

## TEREX AFRICA'S MARIPA PROVES HER METTLE IN MINING



A heavy mining equipment assembly site in midwinter is the last place one would expect to find a 19-year-old woman wielding spanners, screwdrivers and doing her bit to construct a 230 tonne haul truck.

However, this is exactly what Maripa Maleka did as part of her technical training at the Mining Division of Terex Africa. The company, which will be introducing an increasing number of women into its technical apprenticeship programme, recently assembled a Terex MT 4400 haul truck at its Jet Park, Johannesburg, premises.

The truck, which is specifically designed for high volume surface mining and boasts a payload capacity of 230 tonnes, was delivered to customer Anglo Platinum's Potgietersrus Mine.

This is where Maripa spends most of her time as a member of Terex Africa Mining's 37-strong on-site field service support team which is permanently based at the operation, servicing its trucks and shovels.

She decided that the stereotyped roles for women in the workplace were definitely not for her, and sought a career where she could constantly challenge herself and be recognised for her achievements in a male-dominated environment.

Maripa is currently completing Terex Africa's four-year apprenticeship programme, comprising two years of practical training and two years of compulsory work experience with the company. In addition, she is studying mechanical engineering part-time with the Tshwane South Further Education and Training College.

Maripa regards both physical and mental strength as vital attributes for a woman to survive in a mining environment, where it is essential that she has both the physical strength to handle the work and at the same time have the mental ability to understand the complex mechanisms on which she works.

Maripa is extremely proud of her achievements so far, and feels that her progress and the obvious enjoyment that she gets out of her work has vindicated what must have seemed to some an unusual choice of profession.

She has already impressed many of her vastly more experienced male colleagues with her practical ability and mechanical aptitude in dealing with on-site activities, and is determined to prove her worth as an earth moving machinery technician.

Terex Africa is doing its best to come up with ways to try and address the critical shortage of technical skills in South Africa through developing and implementing apprenticeship programmes. It is hoped that more women like Maripa will be trained and developed through the programme, therefore increasing the number of women into the field.