

# Women in Energy

## Webinar

The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy invites Women to a Webinar under the theme

**“Empowering South African women to take part in the energy sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.”**

 **Thursday, 27 August 2020**  
 **13h00 - 17h00**

**Keynote:**  
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy

**Speakers & Panel discussion including:**  
PASA, NERSA, Sasol, SANEA, SALGA, Ikigai Engineering, Raise Africa Investments, Women in Upstream Association and more....



**Generation Equality:**  
Realising Women's Rights  
for an Equal Future



The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) hosted the Women in Energy Webinar in partnership with the Petroleum Agency of South Africa (PASA) and South African National Energy Association (SANEA) on 27 August 2020. The webinar served as the DMRE's women's month commemorative event, and was attended by more than 200 delegates.

The programme comprised of two sessions, focusing on opportunities in the Small Scale Embedded Generation (SSEG), and the Upstream Gas Sector. The webinar began with keynote addresses from the DMRE and SANEA, represented by Ms Elizabeth Marabwa on behalf of Advocate Thabo Mokoena, DG of the DMRE, followed by Ms Kiren Maharaj the Chairperson of SANEA on the impact of Covid-19 on business and women.

Key messages that emerged from the keynote addresses are as follows:

- Gender-based violence has increased over the Covid-19 lockdown. Women need to be protected from the triple challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, gender-based violence, and economic recession.
- Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the energy sector and women, and the DMRE is rolling out various programmes to support women in the energy in this regard. This includes the further uptake of renewables and other technologies as is happening elsewhere in the world.
- Access to electricity plays a key role in social and economic upliftment and distributed renewable systems, together with other small-scale generation technologies as they can provide access to modern energy services and related benefits, such as improvements in air quality.
- Women are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities provided through the scale up of small-scale embedded generation.
- NERSA has developed regulations in this regard and the municipalities in South Africa can play a key role in supporting this drive.
- Upstream gas development is another opportunity for new business development for women, especially given the latest discovery and developments in the gas sector.

- Covid-19 has exacerbated many existing energy and ancillary challenges including economic growth. The recent StatsSA report on the economy has shown that almost every sector has been significantly impacted and it is estimated that globally, it might take up to 5 years to recover. The energy sector has been impacted across all the sub-sectors including the Independent Power Producer Programme, as well as the oil sector where demand has dropped across the board affecting revenues and economic growth.
- However Round 5 of the IPP Programme will be initiated shortly and demand is rising, and these are positive signs. There is a significant opportunity to use the implementation of clean energy to support and stimulate economic recovery after Covid-19. South Africa has a lot to offer and furthering the just energy transition can be achieved whilst building reducing carbon emissions.
- Operational efficiency can contribute towards reducing the financial pressures in energy companies.
- The adoption of new technologies is also key and will boost job creation and contribute to the resilience of the sector.
- In SANEA's "navigating the new energy reality" webinar series and the South African Energy Risk Report, shifting the risk landscape is identified as a key mechanism to realise South Africa's "New Gold Rush" and to grow the sector and the economy.
- Women in the energy sector must play a key role in the just energy transition and build on existing efforts, using our best minds, and leveraging our diversity.

The first session of the webinar began with a presentation on the Small Scale Embedded Generation (SSEG) licencing process in South Africa, presented by Mr Elvis Matikwane from the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA). Following the presentation, a panel comprised of Mr Matikwane, Mr Kribs Govender from Sasol Energy, Ms Devaksha Maharaj from Ikigai Engineering, Dr Silas Mulaudzi from SALGA, Mr Tim Beckley from Solar Saver and Ms Lungelwa Tyali from Solar Turtle discussed the SSEG sector opportunities and access mechanisms.

Key messages that emerged from this panel are as follows:

- NERSA has set up the regulatory processes to support various SSEG projects in South Africa in alignment with government policy. The licencing and approval processes for developers is in place and details can be obtained from NERSA. This includes approval from the relevant licenced distributor (ie. ESKOM and Municipalities) for connection to the grid. Challenges include lack of awareness of the processes and not submitting all the required documentation.
- The SSEG sector is growing rapidly and many new skills will be required to develop SSEG projects including upstream activities, logistics, maintenance, construction, legal and compliance, financial management. Women can, therefore play a role across the value chain of SSEG projects.
- SASOL has gone out on a Request for Proposal (RFP) for SSEG projects (<10MW solar PV) on Sasol land and in support of their decarbonisation drive. Women ownership and management as well as community involvement are key criteria. 20-year Project P Agreements (PPAs) will be put in place. The project will thus contribute to economic stimulation.
- SALGA is promoting SSEG to promote grid stability. SALGA is providing support and training for municipalities in terms of grid impact and integration, application processing, pricing, and revenue. On-line training in various topics is in place. SALGA is also determining the installed capacity in the various municipalities. Women can participate in various large municipal initiatives (over 50) to self-generate and sell back into the grid. For example, the City of Cape Town offered training (installation and PV Green Card) for electricians, and female electricians were subsidised 100%. eThekweni Municipality is also offering training and has established a renewable energy department. Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality has also offered training. Most municipalities offer various

incentives for women including preferential procurement.

