



**BUSHVELD**  
MINERALS

H A P P Y

women's  
month

**CELEBRATING  
WOMEN'S MONTH**



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## Kgolagano Goseka

**Extraction Maintenance Planner**

Bushveld Vametco

### **How long have you been with the company?**

I've been with the company for 4 years now.

### **What does your job entail?**

I'm a maintenance planner, so that includes planning maintenance for the plant, making sure that spares are always available and that everyone is performing to the best of their ability, to always keep the plant online. This also includes supporting the team as well as my Foreman and Section Manager whenever they need my assistance.

### **Which women in your life inspire you the most?**

My mother, Aunt and Grandmother. These women have made me who I am today, with all their prayers, remarkable strength, and confidence in me. They are warriors, victors and are always ready to take on any challenge that life throws at them and turn it into Gold. I am indeed who I am because of these women!

### **What do you think is the biggest challenge women face today in the mining industry?**

Mining is historically a male dominated industry, and the reality is that women generally don't have the strength of a man and can't do the jobs that men can do. So as women, we are taken for granted.

### **Have you faced any barriers in your career due to being a woman?**

Yes, I have. Being a young black women in this industry, I always had to try hard to prove myself, and at times I find myself crying alone and asking God why I was being treated unfairly. I constantly have to prove that I can do jobs that three men can do together. I would have to do it alone in the name of proving myself. But once I completed the task, I would realise that "Not only am I STRONG, I am SMART TOO, I am a WOMAN and I WILL MAKE IT HAPPEN whether the odds are against me or not."

### **What are your hopes for women in mining in the future?**

Well, I want all women to know that whether you are feeling down or made to feel weak, never stop believing in yourself. At times we tend to put each other down as women, my one wish is that one day we will all come together as women and take the industry by storm. We need to keep encouraging fellow sisters at work, keep reminding each other how beautiful we are, despite the grease on our work suits or black powder from the shafts. We must just be there for each other and keep rising because WE DETERMINE OUR FUTURE IN MINING.



## Lebohang Papi

Analytical Chemist  
Bushveld Vanchem

### How long have you been with the company?

I've been with the company for over a year now.

### What does your job entail?

I work in the Laboratory, and the primary role of my department is to ensure quality assurance of the final product produced. My key responsibilities include maintaining a chain of custody for all samples received by the laboratory, timeous reporting of results, and monitoring and evaluation of quality control data.

### Which women in your life inspire you the most?

My mom inspires me the most. She is always cheerful even when faced with adversity. She takes each day as it comes. She inspires me to strive for greater goals. She is always there with a helping hand, a PRAYER 😊 and a word of encouragement, and it motivates me to stand up and try again whenever I feel I am ready to throw in the towel. What inspires more is her patience, kindness, and her ability to live in the moment. I am gracefully growing into a woman who understands that you can be firm without being rude, all thanks to my mother's love, guidance, and prayers.

### What do you think is the biggest challenge women face today in the mining industry?

The mining industry is male dominated all over the world. Some of the biggest challenges that women face in this industry are gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, lack of facilities and protective clothing.

### Have you faced any barriers in your career due to being a woman?

Yes, in previous work as a team leader, I had about four older men who reported to me. It was quite a challenge as I found that they simply took instructions better from my male counterpart than they did from me. It took some time and personal development to get us to a place where they could respect and see me as a leader and not just some little girl who didn't know what she was doing. I learned that things will go wrong and its important to effectively communicate one's expectations from your team while maintaining a calm response to the challenge at hand.

### What are your hopes for women in mining in the future?

It would be wonderful to see women in senior leadership roles, who can act as examples and mentors to other young women. I believe that having women in leadership positions will influence important company decision-making, stronger governance, and this will take the industry forward. Women should have the same opportunities as men. I would like to see women being recognised for their capabilities, ideas, and untapped potential – all of which the industry can benefit from, and not because of their gender that has historically made them outliers in mining industry.



## Tsholofelo Matsobane

**Junior Process Engineer**  
Bushveld Vanchem

### **How long have you been with the company?**

How long have you been working for the company?

I have been working at Bushveld Minerals for two years. I joined in November 2021 as an intern at Vametco and I was appointed as a junior process engineer at Vanchem in August 2022 to date.

### **What does your job entail?**

My job entails monitoring the process to identify problems and solve them to de-bottleneck the Vanchem process. I also update control charts daily to optimize and improve the concentrator, extraction and the chemical plant processes. This will allow me to make recommendations to reduce variance and shift the mean on identified control chart parameters. Lastly, I am required to make sure that all process measuring systems are accurate and I do that by data collection.

### **Which women in your life inspire you the most?**

My aunt Beauty Kgobe inspires me so much. She is self-made and rose against all odds to become the woman she is today. Her persona and demeanor oozes strength, power, confidence, independence and resilience. I can't help but admire the woman she is. Her presence in my life feels like a gift from God. She played the role in shaping me to become the woman I am today.

### **What do you think is the biggest challenges women face today in the mining industry?**

There has been a clear benefit realized after the introduction of gender diversity in the mining industry. However, we cannot shy away from the fact that some women face several challenges in this industry and that creates a setback in their full participation. Those include cultural and societal norms, being a reproductive species, work-life balance issues and family responsibility. Women can also be easily overlooked or have their capabilities questioned because of working in a male dominated industry. I personally feel like women must work twice as hard to continuously prove themselves and cement their positions in this industry as compared to men. Given that there is an increase in the number of women in this industry every year, there is hope for the narrative to change especially because most mining companies are starting to embrace gender diversity and investing in women empowerment.

