

## Debmarine Namibia's first lady Geological Observer at sea

She grew up in Onyaanya Village in Oshikoto Region, cooking, looking after the goats and doing other house chores that her grandmother entrusted her to do was an order of the day. Elina Amutenya was an ordinary village girl, thanks to her grandmother who instilled the ethos of taking her school seriously, a lesson that would later give birth to Debmarine Namibia seeing its first lady Geological Observer working at sea.

Elina beamed, narrating her experience working at sea as an honour and privilege as she set a good standard for the current ladies working at sea at different levels. Armed with a Bachelor Degree in Geology from the University of Namibia obtained in 2005, she took a leap of faith and applied for a Junior Geological Observer at Debmarine Namibia. "Mining is an industry which has always been male-dominated, regardless of geographical location let alone working at sea. I had doubts when I applied for the position and I did not know what to expect", said Elina.

She fondly recounted on how she had been the only woman amongst 60 – 70 men at the vessel. "It was not a smooth sailing journey, there were a lot of doubts whether a women will cope within that environment, deliver and so forth. I needed to work harder to prove that as a woman in my profession I can equally contribute to the company's goals in any environment. It was just up to me to show them that I was actually capable. After a few months, my male colleagues were no longer see me as just a woman, but they started to see me as their colleague".

Eleven years and counting at Debmarine Namibia, Elina grew within the Company. She started as a sea going Geological Observer (Junior Geologist), promoted to a Geologist and subsequently to Senior Geologist base in the Head Office in Windhoek.

She is inspired mostly by the marine geology and mining experience that she does every day. "What I enjoy most in my position as geologist is "unlocking the sparkles". Being part of this dynamic operation that involves in determining the optimum resource for different vessels, defining the optimum tool deployment strategy, mining the resource in sustainable and a responsible manner and eventually achieving the set targets really keeps me inspired", said Elina.

Elina attained her Hounour's Degree in Geology at the University of Pretoria in 2009 and is currently completing her Master's Degree in Geology with the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa.

Elina feel privileged to work for her ideal company and mostly for setting a good standard as there a good number of female Geological Observers and currently working at sea. She commended Debmarine Namibia for looking beyond gender and focusing on professionalism.

Elina adore mothering and finds strength and joy through her children “I am a wife and a mother of two girls and a boy. I am social more especially in activities which are focused on families, community and church. I love to sing in my church choir”.

Encouraging ladies that are interested in mining careers, Elina has this to say “I am encouraging you to follow your dreams. My advice is that marine mining or mining in general has always been a male dominated environment. Do not join the mining career to compete with men, rather go there to live your dreams alongside theirs, and if you can beat them in the game, excel at it. As a professional woman, you have got all it takes to perform your duties in any environment. You just need to focus, work hard, and aim high.”

Photo caption: Photo 1. Elina Amutenya Senior production Geologist at Debmarine Namibia

Photo caption: Photo 2: Elina Amutenya at work during her time working as a Geological Observer at sea.