



**THE GLOBAL GEOGRAPHIES OF MINING AND LOCAL  
EXPECTATIONS: THE CASE STUDY OF A NEW COAL MINE  
PROJECT IN MAKHADOLIMPOPO**

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Science, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science (Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies).

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## DECLARATION

I, Desire Marandela Muzhambi, declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is submitted in fulfilment for the degree of Master of Science at the University of the Witwatersrand. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree at any other institution.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Desire Marandela Muzhambi", written over a horizontal blue line.

Desire Marandela Muzhambi

February 2021

## **ABSTRACT**

Globalization and spatial networks have changed the spatial planning of the world wherein global geographies of the mining, farming, and agriculture sectors have changed. Previous researches have shown that the mining industry in South Africa has attracted foreign companies that have connected South Africa to the rest of the world. The mining industry has positive and negative impacts, but the negative impacts are often localized. This study examines the globalized geographies of capital in the mining industry and the local expectations of change, it makes use of the new coal mine in Makhado as a case study. It considers the ways in which global mining interests and geographies land in place including how these come to be translated and mediated. It does this by exploring the way it lands in place in terms of promises, the expectations and consequences that are immediate and within a longer-term horizon.

Local communities that are affected by mining continues to be cut off from access to the benefits of global economies. Through the network analysis, interviews, and mapping amongst other research methods, this research argues that mining has connected the world, but impacts are localized. Moreover, the local people access those networks through gatekeeping systems in their communities. It is because of the mining industry that the local is implicated in the global. We cannot understand a place like Makhado and how underdevelopment has affected the community without understanding how it is the community is situated into the broader networks.

On the other hand, the majority of people are excited about the possible developments but are not aware of the environmental, health, social and cultural impacts that will be imposed on their community and surrounding communities by the mine. The research, therefore, shows that people are continuously being cut-off, and this is mainly because of past injustices of apartheid, and the traditional council legislation that enforces the gatekeeping system. Additionally, there is miscommunication between the mining company, the traditional council, and the local hosting community, which had led to contestations and misinformation around the mining project and mining industry, respectively.

Keyword: scale, power, networks, space, and place, promise of infrastructure, mining communities

## DEDICATION

IN MEMORY OF

Oritonda “baby Roro” Matidza

March 2018- June 2018

Ipfani “Ipfi” Rambau

May 1994- July 2020

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*To God be the Glory forever and ever*

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AMD	Acid Mine Drainage
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BBEE	Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment
BBSE	Broad Base Socio-economic Empowerment
CoAL	Coal of Africa Limited
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DEFF	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
DME	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy
DMR	Department of Mineral Resources
HDSA	Historically Disadvantaged South African
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LED	Local Economic Development
MC Mining	Metallurgical Coal Mining Limited
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
MPRDA	Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
SLP	Social Labour Plan
SMMEs	Small Medium and Micro Enterprise

## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Introduction

Mining is an important economic sector in South Africa, it is the largest employer. It is one of the industries that place South Africa's economy the strongest in Africa. This made the country one of the key players in the global economy. Through globalization and networks, the mining industry allows foreign companies to invest in South Africa which links the country to other countries worldwide. Consequently, the mining industry in South Africa is adapting to change the local, national, and global scale. Globalization has led to communities putting pressure on the government and mining organizations to take part in social responsibility so that they can benefit from mine projects in their communities.

Over the years the use of coal all over the world has raised due to electric power production and this has been the case for South Africa (Zhuang *et al.*, 2016). Coal mining is dirty and negatively affects host communities, but to minimize this, the government has implemented different legislations. These legislations are mainly focused on making sure that the companies have minimal impacts on the environment and the health of the people. Additionally, they require the local people to benefit from the mines in their mineral-rich land through strategies such as community development, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Social Labour Plan (SLP). Moreover, to empower black South Africans that were initially affected by apartheid, black-owned industrialist businesses are to benefit from mines owned by foreign countries. On the other hand, mining companies do not adhere to these legislations coupled with a lack of transparency between the mine companies, the local traditional authorities, and the community. Like in many countries this usually leads to contestations locally, nationally, and globally wherein the fruits of many mine projects are eaten by the companies and traditional authorities.

Mining companies often promise development and better infrastructure to the communities, but often do not keep the end of their promise. Although mining is a globalised industry, the impacts are localised. This show how the discourses of scale and power take place in the mining industry. Local communities are cut off resources and information, they usually access these through the government and traditional authorities. The government and traditional authorities act as gatekeepers in most mining communities. This can be used as an example to explain why Limpopo is one of the provinces that are rich in minerals but remains as one of the poor provinces made up of rural areas.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Natural resources are a basic part of all human civilization. For many decades mining has been a revenue source all over the world. Mining has changed the composition of South Africa which in the long run has influenced factors such as spatial planning. Consequently, cities in the country are linked to each other (Tamuno & Edoumiekumo, 2012). Space matters for poverty, welfare, and wealth (Massey, 2004a). Mining is both a global and local industry all at once (Ellem, 2015). The influence of global networks of mining has now linked South Africa with different countries including countries out of Africa for profit gain.

The Metallurgical Coal Mining Limited (MC Mining) mining company wants to establish a mine that is situated in a historically impoverished homeland, Venda Mudimeli village in the Makhado area. The company is registered in Australia, conversely, the biggest shareholders are based in China. The coking and thermal coal open-cast mining project has been under development for a couple of years and was granted mining rights in 2015. This area has rail infrastructure and road which will be of advantage to export services to other neighbouring countries.

Although mining contributes to the economy through the infrastructural lens it is associated with social and environmental impacts. Mining is a big deal internationally, we think about it in terms of global, but when it comes down to the local the impacts are sometimes very local. On the other hand, it is only natural for the community to be excited about the positive effects including promises of infrastructure than the harm that will put people, animals, and agriculture in danger. However, farmers, agricultural businessmen, and activists are aware of the negative effects of mining and warn of the massive harm towards the environment, heritage (considering how African people protect their ancestral belongings), biodiversity and the society at large.

While there is a great deal of literature that looks at the end life of mining, there is little literature that looks at the beginning of a mining project because the mining industry in South Africa is at the end of its life-cycle. Limpopo Province is endowed by mineral resources that have placed it in the global economic map, but it is one of the poor provinces in the country. Furthermore, employment relations of mining are marked by geography (Ellem, 2015).

This research is interested in understanding communities' expectations of the mine as well as how the communities understand and prepare themselves for the prospects of mining-led growth, developments, and their fears. However, while the mine and its relationship to the communities experience a localized set of conflicts the mine itself is connected to a massive

political including gatekeepers and global economy which involves investments from all over the world. Global networks touch down in the local place in different ways. There is a relationship between the mining company and the expectations of the mining project and that of the future. However, I am locating this within a particular geography, which is the local and the ways in which the local is connected and disconnected from the global. In the South African context, we have a history of local mining communities being cut off from the global. Therefore, this project will try to understand how the globalized network is experienced at the local level using the themes of globalization and capitalist networks, promises of infrastructure and the gatekeeping system at Makhado in this context.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

#### **Aim**

This project aims to understand and provide an explanation of the link between global networks of capital in the mining industry and local expectations of change in the context of historical and more recent mining activities in Makhado, Limpopo province, South Africa.

#### **Objectives**

- To locate the mining activities in Makhado (old and new) within globalised geographies of capital and how these land in place.
- To understand the local expectations, experiences of development, consequences as well as the response of promises of infrastructure made on the ground in the context of mining activities in the Makhado area.
- To interrogate the ways in which these two spheres (i.e. global networks of mining capital and local expectations of change) are mediated through situated gatekeepers.

