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REVIEW AFRICA

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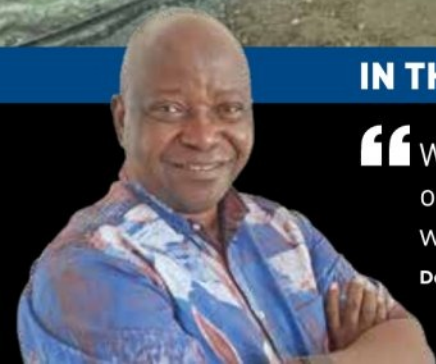
“We believe our growth and wealth aren't ours to keep; it's supposed to be shared with our community.”

Denis Ngoy, General Manager, Knight Plésold DRC



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Not only is Knight Piésold DRC helping to optimise the country's mining operations but it places great emphasis on promoting socio-economic development in the country



# Knight Piésold

## Ensuring African excellence in the DRC

Backed by more than a century's experience in the African mining sector, **Knight Piésold Southern Africa (KPSA)** continues to grow its footprint in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Since it first entered the country in 2008, it has not only ensured sustainable mining, but it is also creating opportunities for local employment. Knight Piésold DRC's General Manager, **DENIS NGOY** explains to **GERARD PETER** how this holistic approach is driving African Excellence in key mining regions.

**K**night Piésold provides specialised services to mining clients at all stages of project development from early exploration, through project development and to construction, operations and closure. Its engineers and geoscientists specialise in environmental management; tailings and waste management; water management and water balance; embankment design and monitoring; dam break analysis; pipeline and pump stations; heap leach pads; mine closure; due diligence; external audits; as well as renewable energy integration.

In 2019, Knight Piésold established its branch in Lubumbashi and, since then, its operations have grown considerably. "We have a team of 15 employees comprising of Congolese staff, who have

played a pivotal role in our success in the DRC. We continue to grow year on year and today, we are among the leading mining consultancy companies in the country," Ngoy explains.

Knight Piésold DRC prioritises building strong and mutually beneficial relationships with its clients. The company strives to be a trusted partner and aims to deliver the highest standards of service and expertise. Its commitment to excellence, coupled with its client-centric approach, has been the foundation of its success in the DRC.

When it comes to mining in the DRC, Knight Piésold DRC is focused on water and tailings management and has the technical capabilities in hydrogeology, environmental science and geotechnical services. "We are a local entity with global experience, and this is why we

can offer expert services to our clients in the DRC," Ngoy adds.

Knight Piésold is currently involved in several mining projects in the DRC, this includes various stages of operation including start-up, life-of-mine, expansion and closure.

### Paying it forward

Ngoy states that while the rest of the world sees DRC as a big risk, Knight Piésold Southern Africa views the country as one that holds plenty of opportunity.

"As a company, we aim to change this narrative, not only through our work ethic but also by developing local talent. We believe our growth and wealth aren't ours to keep; it's supposed to be shared with our community."

He emphasises that establishing a company in the DRC is a testament to

the importance of having a presence in the country. "Many companies cannot do what we are doing but we have the capabilities to work on big mining projects thanks to collaboration and assistance from our Southern African operations. Our experience is not only limited to the mining sector but we are also involved in power generation and infrastructure projects in the DRC."

Another key focus for Knight Piésold DRC is technological innovations to optimise mining operations. Ngoy elaborates, "Our Engineers of Record advise on technologies that can ensure efficiency in their companies. There are many innovations we can advise on but what is most important is that we offer the right technology to our clients."

While KPSA continues to grow its operations in the DRC, Ngoy adds that its presence serves a bigger purpose — that of creating socio-economic development in the country.

It is for this reason that the company invests heavily in skills development. "Our focus is on the future generation and contributing to development and building the country to be the best it can be."

The company takes a three-phased approach to developing a qualified local skills force. Firstly, it hires Congolese nationals, ensuring a local workforce. Secondly, all candidates receive on-site or practical training opportunities. Thirdly, and most importantly, there is a strong focus on knowledge sharing and training opportunities where KP Africa group specialists are

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**DENIS NGOY**

available to train and mentor Congolese engineers and scientists as part of our one-team approach. This takes place through their KPSA skills transfer programme and other Learning and Development platforms.

In Kolwezi, it assisted the community by providing computers to schools and this contributed to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning.

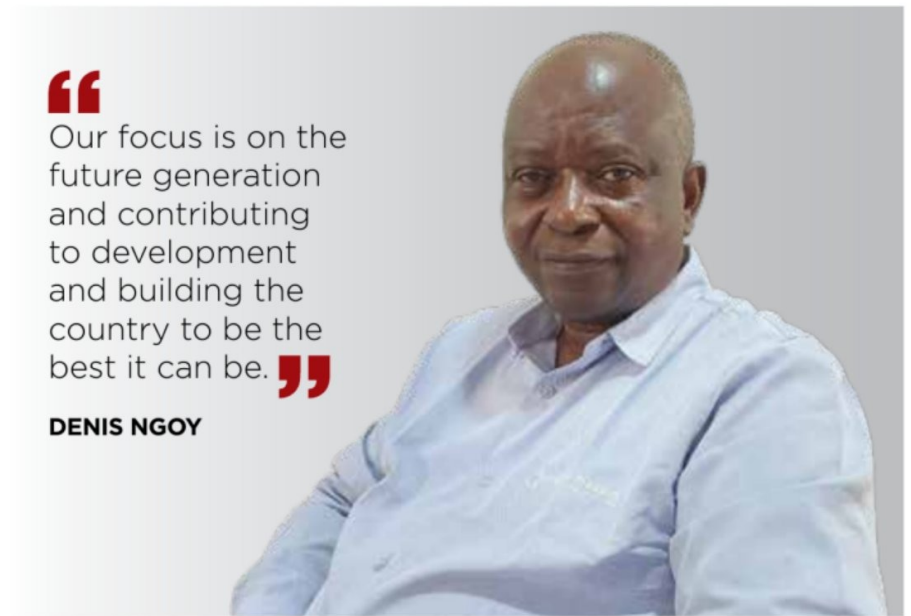
Taking this a step further, KPSA aims to continue contributing to STEM initiatives in schools and universities as a way to encourage scholars and students to pursue civil engineering and environmental science qualifications, thereby continuing to build a talent pipeline in-country. "Furthermore, the

need for geologists, hydrologists, pipe technologists in our company plays a key role in our multidisciplinary investigations," adds Ngoy.

In addition, the company's contribution to the DRC goes beyond its operations. For example, the company has sponsored nursing staff to look after the aged in Kolwezi. "In addition, we have placed a great emphasis on agriculture and we help a cooperative in the country to develop maize, bean and soya beans for growing. We are also assisting them to learn agriculture best practice to grow these crops, something that is important in a country that relies heavily on imports," Ngoy adds.

Knight Piésold DRC has also made an indelible mark in the local DRC community through its socio-economic programmes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was the only company that opened its doors to give free sanitisers to the community in Lubumbashi and offered assistance to the public and schools.

"At Knight Piésold DRC, we firmly believe in African Excellence. To each of us it means something unique, but it stems from the principle of *ubuntu*. In the DRC we say *bumuntu* — meaning we work in solidarity; I am because you are. KPSA isn't a company, our employees are not just working here, it is a culture. We do things differently here, we are of the people, by the people and for the people," Ngoy concludes. **MRA**



↑ The company is a leading expert in water management in the country