

Ruth Mugurusi is the first female Open-Pit Blasting Engineer at GGML



Engineer Ruth Mugurusi from the Drilling and Blasting Department briefs the guest of honour at the opening ceremony of the fifth National Mining Technology Exhibition, Minister of Minerals Dr Dotto Biteko (right), who visited the GGML exhibition stand. To his left, AngloGold Ashanti's Vice President of Sustainability for Tanzania and Ghana, Simon Shayo.

“It was always a dream of mine to become an engineer, but i was not sure which area of engineering to focus my studies on,” she says. “When i was in form three, i was very interested in geography, and i remember looking in a textbook for overlap with engineering,” recalls Ruth Mugurusi, GGML’s first female Open-pit Blasting Engineer.

“In this geography textbook, there was a page that caught my interest because it listed the professions that related to this area of study, and the one that caught my attention was mining engineer,” says Ruth.

She made a note of the profession and used her next break from school to learn more about mining engineering and the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in this field.

“Before i did my bachelor’s degree in China, i thought i needed more practical experience, so i took the opportunity to gain that experience both in China and Tanzania. So, while i was still studying, i completed my research and got to know the mining companies in Tanzania. And through GGML’s training department, i was able to apply for practical field training and gain hands-on experience, both in the open pit and underground, under the fantastic guidance of the very knowledgeable staff from all departments.” she recounts.

Ruth said that the time she spent at GGML doing her field training was very special because unlike other places where she had done her training, at GGML there was an encouraging and warm atmosphere at GGML where everyone was willing to teach and explain the general aspects of their work. The first positive experience at GGML really influenced her decisions about her career path.

One area of her job that Ruth enjoys and is proud of is designing patterns to achieve good blasting. She adds, “It’s true that drilling and blasting requires the ability to make calculated design decisions and a lot of interaction with everyone involved in the different departments, all working towards the desired outcome.”

Ruth’s hard work at university was rewarded with a Bachelor’s degree in Mining Engineering, performing exceptionally well and achieving the highest grade point average at the university in a field that is considered highly competitive. This pursuit of excellence and her diligence have undeniably brought her to where she is today professionally.



Engineer Ruth Mugurusi from the Drilling and Blasting Department at the fifth National Mining Technology Exhibition.

Shortly after graduating, Ruth took a drilling and blasting course and obtained a Blasting Certificate, after which she registered with the Engineer's Registration Board of Engineers as a Graduate Mining Engineer.

Ruth was then accepted into the GGML internship programme, where she worked in Open Pit Mine Operations. During her time as an intern, Ruth shone in her role and showed a lot of potential, which led to her being offered the position of Drilling and Blasting Engineer.

Ruth is enjoying her time at GGML and has some advice for anyone looking to pursue a career: **"I encourage young people to set a goal and go for it. Do not hesitate if you get the opportunity to learn and develop in your field, no matter what department."**

Ruth continues, **"For anyone wanting to work in mining, especially women, it would be nice to see more young women in drilling and blasting as it has its own unique appeal."**

AngloGold Ashanti, the parent company of GGML, is committed to promoting gender equality across its global operations. To this end, the board has adopted a gender diversity policy and the company's succession planning processes specifically support the advancement of women. This runs through all departments of the company, making GGML an outstanding employer where most roles are not defined by gender and its leaders mentor young and aspiring engineers, ensuring that they are guided along the career path of their choice and supported in achieving their goals. Ruth adds: **"This is rare in the industry, but I have found it here at GGML."**

This has been further emphasised earlier in July 2022 at the 7th Tanzania Women Engineers Convention and Exhibition (TAWECE), organised by the Institution of Engineers Tanzania - Women Chapter where the Prime Minister presented a certificate of appreciation to Simon Shayo, AngloGold Ashanti's Vice President for Sustainability in Tanzania and Ghana, in Dar es Salaam on 29th July, congratulating the company for its efforts to promote women engineers in Tanzania.

The driving force behind engineering is to find solutions to everyday technical problems that lead to the discovery of future engineers and leaders of tomorrow. Ruth believes that for this to happen, engineering needs the brightest young minds in the country. That's why Ruth encourages more girls and boys to follow the same career path as her and share the same success. Ruth exhales, **"Nothing is impossible under the sun!"**