### **1.4 Overview of the Dissertation**

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The chapters are a built-up of the concluding chapters. The chapters are divided into the following:

#### Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the background of the global geographies of the mining industry as well as the problems that are imposed by the interconnections of the mining industry. The mining industry has positive and negative impacts, but these impacts are often localised. In this

chapter, I give a concise description of issues that this research seeks to address the gap in knowledge which is that the globalised geographies of capital in the mining industry touch down to the local but the local is often excluded in decision making. Moreover, through community development local people expect their communities to develop through mine-led growth. It is in this chapter that aim and objectives are stated.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter outlines the literature that relates to the global geographies of mining and expectations. Literature is divided into three sections. The first section on literature focuses on how the mining industry has helped integrate local and national economies in the global economy. It is for this reason that the local is often implicated into global connections. The second section argues that the impact of the mining sector is localised but these impacts on the community are not often taken into consideration. It focuses on the impacts of mining and discusses how mining has localised impacts in different parts of the globe. It is in this chapter that I unpack the issues around the promises of infrastructure.

To argue how the impacts of mining touch down to the local, the third section draws on the broader theories of place and space. This is to show that place, particularly local place is produced not only through the characters of place but as Doreen Massey say it is produced rather through the relationship between the local and elsewhere. It is in this chapter that I discuss the role of gatekeepers, power and governance. Therefore, what I am essentially arguing is that we cannot understand a place like Makhado and the ways in which underdevelopment has affected the community without understanding how it is the community is situated into the broader networks.

What this chapter seeks to do is to bring literature on mining, which speaks to how mining companies promise local people better infrastructure but they do not follow through as well as how mining impacts affect local communities. I am bringing a broader literature on theories of space and place. This was drawn from the work of Doreen Massey and Henri Lefebvre to show that place is a product of global networks. The ultimate argument of the literature review sets out the context of the research study. This chapter situates the literature around mining and impacts on local communities and argues that the local is often produced through its relationship to the global. The way in which the mining village in Makhado is produced is in its relationship to other places and mining is implicated in there.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter focuses on the description of data, methods of data collection and research design that were used to achieve the objectives of this research. It is in this chapter where I introduce the study area in a more detailed way. I do this through mapping, observations and giving my knowledge and reflections of the research area as I grew up visiting the Mudimeli village in which the Makhado mine is situated. The chapter explains the methods that were used in this research study to show the global geographies that exist within the community, how the impacts of mining are often localised and the interface that exists between gatekeepers and the global networks. Additionally, the chapter outlines the limitations of data collection. This chapter finally explains the stages taken to acquire ethical clearance from the university as well as consent from the participants.

### Chapters 4, 5 and 6: Results, analysis, and discussion

These chapters outline the analysis and discuss the fieldwork result that was obtained using the methods explained in chapter three. Unlike any other dissertation, this dissertation divides the results into three chapters, however, all these chapters (the global geographies of mining in Makhado, the citizens and subjects of mine developed and the response of promises made on the ground, and the role of gatekeepers and interface with global networks and how they understand local expectation) are related to each other. The discussions in these chapters are also linked to the literature reviewed in chapter two.

Chapter four outlines the global networks of mining and locates the Makhado mine within the broader networks of capital. Chapter five locates the context of the mining community and how it has experienced various promises of development. It shows how the community has moved through waves of promised development from the apartheid and recently the promises that are often linked to the changes of landscape and mineral resources. On the other hand, this community continues being cut off from access to these globalised networks argued in chapter four. Chapter six finally brings together the results and analysis section by looking into more detail of how the local elites and the global capital intersect to produce a gatekeeping system. This is to understand how power and governance are exercised in mining communities.

### Chapter 7: General discussion and conclusion

This chapter describes and interprets the significance of the findings of the research and provides insights and understandings of the problem stated in chapter one taking into consideration the aim and objectives of this research study. Therefore, to understand what I



have argued in the previous chapters, this chapter concludes the research findings by giving a synthesis of the argument and gives recommendations. It does this by looking at the ways in which the local expectations are often produced through failed promises of development and the role of gatekeepers.

## **CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In the previous section, I have outlined the structure of the dissertation. This chapter situates the literature of this research and sets the context of the study. The core argument of this project is to understand the networks between countries through the influence of the mining industry and how those networks shape the local space along with the communities' perceptions and expectations. It explores the global mining interest in terms of promises, expectations, and consequences thereafter.

The literature looks at three themes that will help in understanding the research. The first theme reviews the relationship between mining and global economies in which I will discuss how mining in South Africa is globalized, the networks that exist in the mining capital and the implications of those networks. The second theme reviews the relationship between mining and socio-economic impacts including the discussion of mining policies in South Africa and the promise of infrastructure promised by mining companies. The last theme analyses the 'global sense of place' and the production of space focusing more on the work of Doreen Massey and Henri Lefebvre including the role that traditional authorities play in mining communities. The literature review analyses key ideas and debates around the themes associated with the study to help understand the project.

## 2.2 Mining and Global Economies

The mining industry is directly related to the economic difficulties in the global economy. Moreover, the industry has aided in integrating the local and national economies into the global economy. The economy of South Africa is rapidly globalizing (Carmody, 2002). Gillian Hardt defines globalization as the spatial inter-connection with capitalist restructuring and the exchange of ideas in which knowledge is produced (Oberhauser, 2005). Adding to this, the influence of globalization on the country is now linked to different countries including countries out from other continents, primarily for profit gain. Although globalization is a broad subject different factor such as technology and information are the umbrella ideas globalization or global geographies. Conversely, the mining industry is different from the information and manufacturing industries because of the processes of production and discourses of globalization (Ellem, 2015). According to Woo and Jun (2020), globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon. This research discusses mining and global economies by looking at the dimension of economic globalization, social globalization, the political globalization. This section locates mining activities within globalised geographies and how those activities land in place.

Globalization allows the processes that create networks among different actors through different flows erode national boundaries and increase mutual dependence among countries (Woo and Jun, 2020). According to Dietz (2021), capital investments in mining grew at an exceptional pace, especially in the global south. Mining is an important industry in the economy of many countries, and this is because it is a major foreign exchange earner in economies (Tamuno & Edoumiekumo, 2012; Olowu et al., 2017). Due to this, mining is the reason remote communities have adequate infrastructures such as schools, roads, and water, which contribute to the economic development of the community and in turn of the country (Ibbih and Gaiya, 2013). This can be clarified through the idea that when one generates wealth that wealth is used to better off their family which is why mining projects can be said to be responsible for development.

According to Manuel Castells, globalization is the reason why as the world we are seen moving from the industrial era to the technological era wherein he gives social media as evidence of developments within globalization. Globalization has led the world to be connected and Castell gives this association a theory known as the network society. He defines this theory as “a society whose social structure is made up of networks powered by micro-electronics-based

information and communications technologies" (Castells, 2004:3). Due to globalization, we can create economic, social, and political relationships. These relationships are not bounded by the spatial location of people. However, these relationships and networks are constitutive of social power.

The world through the work Hardt and Negri from Lemke (2002) is seen as a political subject that regulates global exchanges through creating new social life through forms of human interactions. The theory of power can no longer exist in the reality of multiple and interconnected networks that support the politics of social space in the world of virtual communication (Lemke, 2002). On the other hand, Manuel Castells does not account that the mining industry and manufacturing of objects are still growing industries. Furthermore, this shift has consequences to the global south. This is because according to Robinson (2016) technology leads to jobless growth or retrenchment because machines are now used to perform labour in place of manpower.

