

From high heels to hard hats

Tigidanke Camara swapped the glitz and glamour of the modelling world to make a difference in the mining industry in her native Guinea and beyond.

 By Nicci Botha 18 Apr 2016



Tigidanke Camara, founder of Tigui Mining Group

Having founded [Tigui Mining Group](#) (TMG) in 2012, she is the only woman mine owner in her homeland and one of the youngest mine executives in Africa. She is also committed to improving the lot of women in Guinea.

Company profile

TMG is a conglomerate of natural resources and innovative technology companies specialising in minerals such as gold, diamond, and iron ore. Its strategy is to acquire and develop natural resources that have economic value and potential for future growth, in collaboration with partnerships and alliances.

“I have always been interested in mining. In my country, it represents approximately 90% of total exports and I firmly believe that the exploitation of mineral resources is one of the key drivers for the economic development of Africa. I decided to be part of it,” she explains.

Projects

The 100%-owned subsidiary of TMG, Camara Diamond & Gold Trading Network (CDGTN), has a portfolio including gold and diamond assets totalling 356 square kms in Guinea.

The company's diamond interests are located in the southern part of the Guinean Diamond Triangle (Kerouane – Kissidougou – Macenta), where the majority of the country's alluvial and hard rock diamond potential originates.

While the gold projects can be found in the highly productive Birimian Belt, almost entirely within the Siguir Basin in the northeast of the country. The area is predominantly made up of gold- and diamond-rich proterozoic birimian rock.

In addition, TMG has branched out into neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire with a gold prospecting project in Odienné.

Developing sustainability

Mining remains the second biggest employer of women, after the agricultural sector, in Guinea, and Camara's company, which employs about 50 people, makes a point of hiring and training locals.

"We focus on developing the local economy for the community. We founded AgroMine, a programme to empower women - who live in our exploitation areas - through sustainable agriculture opportunities to build community resilience."

"Local women are learning to produce and market diverse products to generate income for themselves and their families. The goal is for them to achieve financial independence. We strategically partner with agricultural companies to offer training in food security, food hygiene and income generation," she explains.

According to Camara, there won't be sustainable development across the continent, if women are left behind.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.
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