

All women need is belief in themselves

Setsoto Hlohlomi is a hardworking and dedicated Mosotho female raised by a single mother Maliako Hlohlomi.

She ventured into technology because of her mother who had been her role model from a very young age.

"She used to help me with my physics assignments. Regardless of how hard I found the assignments, she never gave up on me.

Setsoto says her mother used to recount about when she was pursuing her certificate in Electrical installations where there were only two females in the class then.

"The males used to mock us and make snide remarks making us feel belittled and uncomfortable about how we would not survive. Nevertheless, I decided to venture into the Engineering and Technology field despite this as it fascinated me," my mother would recount.

Setsoto attended St James Primary, went to St James Secondary and attended Tsakholo High School and made it to the National Top 4 Students in the class of 2009.

"I went to the National University of Lesotho to obtain my Bachelor's degree in Engineering in Computer Systems and Networks where I was the only female, receiving all awards for the course at graduation in 2015 for being the best student. I am currently a Microsoft Certified Professional in Installing and Configuring Windows Server 2012," she says.

She joined Vodacom as an intern and progressed to become a System Administrator before her current role Specialist: IT operations.

"I deal largely with physical and virtual servers, I support Windows Server and Windows Client operating systems

and support applications such as Active Directory, DNS, DHCP, File and Print Services, VMWare and other systems. I am also a java and website developer as well," she says.

To motivate other women with ambition and unmet dreams, Setsoto advises them to ready themselves to put manicures and heels aside every now and then to concentrate on fulfilling their dreams.

"I believe that society has evolved to accept women into such roles. I have no doubt about that and males I interact with don't doubt or criticize my work. It is in fact very fun to work with them," Setsoto says.

But she says the only challenge remaining is the physical ability required to perform some duties; some fields of engineering and technology becoming more physically demanding than others.

One other challenge for her is the late nights, working or learning and trying to keep up with the current technologies or solutions to operational problems and the extra effort having to be put in to survive which may come at a cost to your social life and sometimes even your family.

"But they can all be overcome through determination and hard work and trying to find a balance between your professional and personal life," she says.

Setsoto's dream is to see more females in the field of technology; to have the male female gap reduced because the ladies are not afraid to venture into such a field only if it is their dream as well but are not sure if they will cope and to mentor a few females who would like to be a part of this field.

Her advice to women is: "There is no force equal to a woman determined to rise" as said by W.E.B Du Bois

"Work as hard as you can to achieve the



Setsoto Hlohlomi

things you want to. Do not be intimidated by the challenges; do not let them derail you from your dream. Challenges are meant to build a stronger person, therefore if you want to pursue a career in Technology or Engineering, go for it.

Setsoto was featured in 2015 in a UNDP newspaper insert, one of the panelists at A Girl talk organized by Vodacom earlier this year (where a lot of females approached her, asking how she does it saying that they would love to be a part of a field like hers

but are afraid if they will cope) and made it to the Finite Magazine.

"It's a woman's world too article basically to talk about my story, choice of career and how I cope as the field of Engineering and Technology as a male dominated field, to reach out and encourage females who would like to venture into it but may be afraid due to the scarcity of females in the field, to let them know they can do it and provide insight on what they can expect," she explained the magazine's thrust.



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Who is eligible?