Foreign countries have invested in other countries; however, South Africa has also invested in other countries such as Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, and Mali (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), 2015). This shows that the local matters, there are key global nodes. This also explains the theory of network society wherein because of globalization, places become nodes in the network due to the technological and economic base. Additionally, using Massey's theory this can be clarified wherein she "suggests that a sense of place is a fluid notion" (Massey, 1994). According to Massey (1991; 1995), the notion of place in the age of globalization is emphasized more on connections, flows, and networks. A place cannot be identified as a distinct coherent associated with a given community.

Most countries in Africa pose significant opportunities but due to the weak macroeconomic framework and people not adhering to legal laws and regulations those countries are hindered in terms of development (Olowu et al., 2017). Moreover, this is generally because of the effects that of mining are adverse which led to economies failing to accelerate growth (Olowu et al., 2017). This is also because most of the investors of the mining projects are from different countries, therefore, they do not necessarily experience the negative impacts of those mining projects. Few examples of this as set out by the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) are Kenmare Moma Mining Limited project in Mozambique wherein the investors are from Germany, Kahama Mining Corporation Limited project wherein the investors are from France and Canada, and Chambishi Metals project in Zambia with South Africa being the investor (Olowu et al., 2017; MIGA Bulletin, 2015).

Mining in Southern Africa dates to the 13th century but this was mostly substantial mining and smelting wherein they would trade to Arabian countries. However, mining in most communities developed "with the beginning of colonialism and imperialism" (Bridge, 2004). The dialogues of neo-liberalization and globalization are described by Hart as the impact model of global on local. Moreover, capitalist restructuring influences the privatization of production and foreign investments. This is the reason why local governments find themselves in a difficult position wherein they assume greater responsibility for providing service and accumulate wealth (Oberhauser, 2005). Therefore, the economic realities of the local are contradictory to the global forces. This may also be an explanation as to why most of the mining companies such as Anglo-American and De-Beers in Southern Africa are owned by foreign countries (Mabin, 1985). Despite policies such as the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), foreign ownership has led to international companies prevailing over the local that bounds opportunities for local investors (Executive Research Associates, 2009; Arya and Bassi, 2011). Social movements are an example of globalization or networks. Flint (2016a) since scales are interconnected and so one event at one scale may implicate another. These movements are known as transnational social movements because people from different scales can be protesting for a common cause usually against the government. To give a practical example Flint uses the case study of the suicide bomb at hotels in Afghanistan. The hotels that might be used to accommodate international were a target against foreigners in the country. As a result, the movements that transpired at the local scale were connected to the global scale.

Over the years, China has become the prime driver of mineral prices and African countries have become key beneficiaries of this development. It has displayed an interest in the mining belt of Southern Africa, involving Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique because these areas are well gifted with copper, gold, and iron amongst other base metal (Executive Research Associates, 2009; Alden, 2011). Although African countries are finally getting what they have longed for many years which is a foreign investment the mining industry has exposed detachments between countries and local communities (Hall, 2011). Of those African countries, Zambia has the most engagement with China and this engagement has become a contentious issue. The geopolitics of China and its involvement in Africa has changed the economic development, nationally and internationally. However, this involvement is beneficial to the government and the privileged. According to Hall (2011), this is because China is unable to meet its annual demand for resources because of the growing population. Concerning this, the Executive Research Associates Report (2009) declares that although China rooted itself as

the key energy player of Africa, Africa plays a critical role in providing the Chinese economy with key minerals.

This theme has shown how Doreen Massey, Hardt and Negri and Manuel Castells have made an important contribution to the discourses of globalization. Although these scholars write from a different perspective about globalization, they are interested in ways in which the local places are connected to the global structure. The key point of this theme conveys that there is a connection between the local and the global, the local is often implicated into the global connections. The significance of this chapter is to help locate the mining activities in Makhado within globalised geographies of capital and how these land in place. Mining is a particular dirty industry that is connected to different geographies. Although Manuel Castells speaks about the globalization of technology and information, he underestimates that industries such as mining are still involved in global economies and do not allow creating opportunities for opening up but also of closing down which creates huge social and environmental impacts.

### **2.3 Mining and Socio-economic Impacts of Mining**

The mining industry has an impact on the local communities. These impacts are often overlooked because mining companies promise communities better infrastructure and development. The local communities that expect development are brought into the bigger global networks because mining is a much-globalized industry. While there are a lot of case studies that deal with mining impacts on society this literature analysis will look at a few case studies.

Minerals such as coal are relatively cheap, and this has posed harsh working conditions to poor African people (Munnik, 2010). According to Munnik (2010), coal mining poses threats to the surroundings and the people; it is disturbing to the environment. Conversely, different academics such as (Ako 2009; Mathathaba, 2011) acknowledge that the presence of mining projects in communities could be beneficial for the community through employment of some local people while increasing the standard of living of those host communities. Therefore, this section begins with the promise of infrastructure and the tension that exist. It further discusses the impacts of mining, followed by the measures that the government has implemented and closes off by discussing the challenges of those measures.

There is a multivalent political trajectory of both the infrastructure and the promises of infrastructure. Infrastructure has long promised modernity, development, progress, and freedom all over the world (Appel, Anand and Gupta, 2018). On the other hand, communities face problems concerning service delivery while government see infrastructural investment as a source of employment, safety and capital accumulation (Appel, Anand and Gupta, 2018). An example of this is mining operations in the global south (Meyersfeld, 2017). Mining laws have developed the mining industry, but these changes have not ended the cycles of poverty in mining communities. According to Meyersfeld (2017), mining operations often brings regression and not progress, which is contrary to the narrative around the promises of infrastructure and growth.

According to Appel, Anand and Gupta (2018), infrastructure is influenced by globalization. The construction of infrastructure is shifting the geography of infrastructure expertise. Infrastructure such as roads and telecommunications systems influenced by globalization are important to produce goods and services. Globalization is an important dimension in the economic circumstances in most countries; however, economic growth also lies towards creating inequalities (Winters, 2014). This is because roads links between cities increase their

combined growth but worsen differences in their manufacturing shares. Additionally, educational infrastructure in conjunction with telecommunications infrastructure stimulates knowledge tradeoffs between cities. Moreover, these not only boost combined growth but also to cause manufacturing shares to converge (Winters, 2014).

The government plays a role in hindering local farmers and local people to use natural resources that could be of profit gain to the mining company. The government does not necessarily care about their people but profit and trade relationships (Mathabatha, 2011). In addition to this, because of land grab and pollution from the mine, there is a reduction in farming production Akabzaa *et al.*, (2008). The mining industry also poses a threat to the beliefs of the indigenous people. This is because people are generally attached to the natural setting of the community and so the interference of that relationship may have an adverse effect on the history and beliefs of people as well as their rights as human beings (Akabzaa *et al.*, 2008; Mathabatha, 2011). Although people might receive compensation (Mathabatha, 2011), Munnik (2010) acknowledges that there is never enough compensation that would make people forget about the land they grew up in that holds their indigenous sentiments. This also accounts for the conflicts that are a result of relocations wherein lives could also be lost.

According to Munnik (2010), one of the challenges of coal mining is Acid Mine Drainage (AMD). This is a hazardous impact on the community and biodiversity. According to Groenewald (2012), there is an ongoing water crisis at Medupi power station wherein the construction has affected the flow of water and the quality of water in the area. Furthermore, the Kusile power station will use water from the Vaal, the same source for many areas in South Africa. Although the Olifants River is closer to the power station the quality of water has dropped due to previous coal mining in the area.

