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## **Women's Month: UCT alumnus exposes young female sea cadets to STEM careers**



Masego Mosupye is exposing young female sea cadets to STEM careers. Photo: Supplied

University of Cape Town (UCT) alumnus Masego Mosupye is on a mission to expose young female sea cadets to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). She is a chemical engineer, former naval officer and now an ARMSCOR Dockyard employee.

Globally, women with qualifications in STEM are under-represented, and South Africa is no different, with less than 13% of women choosing to study in STEM disciplines while men account for up to 28%, according to the 2021 Global Gender Report.

Various organisations have taken upon the task of educating young girls about STEM careers in an attempt to increase the numbers, and amongst these is the South African Women in Engineering (SA WomEng), a non-profit organisation.

SA WomEng is a multi-award winning social enterprise, developing high-skilled girls and women for the engineering and technology industries. Their core philosophy is the promotion of STEM, focusing on engineering and technology from primary school to industry. Their projects include the #1MillionGirlsInSTEM campaign, a global campaign initiated in March 2017 to reach one million girls (aged 13–18) through STEM education and awareness initiatives.

“We need to break the bias on why women don’t choose careers in STEM and why most women end up quitting in the industry,” said Mosupye, SA WomEng #1MillionGirlsInSTEM ambassador. She is using established new networks and relationships to grow the campaign through initiatives in her community continuously.

She added: “I aim to expose young girls to how it is for women in STEM careers in order to motivate them to become engineers, scientists, chemists, etc, to increase the numbers.”

Mosupye has partnered up with Historina Hlanze, an electrical engineer, former naval officer and now Romano Solar employee, to present various careers in STEM to 45 female sea cadets at TS Woltemade, a sea cadet base. The girls were in Grades 6-12 and between the ages of 12-18. The South African Sea Cadets is a non-profit organisation dedicated to training and preparing school-going boys and girls for a career in the maritime industry.

Mosupye and Hlanze endeavour to continue with these educational presentations until a larger audience is reached and the knowledge is transferred such that the young girls receiving this education on STEM careers use it to join and become ambassadors for STEM careers in the future.

***ENDS***

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

**Ridovhona Mbulaheni**

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer  
Communication and Marketing Department  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch  
Tel: (021) 650 2333  
Cell: (064) 905 3807  
Email: [ridovhona.mbulaheni@uct.ac.za](mailto:ridovhona.mbulaheni@uct.ac.za)  
Website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)