



# The Association of Municipal Electricity Utilities (AMEU) Launches Women in Electricity

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The Association of Municipal Electricity Utilities (AMEU) held a pre-launch for Women in Electricity (WIE) on the 3rd August 2015 at the Durban International Convention Centre, a new initiative aimed at women becoming a critical mass in the electricity generation and distribution sector. This initiative will be formally launched at the AMEU annual conference in October 2015.

The President elect Mrs Refilwe Mokgosi in her address shared the vision and goals that the AMEU seek to achieve through WIE, these were clearly embodied by the objectives of the WIE which are;

- To create tangible programs designed to groom women in the energy sector
- To accelerate gender transformation
- To maximize the positive contribution that woman can make in the industry

Vision 2035 which is the envisaged time frame for this program to completely phase into the current system will focus on four areas; school awareness, tertiary- bursary support, recruitment and coaching.

At the core of the program was discussions around issues that women in electricity are faced with; the pre- launch was graced by women and men from different backgrounds in electricity addressing pressing matters. Among panelists names such as Ms Canninah Mapena, Mr Azwi Mamanyuha, Ms Jayshree Pershad, Ms Sy Gourrah; who their vast experience and service in this industry echoed a voice of hope while challenging women to cease opportunities, bring about solutions, exercise their great leadership qualities and ultimately thrive in the electricity industry.

The most exciting activity was the opportunity to involve all women in shaping the program that will be rolled out this financial year; after discussions among groups all presentations were presented, adjudicated by the panelists who then selected the winning presentation. The aim is to create a program in activities that are simple with high impact to bring about tangible results.

The event closed in style in a dinner event; where the president of the AMEU Mr Sicelo Xulu put emphasis on the contribution of women in the energy sector and the importance of embarking on initiatives such as WIE to bridge the gap that is currently so wide in getting women to participate in key roles in electricity. A working committee for the roll out of this program was elected and a prize giving conducted; all women who took part in contributing to the WIE planned program received gifts, with the winning team receiving a revolving trophy which will be passed on to next year's winners. Indeed there is a wave of change underway; it is exciting that SMEC SA- Power and Energy has answered the call to be part of this great initiative.

