**NEWS ARTICLE**

The women of Rietvlei keep Corobrik’s quarries and factory running optimally

**08 August 2****024:** Observed on 9 August, Women’s Day serves as a powerful reminder of the ongoing journey toward gender equality. This day seeks to eliminate the root causes of discrimination that still curtail women's rights in both private and public spheres. Leading brickmaker [Corobrik](http://www.corobrik.co.za) proudly commemorates the day by showcasing the exceptional women excelling at its Rietvlei operation.

**Katlego Mahlangu, SHE Supervisor**

Katlego ensures compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations. The factory also complies with the Mine Health and Safety Act at its two quarries, namely Rietvlei and Fortress Mine. In addition, Corobrik adheres to the National Environmental Management Act. Katlego assists with SLP compliance for the site and is part of the LED project team, attending meetings and visiting sites with the manager.

“Currently, we are engaged in a project with the Rietvlei Nature Reserve to eradicate alien invasive plants in exchange for donating bricks. I also educate and motivate employees to work safely and protect our environment, arrange training for our factory, and work closely with our cleaning staff, guiding them on how to perform their tasks effectively,” explains Katlego.

She recently completed her training in safety management for the mining sector. Katlego holds a BSc in Natural Sciences and a BSc Honours in Environmental Management. She has also completed her MQA SHE representative training in mining and the mineral sector, environmental legal compliance auditing and monitoring, legal liability training, and ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 implementation and auditing.

“My career has been very interesting. I joined Corobrik in March 2017, and I have been exposed to many opportunities that have helped me grow professionally. I am more confident and capable of facing new challenges in my career. The company provides opportunities for growth and involvement in the mining area, ensuring compliance and continuous improvement,” highlights Katlego. All employees have equal opportunities to advance their training and skills.

Working with different people and making changes in their lives keeps Katlego passionate about her role. “I enjoy engaging with employees, motivating them to upskill, and learning from various experiences, including the DMRE visits to the mining area,” she adds.

Being part of the management team and participating in decision-making processes is exciting. She manages her budget and team independently, without undue interference. “I also enjoy understanding and contributing to the quality processes in the manufacturing environment. The team is always excited for change, and our manager supports our professional development,” says Katlego.

Her advice to young women who want to pursue a similar career is to be passionate about working with people, have patience, be a go-getter, and do not restrict yourself to one area. “Be brave, know what you want, and continuously strive for improvement,” says Katlego.

Her message for Women’s Day is to “change the way you think and how society sees you as a woman. Be proud of who you are, aim high, and have a positive mindset and high self-esteem. Embrace the opportunities available and prove that you can achieve great things,” concludes Katlego.

**Evidence Silinda, Millwright Intern**

Evidence attends to mechanical and electrical breakdowns and participates in preventative maintenance in various departments such as clay preparation, brickmaking, kilns, and dehacking. She has a National Diploma in Electrical Engineering (Heavy Current) and in Hydraulics and Pumps. She also has certificates in Occupational Health and Safety, First Aid, Firefighting, and Boiler Operation. At Corobrik’s Rietvlei Factory, she is one of five women who have been selected for further training.

“It has been challenging yet exciting, as I get to work with diverse skills and personalities, which helps me grow in my career. The company is planning to send me for further training next year to achieve a trade test as a Millwright, which will make me double trade certified,” Evidence adds proudly.

Corobrik is committed to transformation, including employment equity, diversity, and inclusion in recruitment. It is company policy to promote from within whenever possible. Evidence says the quality of work is highly dependent on the quality of personal life. “Unhappiness at work can affect family life and vice versa,” she points out. What keeps her passionate about her job is that every day presents new challenges, and she learns new things constantly.

Her advice for young women who want to pursue a similar career is that they must be passionate, focused, dedicated, ambitious, and willing to work beyond their allocated time. “Women’s Day is about celebrating our progress and the ability to do what men can do. We are celebrating our achievements and the opportunities available to us now,” concludes Evidence.

**Esther Chepape, Quality Control**

Esther oversees quality for all departments, taking samples from the stockpile, reclaimer, brickmaking department, kilns, and the drying plant. She has a Matric certificate, a Computer Certificate, and qualifications in Stock Control, SHEQ, and Diversity Management.

Working at Corobrik has been challenging yet exciting. “We learn everything in our company. It provides equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender and affords us opportunities to go to school and improve our skills.”

Her advice to young girls is: “They should believe in themselves, be brave, passionate, and dedicated to their job.” Esther says Women’s Day is ultimately about “celebrating the heroines who fought for our freedom.”

**Menchy Chauke, Factory Administration Controller, Staff Trustee Board Member**

In her daily role, Menchy supports the factory, coordinates daily activities, provides office support, maintains equipment and facilities, oversee contracts and suppliers, implements quality policies, and handles general administration.

She has a Matric certificate and additional certificates in Computer Skills, Diversity Management, Conflict Management, Performance Management, and Stock Control. Working at Corobrik has been challenging yet exciting she adds. Menchy joined Corobrik in January 2013 where she was then promoted to her current role in addition to accepting a position on the Corobrik Board as Staff Trustee at the end of 2023.

“The company’s vision and goals are inclusive and supportive of women, especially through our women’s forum meetings. Corobrik is committed to diversity and inclusion, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for everyone,” says Menchy.

What keeps Menchy passionate about her job is helping others, being part of a supportive team, and contributing to the company’s success. Her advice to young women is: “Be passionate, dedicated, and always willing to learn and improve.” Menchy concludes: “Women’s Day is about celebrating our achievements, opportunities, and the progress we have made.”

***Ends***

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**Notes to the editor**

To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click on the Corobrik link to view the company’s press office.

**About Corobrik**From small beginnings in 1902, Corobrik has evolved into South Africa’s leading clay brick and paving manufacturer. Corobrik’s product quality and performance attributes remain key to the company’s success.

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