

MINING

REVIEW AFRICA



A COMMITMENT TO AFRICAN EXCELLENCE

P4



IN THE SPOTLIGHT P6

“You can only move forward if you take your team along. You need to invest time and have humility to carry out your plan.”

Bernard Kaninda, FLS

REGIONAL ROUND-UP P10

Top projects in East Africa



Knight Piésold

Commitment to African Excellence

From humble beginnings in South Africa in 1921, today **Knight Piésold** is a leading consulting firm to mining companies globally with a presence in 28 countries. Despite a strong international presence, **VISHAL HARIPERSAD**, Managing Director of Knight Piésold Southern Africa, tells **GERARD PETER** that Knight Piésold is firstly an African company committed to leaving a lasting legacy on the continent.

Backed by 103 years of experience, Knight Piésold provides specialised services to mining clients at all stages of project development, from early exploration through project development and on to construction, operations and closure. Its engineers and geoscientists specialise in tailings and waste management, water management and water balance, embankment design and monitoring, dam break analysis, pipeline and pump stations, heap leach pad, mine closure, due diligence, external audits, road, rail and infrastructure design as well as renewable energy integration. The company has offices in the Americas, Europe, Australia and Africa.

Haripersad explains: "Wherever we are, we are proud of our African roots. It is in our DNA. Within Africa, we've grown into Namibia, Zambia, Botswana, DRC, Eswatini, Madagascar, Mauritius, Lesotho, Ghana and South Africa. We believe that in these countries where we operate, we are as good, if not better, than anyone else in the world. We

deliver quality solutions in whatever we do in Africa."

One notable story in Africa is Knight Piésold's DRC operations. In 2015, Haripersad established an office in Lubumbashi. Today, the company employs 15 staff comprising engineers, scientists and technicians, all of whom are Congolese. The company has worked with leading mining companies in the country, including Glencore, MMG and Ivanhoe. "We have employed competent staff and are currently working in the mining and infrastructure sectors. It is a thriving business, and we are bullish about prospects in the country. However, it is not just about securing business. We want to leave a legacy that improves the quality of life of people living in the DRC," states Haripersad.

To achieve this vision, Knight Piésold has initiated several community engagement programmes in social economy and social security, fostering sustainable development.

DRC General Manager, Denis Ngoy elaborates, "These initiatives focus on education; assistance with

scholarships to ISTM terminal nurses in gerontology, agriculture by supporting local cooperatives like COPAGEL with agricultural equipment, healthcare and social security; assistance of orphanages in Lubumbashi, youth; assistance in launching a computer centre in Kolwezi and ensuring local communities directly benefit from the company's operations. This holistic approach demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility, aligning our actions with our vision of ubuntu or bumuntu (Swahili)."

Leaving an indelible mark on African mining

Operating in different parts of Africa means dealing with diverse cultures and different ways of doing business – each country is unique. However, Haripersad states there is a common thread leading to the company's success. "We believe in the philosophy of Ubuntu, which means that we are all interconnected. For example, there are different cultures in South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, the DRC and Botswana, and each is fiercely

proud of it. But what unites us is that we are all striving towards excellence. Also, technical excellence is the same in every country. What unites us is that everybody aspires to produce this African engineering excellence we talk about which is our common bond.”

Saumil Parmar, Country Manager of Botswana, adds, “Each country brings a unique perspective. In Botswana, for example, we have been following the national campaign around mindset change known in Setswana as *A re Chencheng*, which calls for a collective shift in attitudes and perspectives of people in the culture to drive a high-performance culture. This vision aligns with ours in creating and fostering a high-performance culture that solves our biggest engineering challenges of the day.”

Another key factor that Knight Piésold goes to great lengths to uphold is compliance. Haripersad explains: “Our vision is not just to be compliant with local laws but to embrace them and understand the principle behind them and the intentions and ensure that whatever we do, we’re not doing it just trying to make a quick buck.

“You don’t leave a legacy by flying in and flying out. You do so by developing local capability and competency and building a culture of local excellence that we strive for. We want to be involved in projects that can make a difference, which drives our vision of African Excellence.”

Mevashnee Naidoo, Human Resources Director, points out that the company’s staff complement comprises different levels of experience – graduates, specialised skilled, technical experts and managers – across Southern Africa. “Given our strong focus on inter-office collaboration, our people work across geographic locations to produce high-calibre projects for our clients. We make a deliberate effort to hire and retain our staff through various talent management programmes, as our people drive our success,” she states.

Apart from its operations, Knight Piésold also invests heavily in socio-economic development in the countries it operates in. A case in point: KP has contributed to the most social investment of any consultant company in the DRC, including building schools and clinics.



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VISHAL HARIPERSAD



“We plough back a significant chunk of what we make locally into developing and uplifting the quality of lives of the people we work with, not just our clients. That’s what I’m most proud of, and that’s a real indicator of the philosophies we believe in and proving it is not just using words. These initiatives are actually changing people’s lives and will inspire generations to come,” states Haripersad.

For example, the company is actively involved in community upliftment and infrastructure in Namibia. This includes hosting a groundwater and geology workshop in conjunction with Osino Resources for primary school learners in the country. The company is also involved in the development of Namibia’s new international cricket stadium, both of which reinforce Knight Piésold’s commitment to bettering the lives of people in the countries it operates.

Looking ahead, Haripersad sees plenty of potential in the African mining

sector, and the company is currently exploring expansion opportunities in different regions on the continent.

“Across the continent, we have identified opportunities in water security and supply. We are experts in large-diameter and cross-border pipelines and creating road and rail networks. That said, I don’t believe in spreading ourselves too thinly. I think that when you commit to something, then you need to do so wholeheartedly. We are building on our legacy to uplift the countries we operate in while growing our business.”

Knight Piésold has a proud heritage, and Haripersad is keen to build on this legacy. “We are creating new stories in the countries in which we operate. We are committed to developing the communities, the clients, the opportunities and the staff wherever we work to leave a meaningful legacy,” he concludes. **MRA**



↑ The company is involved in several water projects across the continent