

## **Imagining the possibilities and making them happen**

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What does your dream of South Africa, at its best, look like?

What does your vision of your life, at its best, look like? And your construction related career or business dreams?

In the past week or so I've noticed several people make comments that alluded to their expectation that someone else or government should make things happen and be responsible for change in the country.

Who's responsibility is it to make this into a great country? Who's responsibility is it to ensure that women are successful in the construction sector?

*It's up to **each of us** to drive change and make it happen!*

Isn't it up to *each of us* to contribute to the creation of our dream country? To take responsibility for making our own dreams come true in our individual lives? And will we get anywhere if we sit back and wait for someone to *give* us skills and opportunities? This is an extremely exciting time in our history where women have unprecedented opportunities in the economy and in the construction sector in particular. The booming construction economy and Black Economic Empowerment policies strongly support the transformation of our sector. We have a clear window of opportunity and must take advantage of it. The time is now! We must grasp the opportunities now, increase the momentum and make our mark!

I am amazed on a daily basis by women who are making their mark in the industry! So many of the women we interact with are empowering themselves with the requisite skills and knowledge to play a meaningful role in the sector. Armed with determination and a positive spirit these pioneers are not only contributing to the growth and success of the construction sector but they are paving the way for others.

Everything is possible but we must be proactive, be ready to take calculated risks, to work hard and to recognise that we are still in a time where we have to prove ourselves. Imagining a time when women will not have to prove themselves in this industry helps provide incentive in the meantime.

*Do we all dream of a construction sector where women have equal access to opportunities?*

What needs to happen to make that dream come true and what can each of us do in working toward that dream?

Government, through the introduction of the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies sets the foundation for transformation of the economy. We will be writing more about BEE in upcoming editions of Building Women to share information on

how we can best position ourselves to take advantage of the opportunities in the sector and how Women for Housing aims to play a greater role in increasing the interaction between women and industry roleplayers.

It may be the big names and deals that make the papers, but BEE is not just about ownership by a few. The Codes set out a framework to drive transformation across many levels of the construction economy.

The seven elements of the BEE Codes and Scorecard are:

- Ownership
- Control
- Employment Equity
- Skills Development
- Enterprise Development
- Procurement
- Socio-economic Development

We will look at each of these elements in upcoming issues of the magazine. While the BEE Codes set out a framework for transformation (racial and gender) and the commitment of both government and industry roleplayers is critical to successful transformation, what are our roles and responsibilities? Transformation is a process we need work toward together – women, government and the private sector.

What can each of us as individuals and companies do to help drive transformation and to make it successful?