

Lilian Kagai Mugalla

**Mining Engineer attachee
Gesagu Gold Mine, Kenya**



1 Please introduce yourself and tell us what 'I am mining and I belong' in mining means to you

I am a final-year mining engineering student with a strong passion for mining and environmental issues. The theme for this year's International Day of Women in Mining, "I Am Mining and I Belong," deeply resonates with me, as it inspires me to own my place in the mining sector and contribute positively to the industry's growth and sustainability.

2 What was happening and what were you thinking when you took the winning photo? Why was it the one you submitted?

During the IDWIM online event, I was set up with a laptop and Wi-Fi at home, eagerly awaiting the announcement of the top three winners. The win came as a surprise because winning in an international competition is no small feat. When I was announced as the second-place winner, I was so excited that I didn't even know what to say. In that moment, the only thing on my mind was how grateful I was for the achievement.

The reason I chose that particular photo for the competition was to depict the artisanal mining environment, as I had been attached there. Contributing to the betterment of the artisanal mining environment has always been a deep-seated desire of mine. In the photo, you can see me using a torch instead of a headlamp, which reflects the reality of artisanal gold mines where miners often have to improvise due to a lack of exposure to technology and insufficient financial resources to access better mining technologies.

3 You won an online course from Edumine. Which one did you choose and why? How is/was the process of studying?

I chose the 'ESG Across the Mining Value Chain' course because it perfectly aligns with my passion for sustainable mining practices. As a mining engineering enthusiast, I believe that understanding and implementing ESG principles is crucial for the future of the mining industry. This course provides an opportunity to explore how mining operations can be conducted responsibly, ensuring that environmental impacts are minimized, social responsibilities are upheld, and governance standards are met throughout the entire value chain. By focusing on ESG, I can contribute to creating a more sustainable and ethical mining industry, which is vital not only for the environment but also for the communities involved and the industry's long-term success.

So far, the experience has been positive. I have already registered for the course, but I decided to take a break to focus on completing my end-of-semester university exams. I plan to finish the course by September 10th.

4 In your own words, how does a campaign like the International Day of Women in Mining enrich the sector?

The IDWIM photo campaign enriches the mining sector by providing women in mining with a platform to showcase their contributions to the industry. It also plays a vital role in promoting gender equality within the sector.

5 What is your next or ultimate career goal? What would you love to do one day?

My next career goal is to secure a role where I can apply my mining engineering expertise to develop innovative and sustainable solutions that integrate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into mining practices. Ultimately, I aspire to lead a team or organisation focused on advancing responsible mining, where ESG considerations are at the forefront of decision-making. I would love to one day be at the forefront of pioneering projects that drive industry growth while ensuring environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and sound governance, creating a positive impact on both the industry and the communities it serves.