



Commission
for Gender
Equality

**Commission for Gender Equality Public Education and Information
Message: Advancing Gender Equality Through Water and
Sanitation.**

South Africa celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March 2026, and on 22 March 2026 the country will observe National Water Month. Water Month is an extension of World Water Day, spearheaded by the United Nations on 22 March, which draws global attention to the importance of freshwater and advocates for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) highlights the vital connection between gender equality and access to safe, fresh water and dignified sanitation. When water services are unreliable or unsafe, women and girls are most affected, increasing unpaid care work and impacting health, safety, education, and employment. Lack of safe, reliable water services affects everyone, women, men, children, gender-diverse persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, and communities in rural, urban, and informal areas. Without fresh water and adequate sanitation, households face health risks, higher costs, disrupted productivity, and reduced quality of life. CGE calls for gender-responsive planning in the water sector, safe and accessible water and sanitation facilities, and inclusive participation by all genders. Access to fresh, clean water is a basic human right. To lodge a gender-related complaint, email Gender-Enquiries@cge.org.za or visit www.cge.org.za. Follow us on X @CGE_ZA, Instagram @cgelive, and Facebook: Commission for Gender Equality.

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16 March 2026

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16/03/2026

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