



*Philicity Bennet at work at a client's site (Photo Credit: WAGES)*

## **Women Make Great Strides in Male-dominated Trades in Ghana**

**(By: Francis Koomson Nketsiah-August 2021)**

### **Background**

Philicity Bennet graduated with a High National Diploma (HND) in Marketing from the Koforidua Technical University, Ghana in 2019. Even though she studied marketing, she was not sure whether she would like to pursue marketing as a career path. While in the process of deciding her career path, she received information about the WAGES master craft training from a friend. After assessing and reflecting on it for some days, she decided to enroll in the electricals module. Philicity, a native of Aboso, a WAGES Project beneficiary community in the Prestea-Huni Valley Municipality, is undaunted by the stereotypes that often characterizes females in non-traditional trades. Philicity comes from a family of seven; including 4 siblings. She lives with her parents and still depends on them for many things even after completing her tertiary education.

## The WAGES Approach

The West Africa Governance and Economic Sustainability in Extractive Areas (WAGES) Project training activity in non-traditional trades was rolled out in December, 2020 for women and youth from the Prestea-Huni Valley Municipality and Wassa East District. **Philicity Bennet** is one of 22 female youth who enrolled in the mastercraft training activity, traditionally reserved for males in Ghana. Thirty three men are also enrolled in the program undertaking modules such as plumbing, tiling, masonry among others.

## Philicity's Initial Fears

When she first started the training, she kept on asking herself several questions such as what would her colleagues think about her? Would they respect her? Will she still belong?

But with time, some of these fears were cleared. This was a result of the support she received from her trainer and other colleagues. According to her, they were wonderful, collaborative and always ready to lend a helping hand to her.

## Plans for the Future

In the future, Philicity wants to make a career shift from a background in marketing to becoming an electrical engineer. She plans to explore about more training opportunities in the electricals after this training to help her achieve her dream of becoming an electrical engineer. As part of her plan to earn a living from the training and also continue her training, Philicity has already commenced discussions with companies around the Tarkwa Municipality, including the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and some of the mining companies to see how she can be employed upon completion of her training. **'I will like to work with the ECG to show to women in my community that us too can also learn electricals and become engineers'.** She added.

Philicity is appreciative of the support she is receiving from her trainer, trainee colleagues and the WAGES Project team. **'In the beginning it wasn't easy, but with time and encouragement from my master, the WUSC staff and interns, I was able to do it'.** Philicity noted.

Female friends have started asking her about how she is able to learn electrical work because many thought it was not possible for females to learn electrical work; a field dominated by males in Ghana.

The WAGES project aims to break the vicious circle in which local communities, especially women and youth, are excluded from the benefits of mining investments. Through WAGES, **World University Service of Canada (WUSC)** and the **Center for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI)**, work in three regions of Burkina Faso, Ghana and Guinea impacted by extractive industries. The project works to empower local communities, and specifically integrate women and youth, to participate fully in local governance, economic opportunities and the sustainable development of these areas. The project collaborates with local and national governments, select mining companies, as well as small and medium-sized businesses and civil society organizations to attain those objectives. Global Affairs Canada funds the implementation of WAGES from 2016 until 2022. For more information on the project follow this link: <https://resources.wusc.ca/project/wages>

**WAGES**

WEST AFRICA GOVERNANCE AND  
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