

# WOMEN IN MINING (WiM) INVESTING IN WOMEN



## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

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## #MiningMatters



# DR URISHANIE GOVENDER: PIONEERING EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) AND DIVERSITY WITHIN THE MINING SECTOR



Dr Urishanie Govender

**In the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of the mining industry, leaders like Dr Urishanie Govender stand out for their extensive expertise, commitment to ESG practices and profound dedication to fostering diversity and inclusion.**

**As the Director of EHS-ESG at Vedanta Zinc International, Dr Govender has carved a remarkable career path, leaving an indelible mark on the mining sector.**

Dr Govender's journey into the mining industry is a testament to her diverse background and multidisciplinary expertise. With a Post Doctorate Fellowship in Mine Engineering from Witwatersrand University, a Doctorate in Business Leadership and a Master's in Business Leadership (cum laude) from Unisa School of Business Leadership, her academic prowess complements her practical experience.

With more than 30 years of senior management roles at prominent organisations such as Vedanta Zinc International, GIBB Engineering, PPC Cement De Beers, and the Provincial Government, she brings a wealth of knowledge to her current position. A Fellow Member of the Institute of Directors (Southern Africa) and a Professionally Registered Scientist, Dr Govender's influence extends beyond her roles in the corporate sector. Her decade-long experience as a Company Director, including at GIBB Consulting and as a Board Member of SANParks, reflects her commitment to governance and sustainability.

Dr Govender's inspiration for entering the mining industry was mining's complexity and the opportunity to make a positive impact on the workplace, the planet and community, which have been the driving force throughout her career. Her passion for contributing to South Africa's economic growth and development is evident as she emphasises mining's multifaceted role in education, healthcare and community well-being.

During her tenure as the Head of Safety and Sustainability at De Beers, Dr Govender implemented the 4Cs Safety Programme, focusing on Culture, Competence, Cultivate and Connectedness, leading to significant improvements in safety metrics. Her academic publications in Tier 1 journals underscore her commitment to advancing safety practices in the diamond industry. As a Board Member of SANParks, Dr Govender strengthened relationships between mining and biodiversity conservation, demonstrating the potential for collaboration in addressing environmental challenges.

## Dr Govender's commitment to diversity in the mining sector is not just a theoretical stance but a strategic imperative.

Drawing on her experience, she highlights the business improvement benefits associated with gender-diverse leadership, citing studies that link diverse teams to better decision-making and higher employee satisfaction. At Vedanta Zinc International, Dr Govender has been instrumental in driving initiatives that prioritise the employment and advancement of women. With 22% of its workforce being women, exceeding the industry average, Vedanta Zinc International aims to increase women in management positions to 40% by 2025 and 50% by 2035. The success of the Women in Mining

## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# DR URISHANIE GOVENDER: PIONEERING EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) AND DIVERSITY WITHIN THE MINING SECTOR *continued*

(WiM) Committee reflects the company's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive workplace.

Dr Govender provides specific examples of success within Vedanta Zinc International, citing the WiM Committee chaired by Mrs Chamelle Kearns. This committee, comprising more than twenty women across operations, ensures that all areas have women representatives to create a safe and secure workplace free of bias, harassment and inequality. Breakthroughs as part of the WiM outcomes include WiM personal protective equipment (PPE), a six-month maternity leave allowance, adaptable working

arrangement policies and an on-site lactation room to support mothers' re-entry into the workplace.

Dr Govender outlines Vedanta's multifaceted approach to investing in women's professional development, including educational initiatives, bursaries, recruitment policies that actively encourage gender diversity and female-specific programmes addressing the needs of women in the workplace. According to Dr Govender, success in the mining sector, particularly for women, requires a unique set of skills, emphasising the importance of innovation, multitasking and empathy.

Looking ahead, Dr Govender sees untapped potential for women in areas such as digitisation, artificial intelligence and robotics. With physical strength becoming less of a limitation, women equipped with future skills can play a significant role in managing technology and data analytics in mining operations. Dr Govender is a strong advocate for mentorship, believing in the transfer of knowledge and experience to the next generation.