According to China has displayed an interest in the mining belt of Southern Africa, involving Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique because these areas are well gifted with copper, gold and iron amongst other base metal (Executive Research Associates, 2009; Alden, 2011). Although African countries are finally getting what they have longed for many years which is a foreign investment the mining industry has exposed detachments between countries and local communities (Hall, 2011). Of those African countries, Zambia has the most engagement with China and this engagement has become a contentious issue.

Mining is a hazardous livelihood wherein workers are exposed to adverse conditions. Coal mining and coal create air pollution, especially open-cast mining (Arzoo and Satapathy (2016).



According to Munnik 2010, South Africa is one of the worst pollutants wherein Mpumalanga is the worst air pollutant in the world. In contrast, what is sad is that the good coal is exported while the country is left with lesser quality and experiencing the impacts. The health of miners is then put at risk because they are exposed to smoke which leads to lung diseases such as Tuberculosis. When mining operation commences in the communities, the mine brings migrant workers from other parts of the country. This disrupts family life of the migrants as they start their new life in mining communities (Mathabatha, 2011). Moreover, due to the break-up of families and people leaving their partners, there is an acquirement of local sexual partners which in return leads to the spread of HIV/AIDS (Munnik, 2010; Donham and Mofokeng, 2011; Mathabatha, 2011). Furthermore, according to Akabzaa *et al.*, (2008), the influx of new people in the community leads to disruptions of the social structure of the community, which may lead to social jealousy, hatred of “outsiders” and loss of life.

Coal mining often a source of holes around surrounding communities of mining projects and Mpumalanga has been a victim of those holes, these sinkholes are dangerous to both young and old (Munnik, 2010). Transportation of coal leads to potholes yet mining companies do not take responsibility but the government does, this puts a strain on the financials of the government and allows for more corruption through construction tenders. As documented by Munnik (2010) companies fight over access to water and transport lines, these types of conflicts still exist but have shifted more to be between mining companies and host communities.

Meanwhile, through Donham and Mofokeng's (2011) study where they investigate violence in mining fields, he realized that race and ethnic groups are some of the factors that may lead to one being killed at the mines. This is because the miners who were killed were assassinated because they were of a certain ethnic group, Zulu in his study. Therefore, regardless of the BEE legislation in South Africa daily lives in the mine are surrounded by race challenges. Although unions have helped in implementing rights of mineworkers, the Marikana Massacre that took place in 2012 has shown that more than atavist ethnical threatening values, disputes between unionists for miner commitment could also be plausible causes for the killing of more than 30 workers during a strike. Donham and Mofokeng's (2011) work has helped to weave less dichotomous and more nuanced narratives on contemporary South Africa and its way of building democratic representation in a highly unequal capitalist scenario.

Impacts of mining do not only take place during the life cycle of the mine but also after the mine has closed down. This is because of environmental factors such as water pollution (AMD), unstable ground hence people are even forced to leave their indigenous land.

Moreover, due to the networks between countries, the effects of mining can be experienced in one place, but the end products of that mining project experienced far away from the mining project.

Mining puts a strain on the socio-economic structure of the host communities and countries as large, as revealed by James Ferguson in his study in Zambia. When a mine close people who were once employed lose their jobs. There is also a collapse of the business of the subordinate jobs that use to provide goods and services to the mining project (Nyamnjoh, 2001; Akabzaa *et al.*, 2008; Munnik, 2010). At the start of mining people in different mining projects such as Zambia left their homes to go work in the mines and due to the expectation, they thought their lives would change for the better.

As mentioned by Ferguson (1999), “discusses the decline of the Zambian Copperbelt and seeks to contest the myth of teleological modernization”. He refers to teleological modernization as a myth due to the decline of the mining industry in Zambia; this can also be used to analyze Manuel Castells' theory about network society and globalization. The myth guaranteed that the post-war flourishing copper industry would make the country modern, urban, and industrialized (Nyamnjoh, 2001). Both social scientists and Zambians believed this because they were promised that the shift to the industry from agriculture would benefit them. However, after 1994 there was a decline in employment, health and recession and halt of modernization (Ferguson, 1999). Furthermore, the socio-economic impacts of mining can be seen when companies run out of business, they destroy health files and other files to avoid compensating mine workers for what they relatively deserve (Munnik, 2010). The abandonment of mines also can be beneficial to poor people wherein they dig up coal for their use but this digging up of coal heaps has dangerous consequences.

The South African government as a result has implemented various measures to mitigate the socio-economic impacts posed by coal mining. These measures include the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment policy as well as the introduction of mineral policies through the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the Social Labour Plan (SLP). These measures have presented positive outcomes because the ordinary people are now either included in mining projects in their communities, through beneficiation strategies or involved in decision-making to some extent.

The South Africa government since 1994 as an economic empowerment strategy towards the disadvantaged black communities (Arya and Bassi, 2011) implemented the Corporate Social Responsibility strategy. This strategy is mainly a corporate strategy important for the business. According to UNIDO (2021), it is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. According to Mathabatha (2011) and Arya and Bassi (2011) argue that the CSR leads to the development of infrastructure such as roads, schools and health facilities, employment of local people as well as the growing of Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). The SLP is a document of a collection of promises to the employees and impacted communities as legal commitments in which the mining companies submit to the department.

The government of South Africa has readdressed the historical legacy of Apartheid through the Employment Equity Act programme wherein they introduced the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment policy (Fauconnier and Mathur-Helm, 2008; Horwitz, and Jain, 2011). Additionally, the Broad-Based Socio-economic Empowerment (BBSE) as set out by the then Department of Mineral and Energy aims to "promote employment and advance the social and economic welfare of mining communities and the major labour distribution areas" (Fauconnier and Mathur-Helm, 2008:5). According to Capps (2012), mineral policies in South Africa are not only meant to enhance the economy of the country but also include the social goals of the country and the local communities. The government has in place the MPRDA, which effectively nationalized mineral rights and made government the protector to which mining companies would need to apply for mining licenses. Applications for licenses are granted conditionally on meeting policy requirements that emphasize community development through various instruments (Fauconnier and Mathur-Helm, 2008).

Despite these measures, most countries in Africa pose significant opportunities but due to the weak macroeconomic framework and people not adhering to legal laws and regulations those countries are hindered in terms of development (Olowu et al., 2017). Although South African policies have changed how mining companies do business in the community, communities are still faced with negative impacts of mining and it is quite clear that the government cares about economic gains as compared to the well-being of the communities (Mathabatha, 2011).

The black bourgeoisie is occurring at an alarming rate however due to issues such as corruption it is not quite clear whether this emerging class would be able to fulfil the strategies set out for the BEE policy (Fauconnier and Mathur-Helm, 2008; Capps, 2012). In addition, Arya and Bassi (2011) argue that BEE legislation is focused predominantly on the creation of a black

elite while the poor do not necessarily benefit the poor black. An example given by Mathabatha (2011) is that most communities around the operating mines in many parts of Limpopo were once guaranteed economic development as well as sustainable development. However, after several decades people still await for the mine to fulfil the promise of infrastructure. The networks of infrastructure in post-apartheid governments are seen as part of citizenship rights (Lenanski, 2019).

The study that was done by Corruption Watch (2018) show the similarities that involve SLPs, communication, and trust between communities, traditional authorities, and the mining communities of three mining communities in Limpopo influenced by the promises of infrastructure. The study involved the Bokoni Platinum Mine community, Mampa Serole traditional community and the Twickenham mine community. It is evident that mine companies always promise communities better infrastructure and services. However, after mining operations, little development has taken place in these communities. The roads are in bad condition, there are challenges in accessing clean drinking water, there is a lack of skills development and little food production. It raises questions about where and how the monies from royalties have been spent (Corruption Watch, 2018). Additionally, mines do not consult or communicate with them and they believe they are breaching their SLP and other environmental regulations.