- Women can collaborate, network and leverage skills. Although women are increasingly playing leadership roles, more can be done to tap the capacity of women. The EWSETA is developing programmes to access women who can learn technical, on the ground skills to fill the increasing need in the energy sector, particularly the renewables sector. Women also need to play a broader role in policy development and as investors, and the renewable energy sector offers these opportunities. Access to information by women entrepreneurs is a barrier and one of the solutions is sessions such as these webinars.
- There are already women owned businesses in the energy sector that demonstrate what can be done. Solar Turtle is one of these businesses that provides specialised solar solutions. This type of business supports many other economic activities, especially micro businesses by providing affordable, mobile, and reliable energy. Given that mobile solutions are being developed, rural women also benefit.
- DMRE is currently running a process to source 2 000MW of emergency power through the Risk Mitigation Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (RMIPPPP) Request for Proposals announced in late August – which presents a future opportunity for women.

The second session was opened with a presentation on opportunities in the Gas Upstream Sector by Dr Phindile Masangane from PASA, and was followed by a Panel discussion on opportunities in the sector. The panel comprised of Dr Phindile Masangane, Ms Nosizwe Nokwe-Macamo from Raise Africa Investments, Ms Zakithi Zama from Women in Upstream Petroleum South Africa (WiUPSA) and Mr Samir Sale from Sasol's Mozambique Operations.

Key messages that emerged from this panel are as follows:

- The status of the oil and gas sector in South Africa is that the country is overly dependent on imported oil and gas, resulting in risks to economic growth, industrialisation, and the balance of payments. However, there are resources available regionally and in South Africa, and the question is why are we not taking advantage of those resources. This will require investment in exploration, drilling and then development of viable projects for production.
- Indigenous gas in South Africa and to some extent in the region will start to decline at some stage which needs to be managed but, new discoveries are being developed and LNG can also be brought in. Gas can support energy security but, a market needs to be developed. This includes in the electricity sector as gas-to-electricity, and together with renewables. There needs to be consideration of how investment in infrastructure needs to be encouraged to enable the further uptake of gas in the country.
- In South Africa, exploration for oil and gas has historically been led by the state. More recently, international and local companies have begun to do exploration in South Africa, as demonstrated by the Total Brulpadda site discovery. This means that up-stream oil and gas is entering a new phase, and there will therefore be many opportunities for new entrants and women can play a significant role.
- The legislative framework is currently being updated, which once completed should boost investor confidence and activity. A transition mechanism is however being put in place, so that, the momentum is not negatively impacted.
- There is new exploration and drilling currently underway and if the outcomes are positive, then there may even be more international interest and growth. This could bring further opportunities including for equity partners, local spend for drilling campaigns such as logistics management and for human capital requirements in some highly specialist skills areas which can be grown in-country.
- Women empowerment issues do not necessarily require government intervention. By networking and working together, women can remove barriers to entry. A wide variety of the required skills is already available in South Africa. Women's empowerment in this sector is not just about new jobs but includes coaching and mentoring, development of

skills roadmaps, and the diversification of existing service sectors to also cover the oil and gas sector.

- This is not only oil and gas specific engineering skills but, also includes non-technical and related areas such as IT (including knowledge exchange platforms,) safety, maintenance, electrical systems including power generation and drone services. Service sectors can therefore be categorised into three areas namely - indirect services like transport and catering; direct services such as construction and engineering services; and complex services related to offshore services which require high levels of capital and skill. It is critical to take into consideration that the oil and gas sector has very high standards given the complexity and risk, and South Africa is well positioned to participate, with the exception of offshore-specialised services at the scale that will be required.
- South African women therefore need to position themselves to enter this market as once the required skills, competencies and experience have been developed, and women can play a role in the oil and gas sector globally.
- Up-stream oil and gas projects can have a significant impact on GDP, especially in least developed countries such as Mozambique. Sasol's programme in Mozambique has focussed on developing local SMMEs and training them to a level where they can operate anywhere in the world.

In conclusion, the overall message from the webinar was that there are many opportunities for women in the energy sector including the SSEG and the up-stream sector in South Africa both of which are on the brink of significant growth and localisation and women should position themselves and participate in the sectors.

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