Seshni Naidoo to engineer a new energy era at Engie Sout Africa

Seshni Naidoo has been appointed as Engie South Africa's new head of operations and engineering. As an engineer, Naidoo hopes to bring what she calls "thoughtful engineering" into the energy transition conversation.

Seshni Naidoo has been appointed as Engie South Africa's new head of operations and engineering. Image supplied.

"Seshni brings the rare combination of site-level credibility and portfolio-scale judgment.

"Her focus on engineering policy, proving with performance, is exactly what South Africa's transition needs says Mo Hoosen, CEO at Engie South Africa.

Operational discipline and engineering design

Naidoo brings 18 years of experience across state utility and independent power producer environments, with hands-on exposure from development through construction, commissioning and operations across technologies.

She began her career at Eskom and rose to the position of senior engineer at Komati Power Station, wher she worked on the Return to Service Programme, which included returning a mothballed 1000MW coal pla to service through plant refurbishment and redesign, statutory and technology upgrades, commissioning, O&M establishment, and asset life-cycle management.

In 2015, she joined Engie, serving as a technical advisor and director across project and operating companies spanning wind, solar PV, CSP, and open-cycle gas turbine technologies.

She holds a chemical engineering degree, a project management qualification, and an MBA, and maintains professional status with ECSA, SAICHE and IChemE.

“Policy is often framed as something decided in boardrooms.

“In reality, policy succeeds or fails where projects meet the grid and the community,” says Naidoo.

“My focus is operational discipline and engineering design that inform policy by proving what works at the site level sustainably, reliably, safely, and at the pace the country needs.”

Her portfolio now spans the technical execution and long-term performance of Engie’s South Africa assets and build-out pipeline, from wind, solar PV and CSP to battery energy storage, ensuring solutions are efficient, reliable, and aligned with the regulatory frameworks shaping the sector.

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Missing link

Naidoo argues that engineering policy is the missing link in the just transition conversation.

“Thoughtful engineering unlocks investment, while operational excellence builds trust, and inclusive planni turns a project into a local asset.

“Those are technical achievements, but they are also policy outcomes,” she adds.

Three priorities will guide her approach.

First, availability and performance. She will help position design and O&M choices that keep plants producing through South Africa’s weather, load profiles, and grid constraints.

Second, bankability through clarity. This will include the specifications, interfaces, and commissioning regimes that de-risk delivery for lenders and off-takers.

Third, local value. This will incorporate structured skills transfer, supplier development, and site practices t make projects part of local economies from day one.

“As the market evolves, engineering and operations must feed evidence back into policy on grid codes, performance standards, storage integration, and end-of-life planning.

“Bridging strategy and implementation is how we move from ambition to delivery,” adds Naidoo.

Her appointment follows a period in which she led Engie’s engineering and technical support group, supporting projects and operating companies across the South African IPP sector.

The step up to head of operations and engineering formalises that systems view.

“Leadership in engineering is about more than technical mastery, but about creating confidence in our teams, systems, and the energy future we are building,” she says.

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