With the above, the mining industry plays a very important role in the economy and development of the host community and the country at large. Mining companies often promise infrastructure to local people and so local people become subjects of those promises. The local people often agree to mine operations because of those promises and expectations of development. Moreover, the community believe that foreign exchange gives the country and local communities trading partners as well as employment opportunities, both directly and indirectly. On the other hand, mining activities are coupled with negative impacts that harm the environment and the residents. To minimise those impacts the South African government has introduced laws and strategies wherein the mining companies must give back to their host communities. However, despite those measures, the mining companies do not always adhere to those laws and commitments in form of strategies.

## 2.4 Global Sense of Place

One of how we can start thinking about place is that place is made up of connections. Some of the elements that produce place at the local level also produce (uses) place as peripheral, unequal, and disconnected. Place as the global sense of connections is not only a celebration of connections but also about how some places are disconnected. “Capital is going through a new phase of internationalization, especially in its financial Parts”, (Massey, 1994: 24). Space and place have a distinctive relationship and politics plays a very crucial in that relationship (Massey, 2004). Although identity is important and people generally say that it is influenced by one's bloodline, it is influenced through relations; therefore, space and place are important. This section discusses the ways in which the theme of place and space play out in the mining industry. It starts by discussing power and governance in the form of the gatekeeping system. It ends off by discussing how different authors explain place and space. This is to show that the local place is produced by its relationship with other places and networks that exist in between.

The discourses of globalization in the mining industry show a direct relationship of how spatial relations are important when dealing with employment relations. Although the local is often seen as the victim of global forces, it is within local places that globalization takes place (Massey, 2004a; Massey, 2004b). Therefore, employment relations are necessarily socio-spatial relations (Ellem, 2015). On the other hand, according to Massey (2004a; 2004b) capital essentially conquers and changes space, this makes any distinction between the social and the spatial to be a difficult contradiction.

It is argued that space is not given but it is made (Ellem, 2015), wherein Massey (1999) understands space as interconnections between places and that space is conceived through the power and social relations instead of space being seen as a "pattern of atomized objects". Additionally, the place is a social construct through relations, meetings and intertwining together at a specific position. These places do not have boundaries and are articulated moments in networks and understandings of social relations. This then makes the sense of place extroverted links to the world at large and integrates the global and the local in a positive way (Massey, 1994). While trying to differentiate space and place, Ellem (2015) identifies space and place as the area of capital and locations that were established by labour, respectively, drawing from the work of Beynon and Hudson (1993).

Globalization has opened political spaces for social movements and civil society politics (Haarstad, 2009). Politics that play out in one environment can be universal which shows that there are interconnections and sharing of attributes, locally, nationally and globally. The work of Corruption Watch (2018) looks at mining communities in South Africa and found that these mine communities are faced with the same challenges especially those that have to do with the mining company. The mine companies do not communicate with the communities and this is coupled distrust, division, and violence in the community. According to Cox and Nilsen (2007), most communities who are disadvantaged by the economic globalization mount social movements and seek out other alternatives to their problems.

According to the CIP (2015:1), a gatekeeper is anyone who works to allow, refuse, limit, redirect, support, or hinder initiative in a community. These people understand the cultural and political environment of their communities. This deep connection and understanding are mostly acknowledged by a position to make sure that things get done in the community. According to Ruth-McSwain (2011), gatekeepers are an important person in the communication processes that involve the community. In rural communities, chiefs hold the role of gatekeepers (Tieleman and Uitermark, 2019).

Generally, gatekeepers influence the community due to the power that they hold in their communities. Some gatekeepers share their power and influence with the community, while some choose to keep these to themselves. However, strains or contestations between gatekeepers often leave the community stranded and unleash old feuds (CIP, 2015). According to Tieleman and Uitermark (2019), chiefs have become the informal overseers and points of cooperation between local communities and the state institution. Additionally, chiefs work as local gatekeepers between the state institution and the community (Tieleman and Uitermark, 2019). According to Mamdani (2018), colonial subjects were governed through direct and indirect rule. The direct rule was towards people who were uncivilised through racial discrimination. Moreover, the subjects were controlled using European laws. On the other hand, the indirect rule controlled the subjects tribal leadership and customary laws. The community then becomes the subjects of the infrastructural developments that gatekeepers allow in their communities.

The case study done by Corruption Watch (2018) shows that gatekeepers play an important role in mining communities. These people act as intermediaries between the community and the mining communities. However, these gatekeepers are also the reason behind contestations in mining communities. For example, in the Mampa Serole traditional community, the

community members say the person that the mines have appointed to their board of directors to act on behalf of the communities has only acted to benefit himself and not the community. This has resulted in ongoing protests in the area demanding his resignation. Furthermore, in Twickenham mine community the traditional council is made up of 11 members who are all men; most are pensioners and only three are literate. There is deep distrust and division within this community with the traditional council split into two factions, trading accusations of misappropriation of funds, irregularities in lease payments from mining companies, and solicitation of bribes (Corruption Watch, 2018).

Gatekeepers also play a role and influence social sciences research, and this remains a challenge for many researchers (Singh and Wassenaar, 2016). Research conducted in private areas and traditional areas require permission from management and designated traditional leaders. Moreover, it is crucial to remember that gatekeepers might influence the participant's involvement in the research. However, according to Singh and Wassenaar (2016), obtaining permission from the gatekeepers do not overrule individual autonomy to refuse participation. Gatekeepers play an essential and undervalued role in the generation of good research data and this will be shown in chapter three (methodology).

Henri Lefebvre identifies space as lived, conceived, and perceived, this shows how space has a difficult character and enters social relations at all stages (Gottdiener, 1993). Like Massey, Lefebvre acknowledges that spatial relations are also social relations and cannot be separated from each other and space is socially constructed. According to Merrifield's (2004) work on Lefebvre acknowledges that space consists of physical, mental, and social. To explain this Lefebvre introduces the spatial triad. Wherein space is a spatial practice (perceived space) this is the result of daily activities of people living in that area use space, a representation of space (conceived space) - this is how space is viewed by engineers and planners and space of representation (lived space)-this is the way in which space is experienced and how people symbolizes it (Ballard, 2016).

Furthermore, he explains the difference between social space and abstract space wherein abstract is about knowledge and power whereas the social space is about the lived experiences, the practice (Ballard, 2016). Meanwhile according to Gottdiener (1993), the social space and the abstract space both involve imaginations, perceptions, and practices. Through the discourses of geography, there is a production of knowledge and this can be explained by Foucault's work. This includes how space is ordered, understood, and categorized. This is generally based on how different people use space in relation to where one lives, their status in

the community and how they use space. According to Foucault, society defines knowledge differently and this can be said to be the development of the regimes of the production of knowledge that serve socio-economic purposes (Gottdiener, 1993; Gottdiener, 2000). For example, the government is the umbrella stakeholder of the environment or communities that we live in and engineers, planners and technicians are the drivers that serve the development of the economy.

While addressing the issues of the mining industry it is important to think about the connection between the local impacts and the global networks and one of the ways we can address this is to look at the questions around the scale. Although the scale is politicized it is an important phenomenon in Geography. The debate around scale in geography has shown that the processes of globalization have allowed different stakeholders to make use of networks across different scales to be able to play a role and press claims at larger scales (Haarstad, 2009). The production of scale is also important when analysing the production of space because they are both socially constructed and are used to understand globalization (Marston, 2000).

