

NEWS ARTICLE

ROMPCO's Thembeke Mbuli highlights the role of women engineers in the oil and gas sector

21 June 2023: In celebration of [International Women in Engineering Day \(INWED\)](#) on 23 June, the Republic of Mozambique Pipeline Investments Company ([ROMPCO](#)) is showcasing the achievements of Operations Specialist **Thembeke Mbuli**, a qualified civil structural engineer with a Master's degree in Engineering Management and over eleven years' professional experience.

Held under the Women's Engineering Society (WES) banner, INWED celebrates its 10th year in 2023, yet again promoting the amazing work being carried out by women engineers across the globe under the theme of #MakeSafetySeen.

"What makes me passionate about engineering is the opportunity to solve problems and create ideas that can be turned into a practical reality to change the environment we live and operate in," says Thembeke.

She is on a constant learning curve as not all problems, projects or environments are the same. Each one brings new challenges that fosters learning new skills or techniques. "The skills I learn as an engineer can be applied in many disciplines or used as a steppingstone for my overall career development and in my own personal life."

Thembeke's experience in project engineering and operations management has mainly been in the oil and gas sector, particularly in oil production, natural gas vaporisation, natural gas transportation, infrastructure projects and offshore construction of subsea infrastructure. She has significant experience in project engineering, including executing various projects from concept to implementation and providing technical support to operations.

Seconded by ROMPCO to Sasol Gas to provide technical support, Thembeke is assisting the operations team to ensure operational compliance with technical specifications and safety regulations. She also assists maintenance teams with repairs and upgrades to plant equipment as needed.

In her broader role at ROMPCO, Thembeke provides project management support and develops scopes of work for projects and maintenance activities, including servitude management. She develops project execution plans, cost estimates, and project schedules. She reviews the performance of engineering contractors and consultants and provides design input and follow-up during project execution.

Thembeke also provides technical support to all functional departments as part of troubleshooting, regulatory compliance, and optimisation during routine operations, start-ups, and turnarounds. Her daily operational activities include safe operation of pipeline equipment and maintenance.

ROMPCO has representation at all levels and encourages everyone to contribute their ideas. It is currently implementing a mentorship program, while various efforts are being made to maximise opportunities for connection, open communication, and cultural celebrations.

Regarding the INWED 2023 theme of #MakeSafetySeen, Thembeke highlights that women naturally prioritise personal safety in their homes and communities, making safety an intrinsic value in their lives. She firmly believes that these safety values can be seamlessly transferred to the workplace, establishing safety as the foundation of daily engineering practices.

“In my opinion, women are very attentive, meaning we pay more attention to detail, and that level of attentiveness plays a significant role in identifying safety-related issues and concerns. Women can take part in leadership visibility on safety campaigns, talking to those who are involved on the ground and leading by example in embracing safety culture in the engineering field,” says Thembeke.

However, Thembeke acknowledges the prevailing gender disparity in the engineering field, where male professionals often undervalue the contributions of women. She courageously calls for a transformation, urging the industry to challenge the status quo and recognise the immense potential women engineers possess.

“We need to face this head-on and challenge the status quo. There is still a great opportunity to make a mark in the world and come up with solutions for modern world problems, plus you get the opportunity to experience the dynamic worlds of both the office and on-site engineering. Life is fluid, and so is engineering,” concludes Thembeke.

Ends

Notes to the editor

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About ROMPCO

The Republic of Mozambique Pipeline Investments Company (ROMPCO) is a joint venture between the government of South Africa (represented by the South African Gas Development Company (iGas), the government of Mozambique (represented by Companhia Moçambicana de Gasoduto (CMG) and Sasol. ROMPCO was formed to transport natural gas from Mozambique’s Pande and Temane gas fields to markets in both Mozambique and South Africa, for the economic benefit of the region.

ROMPCO’s mission is to maximise stakeholder value through the expansion of its footprint in a manner that promotes reliable, safe, and environmentally responsible operations. ROMPCO aims to contribute to a balanced energy economy, gas infrastructure and capabilities development, while being a responsible corporate citizen.

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