### **Have you faced any barriers in your career due to being a woman?**

So far, I have not faced any challenges. However, I expected to face challenges when I applied for this position while I was six months pregnant. Vanchem appointed me as a junior process engineer while I was 8 months pregnant, and I was honestly surprised. I never felt discriminated against and this goes to show that this industry has evolved by ensuring equal opportunities for all.

### **What are your hopes for women in mining in the future?**

My hopes are for women to climb up the ladder in the mining industry. I am looking forward to a future where we have more women as CEO's, COO's, GM's and other managerial positions in the mining industry. As this would inspire young women to be comfortable with being part of this industry. This can be achieved by continuously striving to address the challenges faced by women in mining and promoting gender diversity to offer a competitive advantage to companies that are open to follow through.

**How long have you been with the company?**

I have been with the company for 5 months now.

**What does your job entail?**

My job entails supporting senior managers with daily clerical tasks, scheduling appointments, planning meetings, and maintaining office organization.

**Which women in your life inspire you the most?**

Oprah Winfrey has been my inspiration from my youth as she inspires me to find my voice and share it with others. She is my role model and I have learnt from her how to express deep thoughts in an articulate and powerful manner, as well as how to smartly use a public platform to convey a message. She inspires me to be vocal and stand up for what I believe in.

**What do you think is the biggest challenges women face today in the mining industry?**

All over the world, mining is a male-dominated industry. I think South Africa is leading in terms of developing women in mining, and although more needs to be done, SA seems to be taking the right direction when it comes to improving this.

**Have you faced any barriers in your career due to being a woman?**

Not yet. I look forward to taking advantage of the opportunities presented to me in the future.

**What are your hopes for women in mining in the future?**

Women working in the mining industry should have the same opportunities as men and must be given the support and confidence that it is safe to pursue them.



**Siyasanga Mkohlwa**

**Senior Administrator**  
BELCO



## Ayanda Sowazi

Communications Officer  
Bushveld Minerals

### **How long have you been with the company?**

I have been with the company for a year and two months.

### **What does your job entail?**

My role as a Communications Officer is to assist the Group Manager Communication and the Corporate Affairs department with the company's internal and external communication.

### **Which women in your life, inspire you the most?**

I have many powerful women in my life, but the biggest inspiration is my mother. She is always able to show her leadership skills whilst positively engaging those around her to become better versions of themselves. So many people call on her for guidance and it shows the impact she made and continues to make even though she is retired. I've made incredible connections, with amazing women, thanks to her.

### **What do you think is the biggest challenges women face today in the mining industry?**

I would say the biggest issue would be the lack of support given to women working in male-dominated industries – and transforming them to be more equal industries. With more support, the norm would be to see female CEOs, Business Unit Heads, GMs and Engineering teams that are all female.

### **Have you faced any barriers in your career due to being a woman?**

Thankfully I have been a part of a company that gives equal opportunity to women. I am treated fairly and have a good team that shows that women in the industry are taken seriously.

### **What are your hopes for women in mining in the future?**

My hope is for the percentage of woman in this industry to increase significantly and to become a highlight and reason for the success of the mining space on a national level. As Isabelle Allende says, "I can promise you that women working together – linked, informed and educated – can bring peace and prosperity to this forsaken planet."

## BMN supports black women-owned businesses in communities surrounding our operations: The MJMA story.

Bushveld Minerals is committed to supporting local Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) through our Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) programs. Our ESD strategy and associated programmes contribute towards supporting businesses in local communities, enabling them to grow local economies beyond the life of the mine.

This Women's month, as we commemorate the women in our organisation and communities, we also pay homage to black women-owned businesses that we support. MJMA is one such company, founded by Mr Joseph Hamese aka Joe40, and now fully managed and led by his daughter, Ms Jacqueline Mothibi. MJMA was part of the 2022/23 Vametco Supplier Development (SD) programme and currently employs 52 people from Vametco's surrounding communities. The company provides housekeeping, and other general operational services at Vametco mine.

Jacqueline Mothibi has undergone a six-month long coaching, mentorship, training, and business development support programme as part of Bushveld Minerals' Vametco ESD Program. With this support, she was able to improve key areas of her business, amongst others, growing her business and ensuring that labour practices are in line with legislative requirements.

Jacqueline said: "The mentorship I received was so helpful and assisted me with personal growth in a male dominated industry – and pushed me to see more opportunities that surrounded me at the time. Once I completed the programme, I was able to employ twenty-eight more local people, increase business opportunities by 200% and improvement my business acumen."

Jacqueline has ensured that her employees are well trained, medically tested, inducted, and refreshed on a regular basis to ensure that all rules and regulations are maintained for the safety of their own lives and their co-workers. The company is now familiar with the 'General Goods and General Works Act' and complies with the Health and Safety, and Labour Act.

**"I am eternally grateful to Bushveld Minerals for this great opportunity that has set me up to be the successful businesswoman I am now, Jacqueline added."**

All this is in line with Bushveld Minerals' ESD program, which aims to develop mutual benefits and ensure a measurable operational and financial impact to the beneficiaries of the program, with an end goal of setting them up to pursue opportunities to transact with our operations or those of our peers, in the future.