According to Weller (2007), the relationship between scale and power has gained an interest in geography. Delaney and Leitner (1997) define scale as bounded spaces of different sizes, the local, regional, national, and global, moreover, this form of hierarchy is interconnected (Flint, 2016a). Equally, Flint (2016a: 45) defines power as "the ability to achieve different goals in the face of opposition or alternatives". It is clear in this dissertation that power relations that exist at different scales have significant involvement in this mine project. This is because the mine project shows that the geographic scale at which activities such as economic and political power are constituted is not fixed but can change from time to time (Delaney and Leitner, 1997). According to Lebel et al., (2005), power and authority can be changed at different spatial levels.

The South African government promotes the mining industry as a means for development. According to Cox (1998) scale is central to political discourse with the state being the central institution locus, scale politicizes environmental issues such as mining. This is because the costs and benefits of mining are not equally distributed. Moreover, this unequal distribution can either reinforce or reduce the social and economic inequalities of that mining community. The analysis of scale allows for a clearer explanation of the political and social struggles that take place in different geographical spaces and the process to reorganize sustainability and infrastructural values (Vela-Ameida, Klinjivadi and Kosoy 2017). The political struggles over



mining imply restructuring power between the scale at which a problem is experienced and the scale of power to address the problem (Kurtz, 2003).

Scale is an important discourse of this research. It shows the way in which the global and the local speak to each other. According to Gibson-Graham (2002), there is a denigration that the local scale is small, traditional and powerless, and defined by the global whereas the global is seen as the abstract space, this is a force wherein the movement of commodities and money occur, with the local being its playfield. However, this denigration can be proved to be true, for example in the mining industry according to Mathabatha (2011), the local host communities do not have a voice towards what is going on in their community and the only time they get to voice out their concerns it is through traditional authorities. Additionally, mining companies are not from South Africa and so the host communities are the field of play because they extract resources from the local and take profits with them. The politics of space and power are important for this research because it analyses the global geographies of mining and how this touch down at the local.

This theme has addressed how place can be understood as the location of intersections at any given time and space. Space and place are socially constructed, and people perceive and conceive this differently, how people use space differs. This section rejects the theory that place is built within boundaries that separates one group from the other. The global sense of place is therefore dynamic and open to networks and social networks, linking to the world at large. Gatekeepers are at the core of the relationship between mining companies and the community. They are generally decision-makers in communities and are often responsible for any changes and developments in the community. According to Massey place is produced through the networks of local and global. The mining industry shows how the local can be connected to the global and how the two plays out in each other, while the mining project is situated in Makhado it is connected to other countries.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The main aim of this section was to define, review and evaluate existing literature to help give the theoretical base and to help understand the study. The general theme that this literature review points out is that the mining industry is a globalized industry which is produced through the networks of global capital. Mining companies promise mining communities better infrastructure and development as a way of buying the local community and the traditional authorities into agreeing to mine operations.

The mining industry harms the society (environment, social-wellbeing and the livelihood of the community). However, the impacts of mining are localized. This does not only mean that global networks touch down at local places but what it means is that the impacts are disconnected from the global networks. People on the ground who experience those impacts, whose lives, society and cultures are being disrupted do not have access to go to these global companies to complain or contest about what is happening. What they can do is scream, shout and protest at the local level therefore they are deliberately disconnected from the global networks. According to Vela-Ameida, Klinjivadi and Kosoy (2017), mining conflicts result from uneven scalar relationships that emerge when decision-makings about the mining operations are far from the site, where local communities bear environmental and socio-economic impacts. These conflicts results in concerns are generally about questions around sustainability, development models and the legitimacy of decision-making.

I have used three sorts of themes, namely global geographies of mining, mining and socio-economic impacts, and a global sense of place. Due to the interconnection and networks as shown by different authors of the theory of globalization is quite clear that mining is a globalized industry. Different authors demonstrate how the mining industry influences foreign exchange. This is evident because countries invest in mining projects in other countries, for example, China has invested in the Southern Africa mining belt. Although the mining industry contributes to the economy of the country the negative impacts are worse. This is because mining is a 'dirty' industry and people do not adhere to mining legislation and policies.

Promises that companies make on the ground are often not fulfilled. The companies promise infrastructure and development as a formality than to develop the communities. Although the mining industry has the potential to positively impact the host communities there is also greater potential to harm the social, political, economic, and environmental pillars of the community. This literature review has given different examples of mining communities and what mining

has done to them. It is clear that mining companies do not always adhere to their initial promises, but they take the profits meant for the community to better themselves, their companies and their countries. The promise of infrastructure seems to be the reason people agree to different businesses taking place in their communities. With the influence of globalization, roads and telecommunications link people.

Gatekeepers play an important role in communities; this has positive and negative outcomes on the communities. The community relies on gatekeepers to make decisions that help benefit their communities in terms of economic growth. On the other hand, the power that gatekeepers have in the communities is the reason why most businesses especially mine companies do not adhere to SLPs and the CSR. This is because these businesses pay off gatekeepers so that they can do as they please in those communities. It is for this reason that the expectations of the communities and the promise of infrastructure is not met. This shows how the global plays out in the local through elements of power of chiefs at the local level and the national level through the different departments and the use of policies as well as networks. This has also led to a lack of trust between the ordinary people, the traditional authorities, and the government.

Globalization and networks have influenced Massey's global sense of place wherein it is illustrated that space and place are boundless. Space and place change with the influence of relationships and interactions. The discourses of place and space play out within the dynamics of the mining industry through globalization. This research study looked at the research around space, place and network society as theorized by different authors. This research made use of Doreen Massey, Henri Lefebvre, and Manuel Castells to understand the network analysis of the mining project. Space is interconnections between places and is conceived through the power and social relations. These spatial relations are also social and cannot be separated from each other. Place and space are socially constructed. With the influence of globalization, information, technological innovations, and employment opportunities are easily exchanged between spaces.

Scale, networks, and power are important aspects of mining and globalization therefore this literature review showed the global geographies of mining by analysing the local, national, and global scale. This helped in understanding how one space is linked to other spaces through globalization, power, and scale in terms of information networks. Networks are also responsible are also constitutive of social power. This is because networks of different stakeholders such as the people, different companies and government officials have more power and resources than others. Moreover, the network provides a rich display of skills and

procedures that can capture relationships in places and across spaces. Networks are therefore seen as the building blocks of place, scale, and territory and they can be seen across different domains such as the economic, environmental, political, and cultural spheres. This literature review helped in understanding the global geography of the mining project, the promises that the mining company has promised the local people as well as how the local community is responding to the development led by the mining project in Makhado, Limpopo Province.

## **CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section will look at the approach and processes that will be carried out to address the objectives of this research project. The research seeks to understand the link between global networks and local expectations in the Makhado area, in the context of a new mine being built. Therefore, I seek to understand how the local communities view and perceive the global networks in which the mine is connected to as well as how the local communities are responding to the mining-led growth and development. In addition, I am interested in finding out how the mining company understands the local expectations of the mine. The aim of this research will be achieved through the following objectives.

- To locate the mining activities in Makhado (old and new) within globalised geographies of capital and how these land in place.
- To understand the local expectations, experiences of development as well as the response of promises of infrastructure made on the ground in the context of mining activities in the Makhado area.
- To interrogate the ways in which these two spheres (i.e. global networks of mining capital and local expectations of change) are mediated through situated gatekeepers.

This chapter illustrates the methodology that was applied to achieve the conclusions of this research. The chapter is divided into sections of a summary of the research site, research design, and strategy, methods of data collection, data analysis, limitations encountered during this research and the ethical consideration before and after partaking in this research study. For research to be successfully conducted a concise methodology should be established. The literature review from the last chapter has shown the context of this research report. Although I am using conventional social science qualitative research methods, what this research is aiming to do is to understand what it means to think about the dynamics of mining from the experiences of one group of people in a specific space. I used a range of methods to get different kinds of data to achieve the objectives of this study.

