



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS' women's workshop seeks transformation and empowerment of women in the water and sanitation sector

30 August 2022

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), on Tuesday, 30 August 2022, successfully held a workshop with women in the water sector to give impetus to transformation in the sector.

The interactive workshop was also used to commemorate Women's Month, under the theme: "Women's Socio-Economic Rights and Empowerment: Building Back Better for Women's Resilience!" and took place at Roodeplaat DWS Training Centre in Pretoria.

The purpose of the workshop was to recognise, honouring and celebrating the dedicated women who are actively participating in the water and sanitation sector. The workshop also provided a platform to engage women that are role players in community development initiatives, and around socio-economic rights and development in line with the government agenda.

The Director Water Resources Support in the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Gauteng, Ms Nondumiso Mabe said that it was about time that the government empowered women by accelerating the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services.

"Theoretically, women and men are equal before the law in developed countries, but even so, much remains to be done to achieve real equality in practice," she said.

Joining hands with the department, Water Research Commission's (WRC) Dr Manjusha Sunill said the Department of Science and Technology (DST), in collaboration with the WRC has established the Water Technologies Demonstration Programme (WADER) to pull together the applied research and development and pre-commercialisation stages of the water innovation continuum.

Dr Sunil emphasised that innovative society thrive andtt sets a culture of openness and endless possibility for change, growth and inclusivity.

"The recently published statistics on unemployment in South Africa, especially women and youth unemployment point to the need for South Africa to devote focused attention to creating opportunities to be innovative in response to our socio-economic challenges. The decline in economic growth and reduced investment in manufacturing and industrial sector also serve as an urgent call to action", she added.

The intention of this annual accelerator call is to identify and ultimately showcase innovative water and sanitation technologies and solutions that will contribute to achieving the objectives of the Research Development and Deployment (RDD programme).

DWS Deputy Director Intergovernmental Relations Ms Silver Rikhotso, said the workshop was meant to highlight the reality that women consistently have to do even more to be recognised as well as to change the embedded beliefs that portrayed them as being incapable.



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“Women must commit to deal with the stumbling blocks to their growth and fight the self-limiting beliefs. We have to deal decisively with the situation where females are followers,” Rikhotso said.

Ms Rikhotso said, the real progress of what was discussed would be if they are turned into a plan that could be monitored to show progression as the women move forward to ensure the goals that have been set are achieved.

The dialogue provided a platform for women in the sector to share their experiences so that they understand these negative experiences are not happening to them only.

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