From an investors' standpoint, Dr Govender emphasises the positive impact of gender diversity and inclusion on a mining company's performance. Beyond social responsibility, diversity contributes to a company's reputation, attracts top talent and aligns with investors' preferences for low-risk, high-reward opportunities.

Dr Govender suggests several metrics for investors to consider when evaluating a company's commitment to gender diversity, including long-term gender diversity targets, the percentage of women in the workplace, in management positions and on the board, as well as monitoring reasons for women leaving the workplace. Dr Urishanie Govender's journey and insights underscore the transformative potential of ESG practices and gender diversity in the mining sector. Her leadership exemplifies a commitment to innovation, safety and sustainability, and the empowerment of women - a blueprint for a more inclusive and successful future for the mining industry.



Chamelle Kearns



Thabisile Mchunu

## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# JOINING FORCES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: MINERALS COUNCIL MEMBER COMPANIES STAND WITH THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES DURING 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

**In South Africa, where gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) is prevalent victims are often unsure of where to turn to for help. Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) are the safe havens that provide solace and after-care services for GBV survivors.**

The centres guide victims of abuse through their darkest of times by using a 6-step model that aims to reduce secondary victimisation and the mining industry is stepping up its involvement and support of these facilities to demonstrate #MiningMatters.

On 2 December 2022, a beacon of solidarity was lit as the National Partnership on GBV Support Centres was launched. This partnership, forged by the Minerals Council, the National Prosecuting Authority and the GBVF Response Fund, is a testament to the collective efforts' resolve to combat GBV together, the partnership strengthens the support for TCCs by providing resources to strengthen prevention and response efforts against GBVF across South African communities.

Twelve member companies of the Minerals Council have pledged their support to the TCC initiative to make a difference in the lives of their employees and those living in nearby communities. From providing public awareness materials and signage for all 65 TCCs nationwide, to the physical expansion of care facilities, the dedication and support of Minerals Council member companies making a difference.



As we observed the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children in line with the 2023 theme "Unite! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls", Minerals Council member companies joined hands with TCCs to champion the cause of survivors.

**Let us take a moment to express gratitude and commend the efforts of the companies in supporting TCCs to make a difference in the lives of GBV survivors.**



## CONTENTS

2	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
4	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
6	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
8	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
10	Investing in the Safety of Women

# JOINING FORCES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: MINERALS COUNCIL MEMBER COMPANIES STAND WITH THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES DURING 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM continued

## CONTENTS



### Sasol:

On 29 November 2023, Sasol staff volunteered at Evander TCC, bringing comfort packs, making renovations to the building and installing a geyser to improve the experience of survivors using the facility.

### Exxaro:

Through their Women in Mining (WiM) initiative, Exxaro donated comfort bags to Laudium TCC on 8 December 2023, a gesture that touched and restored dignity to the lives of 200 GBV survivors.

### Glencore Coal:

At Emalahleni TCC on 14 December 2023, Glencore Coal's gesture of kindness warmed both hearts and bodies through their donations of blankets and teddy bears donations that will provide solace especially to survivors who are minors.

### TEARS Foundation:

Joining hands with TCCs nationwide, the TEARS Foundation offered a beacon of hope through the donation of 1,000 comfort bags that will ensure that survivors have access to essential items such as toiletries in their darkest hour.

### A Day of Learning:

On 5 December 2023, the Minerals Council hosted a Day of Learning, where experiences and insights were shared and new partnerships bloomed, illuminating the path forward in our collective fight against GBVF.

### A Call to Action:

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Minerals Council member companies that have pledged their support for TCCs. Yet, our work is far from over. We call upon more companies to join us in this noble cause to combat the scourge of GBVF and show why #MiningMatters.

To pledge your support, please contact:  
Lindokuhle Zwane, Project Coordinator for GBVF Service Centres

[lzwane@mineralscouncil.org.za](mailto:lzwane@mineralscouncil.org.za)

**Together, let us ignite a flame of hope that will banish the shadows of GBVF.**



2	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
4	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
6	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
8	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
10	Investing in the Safety of Women

# BREAKING GROUND: ACHIEVING GENDER BALANCE IN MINING OPERATIONS

In South Africa, core mining management has historically been predominantly male dominated, a reflection of entrenched industry and societal norms. Glencore Coal SA's commitment to diversity and inclusion is addressing this legacy head on, paving the way for a more equitable and representative workforce.