### 3.2 Research Site

The area that I have chosen to focus on is an area that I know very well, I grew up going to this area. I know people from the host communities, one of those people living there is my grandmother. Identifying a case study in a geography study is important because it allows me to examine the case intensively and therefore allows me to engage in a theoretical analysis. The research site is in Makhado Magisterial district, Limpopo province, South Africa. The mine project is located in five farms, Fripp, Tanga, Windhoek, Lukin and Salaita. The mining project is situated at a Village known as Mudimeli, Fripp Farm, a poor village with about 3500 members, defined by dry pastures, no running water coupled with poor sanitation.

When I first realized that there are not many pieces of research that look at the mining industry before mining operations take-off, I was then interested in taking part in this study. My interest was also influenced by an episode on television about the new mine on Special Assignment Program wherein people were fighting over the land in which the mine is situated. Conversely, while researching more about the mine and the company responsible for the project I realized that not only is the mine connecting the local people, but it is also connected to the global scale.

I then contacted my grandmother about my interest in the mine and that I will be around the village. She suggested that due to contestations between royal families, contestations within the community and media interest I should consult with the chief before I start with any fieldwork. Since she is a resident of the village, she went to consult with the chief on my behalf to let him know of my interest. However, the chief suggested that before I start with my fieldwork, he would like to meet with me. On the day that I went to meet with him, my grandmother went in first to tell him that I was there, after a few minutes I was then called in. Dressed in the most required outfit as a symbol of respect, a midi-length skirt, a long sleeve top, and a head wrap. To show respect, I had to kneel before given the opportunity to sit on a chair.

After all those logistics I then explained my research to the chief, he then gave me the background of the mining project and the state in which the mining development is. When he was done explaining some of the things about the mine, he said it is motivating that a young person would be interested in researching one of the most remote areas in Venda. He mentioned that he was interested in my study because this research will also help him and other traditional authorities in knowing what the mood is out there and how the ordinary community is responding to the development of the mine. Although this study is for academic purposes once

it is published it will help him in addressing the concerns that the community has. He then gave me verbal permission to conduct my interviews and told me that there is an old mine pit that I can visit not far away from his home.

The mine will affect seven nearby communities and these communities will be beneficiaries of the mine. The seven communities are Pfumembe, Kuvule, Mulambwane, Musholombi, Makushu, Mudimeli, and Musekwa clan. The availability of coal in the area was discovered in the 1970s but due to the amount of water in the area and lack of resources to remove the water, the mine that was under development could not go ahead. Recently the MC Mining a company from Australia came forth and started another mining project. The Mudimeli Village is situated 37km north of Makhado town and 65km southwest of Musina Town, GPS coordinates Latitude: 22°48'13.44"S and Longitude: 29°57'44.52"E.

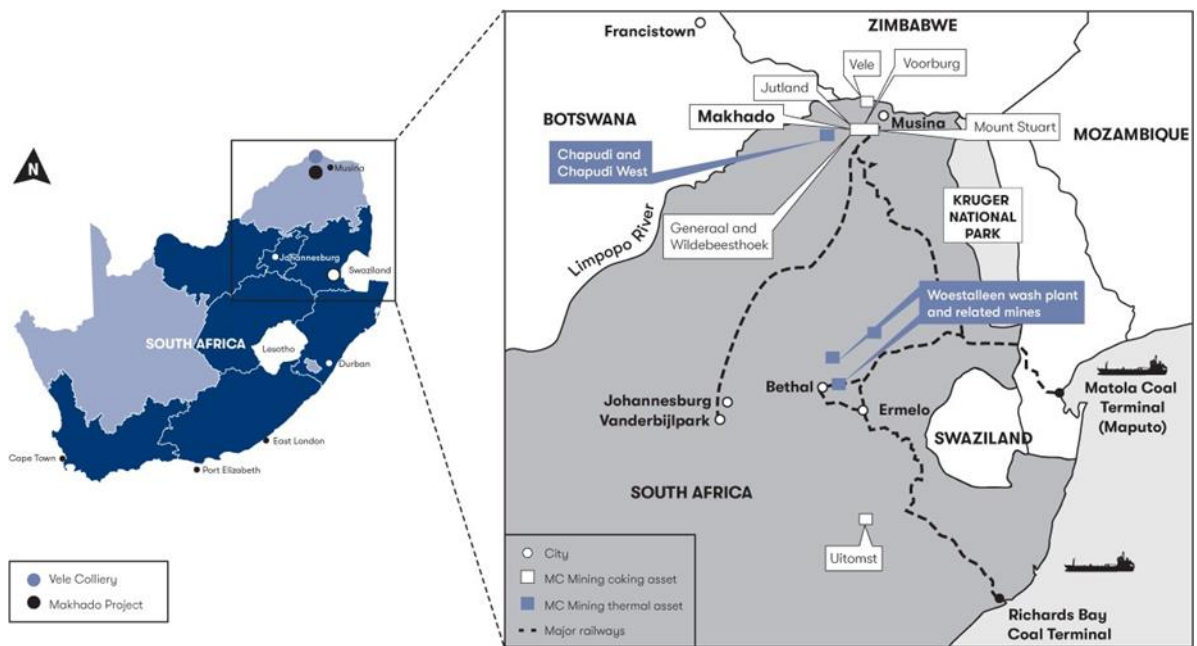


Figure 1: Study site map

Source: [www.mcmining.co.za/index.php](http://www.mcmining.co.za/index.php)



