

OIM Consulting's Poeletso Dibodu - mining needs more women leaders

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

31 Aug 2022

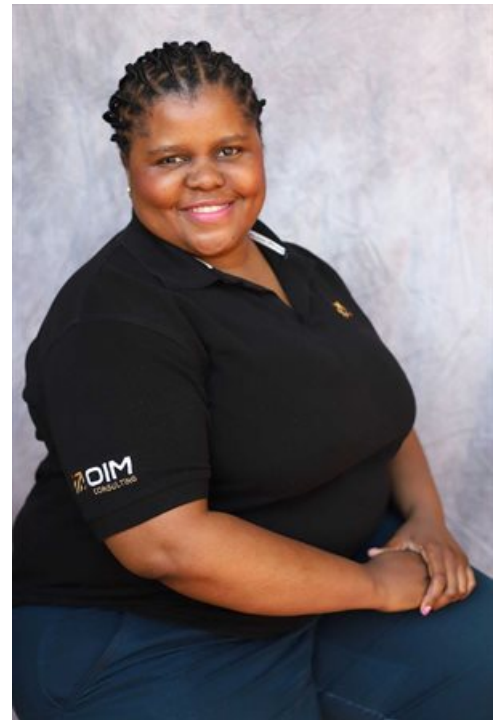
Poeletso Dibodu is a metallurgical engineer and a consultant at OIM Consulting. First exposed to a mine processing environment in high school, she's always been interested in the industry.

This Women's Month, Dibodu shared with us a bit about her work and what she loves most about working in mining, advice for others pursuing a career in the industry, and how OIM Consulting is supporting and empowering women in mining.

■ Tell us a bit about yourself and your background.

I am a metallurgical engineer and a consultant at OIM Consulting. We are currently based in Thabazimbi at a leading platinum mine. We plan and manage basic project workstreams and tasks by having project plans in place and executing OIM's Supervisory Development Programme. We implement business and project management practices to create a high-performance culture, competent leaders and efficient processes.

I have experience in the manufacturing industry, steelmaking industry and currently the mining industry. I consider myself an enthusiastic individual, self-motivated, eager to meet challenges and quick to accumulate skills and concepts.



OIM Consulting's Dibodu

“ I am inspired by my family because they always remind me to stay humble at heart and be accepting of other individuals. ”

I have always been interested in the processing environment. I was first exposed to it in Grade 9 when I was shadowing a plant manager at the Rustenburg platinum mine. I always want to understand what is going on and why things happen the way that they do. I constantly want to challenge myself and my career provides me with this. I am a problem-solver and a critical thinker - I believe that these qualities propelled me to follow a career in engineering as there is always an opportunity to improve situations. The profession calls for people with a passion for what they do.



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■ What does a typical workday look like for you?

We start by going to the plant/mine to sit in on the morning meetings of our trainees. We use this as an opportunity to understand their day-to-day responsibilities and to assess the effectiveness of the meeting. We then engage with the team members regarding their work day and what is expected of them. During the day we look at the plant or mine statistics to assess the KPIs and better understand the performance. The trainees will then be engaged about these results and,

depending on the performance, they will be coached into action to help keep them on track.

■ ***What do you love most about working in the mining sector?***

The environment is a challenging one, and we face new issues each day. This requires us to always be innovative and challenge the status quo. We learn so much from the mining industry.

“ Many women are starting to enter the industry and it's exciting to see them welcomed. ”

■ ***What do you see as the major challenges and opportunities ahead in mining?***

The mining industry is moving at a slow pace when it comes to inclusivity. There is opportunity to appoint more women leaders, as we need to see more women represented in senior roles.

■ ***As a male-dominated sector, what are some of the barriers still limiting the participation and advancement of women in mining? And how do we address them?***

Mining is very labour intensive and requires physical strength to perform some of the tasks, so this can be limiting to females who have roles in the areas that require strength.

■ ***Where, do you believe, does the value lie in a diverse, inclusive work environment, particularly in terms of female representation?***

Women can bring innovative ideas to the table. They can challenge the current way that things are done and their skills can make the quality of some of the tasks far more effective.



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■ ***Based on your experience, what advice would you give to women pursuing a career in mining today?***

I would say that they must first research the typical environments that they will be working in and understand what is expected of them. They must also do some job shadowing before they pursue a career in mining so that they can see what the typical day-in-the-life would entail.

■ ***How is your organisation supporting and empowering women in the mining sector?***

Our organisation, OIM Consulting, is very supportive of women in mining. We create initiatives where we discuss issues that are affecting women in the industry and we give advice to each other on how to handle certain situations. We usually go on team-building outings for these sessions, supported and facilitated by OIM.

■ ***Do you have any pearls of wisdom to share this Women's Month or words of encouragement?***

Believe in yourself and always stand up for yourself when you need to. You deserve to be where you are - believe that.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

Sindy Peters (@sindy_hullaba_lou) is a group editor at Bizcommunity.com on the Construction & Engineering, Energy & Mining, and Property portals. She can be reached at sindy@bizcommunity.com

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