**PRESS RELEASE**

KBC hosts webinar to highlight important role women play in the mining industry

**6 September 2021:** A holistic provider of Onboarding solutions in Southern Africa, as well as induction and other training solutions across the mining industry, [KBC Health & Safety](http://www.kbcsa.co.za/) hosted a ‘Women in Mining’ webinar on Tuesday 31 August.

Currently in South Africa, women account for 12% of the workforce in the mining industry, while this figure is 17% in Australia and 16% in Canada. However, the number of women employed locally in mining has increased significantly, jumping from 11 400 in 2002 to 56 691 in 2019.

The most common challenges faced by women in mining are physical capacity, pregnancy and maternity leave, workplaces not accommodating the needs of women in terms of sanitation and ablution facilities, safety and security, and childcare facilities.

“KBC recognises that this transformation cannot be achieved unless the current issues and challenges faced by women in the South African mining industry are highlighted and corrected. To this end, we believe that hosting a free webinar provided an excellent platform for discussion and debate on this topic,” commented Chief Operating Officer **Sian Thurtell**.

The panel discussion at the event was led by three highly-influential women in the mining industry. These were **Olebogeng Sentsho**, CEO of Ayana Group; **Fortune Naledi**, MD of Dust A Side Coal and CEO and Founder of GNF1 Engineering & Construction; and **Vuyokazi Nontso**, Risk and Compliance Manager at Nkwe Platinum South Africa.

In a presentation entitled ‘What can we do to Attract and Retain Women in the Mining Industry?’, Naledi said: “We are still behind in acquiring the desired number of women in the industry. However, a lot has been done to make the mining industry conducive for women in terms of the environment, health and safety standards, and equipment and tools, which no longer requires hard manual labour.”

Nontso commented that, post-1994, doors have opened for women in the mining industry. “Although we have welcomed that opportunity, the journey over the past 27 has not been without challenges,” she highlighted in her presentation entitled ‘Challenges Facing Women in the Mining Industry in South Africa’.

“Some have been emotional, psychological and physical challenges Some are quite nebulous and hard to understand for people not in that situation, which results in the stereotype that women do not belong in that environment,” added Nontso.

However, Sentsho pointed out that women in mining have twice as many qualifications as their male counterparts, with 84% of women in mining more qualified than their bosses. “Women often sacrifice experience for education,” she noted.

In her presentation entitled ‘Women in Power’, Sentsho advised: “Accept credit for all the work you do. If you were the boss, would you promote someone who insists her success is purely happenstance? Refusing to accept responsibility for the positive role you played will not inspire confidence in your ability and will erode your self-confidence. You need to feel appreciated in order to thrive.”

The webinar not only demonstrated KBC’s support of the important role that women continue to play in mining, but highlighted the need for increased upskilling and awareness of diversity and inclusivity in the industry.

KBC strives to set a single standard of induction training across the mining industry, which reduces duplication of training as services providers have reciprocity across multiple sites. This is based on the five key pillars of Training, Systems, Consulting, Community and Risk Solutions. Therefore, KBC is well-positioned to integrate with the mining industry’s value chains to ensure a streamlined and cost-efficient Onboarding solution for all.

***Ends***

**Notes to the Editor**  
To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the KBC Health & Safety link to view the company’s press office.

**About KBC Health & Safety**  
KBC Health & Safety is a subsidiary of the Workforce Holdings Limited. We have a national footprint. We train, on average, 120 000 learners every year. Quality is key! From our facilitators to our course material, we are all about EXCELLENCE. Our technology-driven products position our clients to achieve a ‘No Harm’ culture. We customise our programmes and delivery for our clients’ target market.

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