

# Teen girls' satellite to the rescue

Fourteen Western Cape schoolgirls are reaching for the stars by designing and building a satellite.



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The technology developed by the girls, with the help of engineers from Cape Peninsula University of Technology, is aimed at preventing disasters in Africa.

The satellite would pinpoint droughts, fires and floods, enabling faster responses to agricultural crises, said Judi Sandrock, co-founder of Meta Economic Development Organisation, which trained the girls.

"I feel empowered that I have built a satellite from scratch and sent up that satellite," said Esihle Mazingi, 16, of Siphamandla Secondary School in Khayelitsha. "It is something only people in big companies and big important positions do. When you as a 16-year-old do it yourself, it is really hard to believe."

The satellite will be launched in May. It will improve the early detection of disasters using thermal imaging data. The 14 teenagers decided food security was the most pressing issue facing Africa. The satellite will gather data for disaster prevention. - Samantha Paisley

Source: *The Times*

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