



**mineral resources
& energy**

Department:
Mineral Resources and Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

LAUNCH OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

The Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Mr Gwede Mantashe yesterday, 31 August 2021, launched the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEGE) Strategy which is aimed at ensuring that women become active participants in the Energy Sector.

The development of the Strategy is the culmination of an extensive and inclusive consultation process with various stakeholders, including government institutions, civil society organisations, women in energy associations, the UN Women, and South African citizens at large. The Strategy will ensure equal rights, opportunities, and economic empowerment of South African women in the energy sector. The strategy has a five-year implementation plan with specific deliverables.

To ensure participation of both public and private companies, the Minister has established a Gender Ministerial Council to oversee and drive the implementation of the WEGE strategy across the Energy sector. The Ministerial Advisory Council is expected to drive transformation and empowerment of women in the energy sector. The Council will meet regularly with the Ministry to report back on progress made regarding the implementation plan of the Strategy.

Speaking during the launch, Minister Mantashe highlighted the need to harness the unused potential of women as an important economic and social driver for more inclusive and sustainable development. He highlighted the fact that in South Africa, the number of women represented in the energy sector is still very much in the minority – despite evidence that shows that companies with more than 33% woman leadership tend to have a net profit margin over 10 times greater than those without.

Minister Mantashe said securing the role of women in the energy sector is not only an economic necessity but also a constitutionally protected right. To support this position, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy has taken considerable steps to create an enabling environment for all South African women to participate in and benefit economically from the energy sector.

In supporting the vision of the National Development Plan to ensure the provision of secure, sustainable, and affordable energy, the department believes this must include the full participation of women in the energy sector as business owners, leaders, investors, researchers, and employees.

The Women empowerment and Gender Equality Strategy will be supported by following four strategic pillars and four operational pillars:

- **Enabling Environment:** create an enabling policy environment for translating government commitment to gender equality into reality.
- **Equality of Opportunities:** Work towards achievement of equality of opportunities and treatment within the DMRE, SOEs, the energy sector and broader society.
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** ensure that gender considerations are integrated effectively into the DMRE, SOEs and energy sector policies, programmes, and projects.
- **Barrier Free Workplaces:** advocate for the promotion of new attitudes, values, behaviours, and a culture of respect for all human beings in the sector.

To access the list of the WEGE Ministerial Advisory Council follow the link below:

<http://www.energy.gov.za/files/PPMO/Energy-Sector-Gender-Ministerial-Advisory-Council.pdf>

Minister Mantashe was supported by the Deputy Minister, Dr Nobuhle Nkabane and the Director General, Advocate Thabo Mokoena during the event that attracted over 528 delegates who attended for the webinar.

For more information on the strategy and the advisory council, visit www.dmre.gov.za / www.energy.gov.za

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