



INTERNET ARTICLE

The youth, especially pupils from rural villages, empowered for the future

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There is a saying that alludes that life is unpredictable and most importantly rough if you did not prepare for challenges hidden ahead.

The best tonic to weather the storm when the waves are at full heights is to prepare for the unknown future.

That is the reason why the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), which holds the welfare and future of the youth at heart, started a youth empowerment programme called Aqua Enduro. This is a yearly event. The competition was introduced in 2008; therefore, in 2016, the competition is running for the eighth year.

The Aqua Enduro's core objective is to address the skills shortage in the scientific and engineering disciplines within the water sector at grass roots level. This is a process of identifying tomorrow's water engineers and scientists. South Africa has a critical shortage of these skills and the best way taken by DWS is identify, groom, prepare and monitor young talent as a base of goodwill for the future.

To achieve this objective, DWS implemented an education programme called 2020 Vision for Water Education Programme (2020 VFWEP). The programme is aimed at educating learners about water quality, efficient use of water, protection of water sources and water safety. It engages learners and educators in various educational projects.

Through this programme young people and their educators become ambassadors in their communities for the department. The youth in schools have been identified as the primary target audience because they play a crucial role in changing the mind set of their communities.

Participating learners come from various towns, villages and cities across the country representing all the nine (9) provinces; the aim being to secure bursaries to study any careers of their choice in the field of engineering and science and provide meaningful contribution in the South African water sector upon completion of their qualifications.

The training programme is in progress at the Roodeplaat Training Centre and is a marvel not to be missed. The five-day event started on Monday, 28 March 2016 and ends this Friday, 1 April 2016.

This year's event is hosted by Gauteng Province using DWS' internal Roodeplaat Training Centre. The department partnered with various role players which include the City of Tshwane, Department of Basic Education, Magalies Water and South African Institute of Civil Engineers (SAICE).



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
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Factfile - Progress reveals that four hundred and thirty-two (432) learners have participated in the National Competition since 2008 and one hundred and twenty one (121) bursaries have been awarded to date.

This year's competition marks an important milestone particularly considering that it is the celebration of forty years since the 1976 youth uprising in the country which changed the political landscape of South Africa. This, therefore, further strengthens the role of the department in prioritising young people's empowerment, particularly young women, including village pupils to be prioritised and encouraged to take engineering and scientific fields of study.

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