At its local operation, Glencore Coal SA has more than 28% overall women representation and it has a special focus on increasing women participation in core disciplines.

Glencore Coal SA has made significant headway in achieving gender balance within its operations management teams.

Glencore Coal SA has three tier 1 mining complexes, each with an opencast operation and a processing plant and surface areas, and each operation is managed by a MHSA 3.1 Operations Manager. This is a category of Mine Health and Safety Act legal appointment assigning specific responsibilities related to health and safety management within a mining operation.

Out of six operations managers in both the opencast and plant and surface areas, four are women, two in the opencast and two in the plant and surface areas —a testament to the power of deliberate career development interventions, mentoring and coaching within Glencore Coal SA.

## Meet the team



Janine Ingram	Vuyo Ketani	Vicky van Schalkwyk	Nothando Khathi
iMpunzi – Opencast Mining Operations Manager	Goedgevonden – Surface Operations Manager	Tweefontein – Surface Operations Manager	Goedgevonden – Opencast Mining Operations Manager

In the chronicles of women in mining success stories, their journey stands as a testament to resilience, dedication and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Janine's journey at Glencore began in 2008 when she joined the Company as a Technical Services Manager. Over the years, her career trajectory has been a testament to adaptability and relentless pursuit of expertise. From Group Mining Engineer to Group Business Analyst, Janine's versatility and acumen have consistently propelled her to new heights. Her transition back to production as an Operations Manager reflects her unwavering commitment to excellence and her ability to thrive in diverse roles. Janine epitomises leadership and innovation in the ever-evolving landscape of mining.

Vuyo embarked on her professional journey in 2008, with Glencore Coal SA's Graduate Development Programme. From the outset, Vuyo exhibited an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a fervent drive to excel in the dynamic world of mining. After the Graduate Development Programme, she worked in various roles in the laboratory, culminating in her appointment as a Laboratory Superintendent. Vuyo's keen analytical acumen and meticulous attention to detail later propelled her into the realm of metallurgy. Appointed as a Senior Metallurgist and undeterred by challenges, Vuyo embraced every opportunity as a stepping stone towards her ultimate goal of top leadership, displaying a rare transition from one discipline to another. As a Plant Manager, she navigated the complexities

## CONTENTS

2	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
4	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
6	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
8	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
10	Investing in the Safety of Women

# BREAKING GROUND: ACHIEVING GENDER BALANCE IN MINING OPERATIONS *continued*

of processing coal, orchestrating seamless workflows and optimising efficiency at every turn. She is currently the Surface Operations Manager at Goedgevonden Complex, and her journey is far from over.

In 2011, Vicky joined Glencore as a Senior Metallurgist. Through steadfast dedication and a hunger for knowledge, she ascended the ranks, assuming pivotal roles such as Plant Manager. Armed with an MBA, Vicky embraced every opportunity given to her. She took on strategic lateral moves across various operations, which underscores her commitment to holistic understanding and expertise. This journey primed her for the pivotal role of Operations Manager, a position she now holds with distinction. Vicky's leadership style and how she presents her self-epitomises authenticity. She is a true example to women that you should not change who you are to adapt and assimilate into the male-dominated environment that mining remains.

Nothando's journey in mining began as a recipient of a Glencore Bursary, a seed that would blossom into remarkable leadership. Starting with vacation work during school holidays to gain practical experience at opencast mines, she embarked on a path of learning and growth.

From being part of the Graduate Development Programme, Nothando's journey was marked by relentless determination and unwavering dedication. Her rise to Production Supervisor, Production Superintendent, Production Manager and, ultimately, Operations Manager mirrors her exceptional leadership qualities and commitment to excellence. She was awarded the Inspirational Leader award at the 2023 Glencore Coal SA CEO Awards. Nothando's story exemplifies the transformative power of nurturing talent, proving that, with opportunity and dedication, greatness knows no bounds.

Today, as Operations Managers at Glencore Coal SA, these four women are beacons of inspiration: a testament to the transformative power of perseverance and tenacity. Glencore Coal SA's openness and willingness to embrace gender diversity has given them the platform to shine in mining. These achievements underscore the importance of proactive measures in addressing gender disparities within traditionally male-centric fields and not always finding excuses why women cannot succeed in this industry. By implementing targeted programmes focused on career development and progression of women, Glencore Coal SA has created an environment where talent knows no gender boundaries.

The success of Glencore's initiative sends a clear message to the mining industry and beyond: diversity is not only desirable but also achievable. It is a beacon of inspiration for other companies seeking to foster inclusive workplaces where individuals of all backgrounds can thrive.

By investing in the professional growth and empowerment of its female employees, Glencore Coal SA has unlocked their full potential and enriched its leadership ranks with diverse perspectives and experiences.

**As the mining industry continues to evolve and faces various challenges, embracing diversity and difference will be key to driving innovation, enhancing decision-making and driving culture change, all of which are key ingredients to a sustainable future of the industry.**

## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICAN MINING: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF THE WOMEN IN MINING PROCUREMENT PROJECT

**On 6 October 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa established the Women Economic Assembly (WECONA), aimed at promoting the equal economic participation of women to combat gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF).**

The Minerals Council's first study of its kind has shown that the South African mining industry has significantly increased its allocation of procurement spending to women-owned businesses in recently years. It puts the mining sector at the forefront of President Ramaphosa's initiative to include more women in the broader economy.

Aligned with the National Strategic Plan on GBVF, the government committed to a 40% preferential procurement target for women-owned businesses inside the public sector.

To achieve this target the following strategic steps were defined:

- the establishment of a powerful institutional framework,
- ability-building programmes for women-owned businesses,
- activating public and private sector supply value chains within an enabling environment

The Minerals Council responded by launching its Women in Mining Procurement Project to evaluate the extent to which women-owned businesses have participated in the mining industry for the years 2020 to 2022. The purpose of the research project was to establish industry-wide insights on the support of women-owned businesses through

procurement of goods and services, and to understand the possibilities of procurement for women-owned businesses to play a more meaningful role in the sector.

The report highlighted both progress and challenges. Although there was positive year-on-year growth in total procurement spending, challenges persist, including limited access to resources, patriarchal labour division and underrepresentation of women in decision-making structures.

## PROCUREMENT SPEND FROM WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES



Total procurement spend increased by **24%** in 2020/21 and by **30%** in 2021/22



Women-owned businesses received an average **31%** of total procurement spend over the 2020-2022 period



DRD GOLD - Far West Gold Recoveries



Glencore Coal - Goedgevoonden Colliery

## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICAN MINING: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF THE WOMEN IN MINING PROCUREMENT PROJECT continued


Delving into the details, mining companies' bought more services than mining goods from women-owned businesses. Notably, spending on 30% black women-owned businesses surpassed that on 50% women-owned businesses.

**The number of women-owned suppliers increased by more than 8,000 from 2020 to 2022, an average growth rate of 31%.**

Minerals Council member companies supported 250 women-owned businesses through enterprise and supplier development (ESD) programmes and an additional 430 through employer improvement applications from 2020 to 2022. The aid included training, interest free loans, preferred loans, guarantees and minority investments.

The Mining Charter 2018 target for procurement from 50% women-owned businesses for mining goods was exceeded

## PERFORMANCE AGAINST MINING CHARTER 2018 TARGETS

 <p>The Mining Charter 2018 target for procurement from 50% women-owned businesses for <b>mining goods</b> was exceeded over the 2020-2022 period</p>	 <p><b>HOWEVER</b> The target for 50% women-owned businesses for <b>services</b> was not met, falling short of the 15% target by 5%</p>
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over the 2020-2022 period. However, the target for procurement from 50% women-owned businesses for services fell short of the 15% target by five percentage points.

In focus group sessions with women entrepreneurs, several challenges were identified and participants expressed the belief that addressing these challenges requires increased access to market opportunities, longer-term period contracts, improved ESD programmes, financial

assistance, upfront charge arrangements and mechanisms to screen and report on progress against commitments in social and labour plans.

This insightful study serves as a baseline on procurement from women-owned businesses and it will be regularly updated and used to monitor the mining industry's progress.

To access the full report please contact Dimpho Moepane at [dmoepane@mineralscouncil.org.za](mailto:dmoepane@mineralscouncil.org.za)



## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# INVESTING IN THE SAFETY OF WOMEN



**We had the privilege of interviewing Lerato Tsele, Deputy Head of Safety and Sustainable Development at the Minerals Council South Africa, a trailblazer who is dedicated to advancing safety and sustainable development in the mining industry. Lerato's commitment to change, particularly in promoting women's safety in mining, sets the tone for an insightful discussion.**

Lerato emphasises the importance of prioritising women's safety in the mining industry. Moving beyond mere morality, it is a strategic imperative to foster a safe, inclusive, and successful workplace. By acknowledging the representation of women in the industry, Lerato highlights how prioritising their safety promotes

inclusivity and equity, creating a foundation for the transformative power of individuals dedicated to shaping a safer future for all. As at 2023 data, 15% of mining employees were women.

In this male-dominated industry, women face distinct safety challenges, including physical hazards, workplace design issues, health risks, gender-based violence, and barriers to career advancement. Addressing these challenges is not only about ensuring a safer workplace for all employees but also about contributing to higher productivity and efficiency when employees feel safe and valued.

Lerato says recent developments and initiatives for creating a safe working environment for women have made it clear that a comprehensive approach is necessary to address the multifaceted challenges and barriers faced by women in the workplace. Gender-specific training programmes, enhanced safety equipment, improved facilities, gender-responsive risk assessments and supportive mental health programmes collectively form a strategy to foster a workplace where all employees thrive.

The Amended Guidelines for the selection and provision of personal protective equipment were gazetted in August 2023. These guidelines, which emphasise specific PPE requirements and promoting inclusivity, reflect a crucial step toward addressing gender-specific safety

concerns in the sector. Historically, women had been required to wear clothing and PPE designed for men, resulting in discomfort and less-than-optimal health and safety benefits.

Linking the importance of a safe working environment to the recruitment, retention and progression of women, it becomes evident that safety is not just a legal and moral imperative but a fundamental factor in attracting women to the mining sector and ensuring they stay and advance in their careers. A physically and emotionally safe workplace attracts talent, fosters retention, and supports career advancement, contributing to a more inclusive industry culture.



## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women

# INVESTING IN THE SAFETY OF WOMEN continued

Despite progress in integrating gender-sensitive safety measures operationally, challenges persist due to a traditional workplace culture, lack of awareness on gender-specific safety needs, resource constraints, resistance to change, and data collection issues. The pathway to overcoming these challenges lies in leadership commitment, education, resource allocation, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Investments in safety improve a company's reputation, provide access

to talent and innovation, and offer market differentiation and a competitive advantage for the organisation. Recognising the economic benefits of such investments reinforces the notion that safety is not just a cost but an investment in long-term sustainability and profitability of a mining operation.

Tracking progress on safety initiatives collectively involves various mechanisms - government regulations, corporate sustainability reports, employee feedback and external audits. The acknowledgment

of safety heroes through initiatives such as the Minerals Council Women in Mining annual heroes campaign adds a human touch, highlighting safety excellence, inspiring others, and increasing awareness of safety issues in a more engaging and relatable manner. It demonstrates that the mining industry is a viable, long-term career option for young women.



Petra Diamonds - Ekapa Mining JV



## CONTENTS

<b>2</b>	Dr Urishanie Govender: Pioneering Excellence in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Diversity within the Mining Sector
<b>4</b>	Joining Forces Against Gender-Based Violence: Minerals Council Member Companies Stand with Thuthuzela Care Centres during 16 Days of Activism
<b>6</b>	Breaking Ground: Achieving Gender Balance in Mining Operations
<b>8</b>	Advancing Gender Equality in South African Mining: a Comprehensive Overview of the Women in Mining Procurement Project
<b>10</b>	Investing in the Safety of Women