Figure 2: Research site  
Source: Google Maps

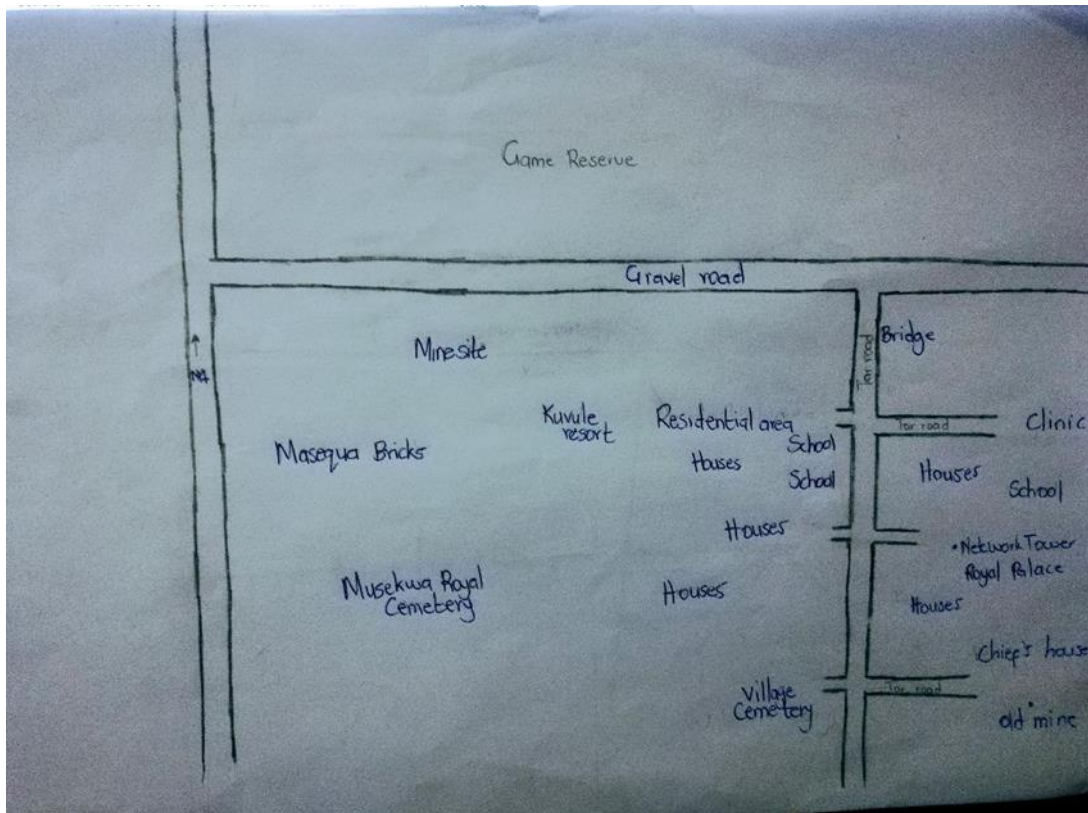


Figure 3: Sketch map of the research site  
Source: Researcher

From the above figures, Mudimeli village in which the Makhado Mine is situated in a dry rural village. Although this community can be classified as one of the poor villages in Makhado municipality it is mineral-rich and mining companies have seen potential profit-making strategies by excavating the area.



### **3.3 Research Design**

This study adopted a qualitative study research design to make use of different methodological approaches to address the objectives of the research. Qualitative research methods are important when one needs to understand and identify different perceptions and motivations in a community through observations and analyses. According to Khothari (2004), qualitative research methods show how individuals and communities perceive and conceive the world in which we live in as well as constructing meanings of the world through their experiences, behaviour, and relationship. This study used the qualitative approach to find out the global networks in which the mine in Makhado is connected to. The study made use of both the primary and secondary methods of data collection of the qualitative approach.

This research is based on the case study of the new mine that is being built in Mudimeli village, Limpopo. The aim of a case study according to Bryman (2004) is to analyze issues within that area through data collection and therefore use theorizes to analyze those issues. The main participants of this research are the people of Mudimeli village and surrounding communities that will be affected by the mine.

### 3.4 Data Collection and Research Methods

This research study made use of different research methods such as interviews, mapping, observations, and focus group discussions. Below is a table that summarizes the kind of data that the objectives will assess as well as the tools that will be used to achieve those objectives.

Table 1: Research methods table

Objectives	Kind of data	Tool
<p>□ To locate the mining activities in Makhado (old and new) within globalised geographies of capital and how these land in place.</p>	<p>Relationship between the Makhado and other countries (network analysis)</p> <p>Government interest</p> <p>MC Mining Limited Company</p> <p>Who will use the coal?</p>	<p>- Mapping and mind map</p> <p>-Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>-Desktop study</p>
<p>□ To understand the local expectations, experiences of development as well as the response of the promise of infrastructure made on the ground in the context of mining activities in the Makhado area.</p>	<p>Infrastructure development</p> <p>Employment opportunities</p> <p>Contestations and impacts</p> <p>-Mining policies and regulatory authorizations in South Africa</p> <p>- Municipality participation</p> <p>- Traditional authorities involvement</p>	<p>-Participant observations</p> <p>-Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>-Pictures</p> <p>-Content analysis</p>
<p>□ To interrogate the ways in which these two spheres (i.e. global networks of mining capital and local expectations of change) are mediated through situated gatekeepers.</p>	<p>Knowledge of people about the mining company.</p> <p>-Involvement of the community in decision-making.</p> <p>- Company's contribution to the National Development Plan goals (Community development).</p>	<p>-Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>-Literature review</p> <p>-Oral history</p> <p>-Participatory mapping</p> <p>- Focus group discussion</p>

Qualitative research involves where the data will be collected when it will be collected as well as how it will be collected. This section explains in detail the methods of data collection and how those methods will be used to achieve the objectives of the study.

### **Sampling**

Sampling is an important aspect of a qualitative study, it is a means of selecting people that will take part in the research study to achieve the aims of that study (Katz, 2006). The research project adopted the convenience sampling method (probability) and snowball sampling method (non-probability sampling). According to Katz (2006), the participants of the probability sampling are selected randomly, and it is assumed that the views shared by those participants represent that of everyone in that community. I conducted interviews with community members that are available then. On the other hand, the participants of the non-probability sampling were selected purposively and subjectively. This means that I was introduced to people who are experts in the research study.

In this regard, I had initially adopted the convenience sampling methods however, after meeting the headman he referred me to people that could be of use in this research. However, during the fieldwork, I realized that I needed views of the ordinary members of the community and therefore interviewed people that were present during that time. Therefore, participants of this research were selected using the convenience sampling method and the snowball sampling method.

### **Interviews**

This research was conducted primarily through face-to-face interviews with community members. This research study made use of semi-structured interviews. Although I made use of the interview guide to guide the interviews, semi-structured interviews allow participants to engage more with the study at hand wherein the researcher can change the style of the interview. Moreover, semi-structured interviews make room for open-ended questions that allow participants to bring up relevant information and express themselves with issues concerning the mining project that might help with the study (Khothari, 2004).

In this research study, a total of twenty-five semi-structured interviews were conducted to achieve the three objectives of the study. Five of the interviews were with people who are involved or were once involved in the mine project and twenty interviews were with the residents of the Mudimeli Village including residents of the surrounding villages that this mine

is connected to. Community members were asked about their expectations and promises made by the mining company, knowledge about the mining company, their involvement in decision-making with regards to the mine project. The participants of this research study were both males and females between the age of 22 and 69. All interviews were conducted in Tshivenda, their home language. With permission granted from the participants, I recorded the interviews for later analysis.

### **Mapping and participatory mapping**

The research focuses mainly on themes around space, place, and networks; therefore, sketches and mapping will be important for this research project. A map is a graphic representation of the surface, they represent and analyse geographic data. Maps are a powerful tool to advance our geographic knowledge as well as influence the way we understand and view the world. Mapping was an important concept of this research because it helped conceptualize this study. Maps are always selective, and therefore they are useful, they give information. Information given by the maps is useful for various purposes. Although most of these maps are drawn from observations with no measurements, they are useful to visualize what is happening in the village.

According to Lefebvre (1991), space is socially produced and how people perceive that space is rooted in how they experience that space. It was not the first time that I visited this place therefore there was no need for a navigation map. However, since this research study is focused on networks, with the help of residents, I sketched out different maps to achieve the objectives of the study. These maps are useful to this study because they shed light on some of the aspects that I had not initially taken note of. Moreover, these maps show routes that connect the local people and the people from outside as well as the networks within the mining company.

Spatial networks connect people for different reasons such as friendship, family, and business relations and therefore structure and organize these systems. This study also made use of network maps to outline the local and global networks that the mine is connected to. Additionally, it shows how the local community is connected to other places through social and economic networks. Unlike in the olden days where transport was the main mode of connection, which was defined more by links than nodes, in the corporate industry, the technological advances play a big role in the business industry today. The telecommunication system shows a very clear network through nodes in the corporate industry.

A large part of my mapping tasks in this research study involved me sitting with participants and mapping. I did this with participants because maps are a representation of geographic knowledge that show where people locate themselves, they show how people locate themselves in the world. We sketched out a map showing where the communities confirmed to be beneficiaries of the project to where the mine is situated. To achieve the third objective in collaboration with participants we sketched a map that shows the networks between the local scale and the national scale through means of transportation to show what is happening on the ground. Moreover, I asked the participants to sketch maps showing where the coal will be exported to and where the mining company's head office is established. These tasks allowed participants to express how they view and understand the world. The following figures show some of how mapping as a methodology was used to achieve the aim of this research.

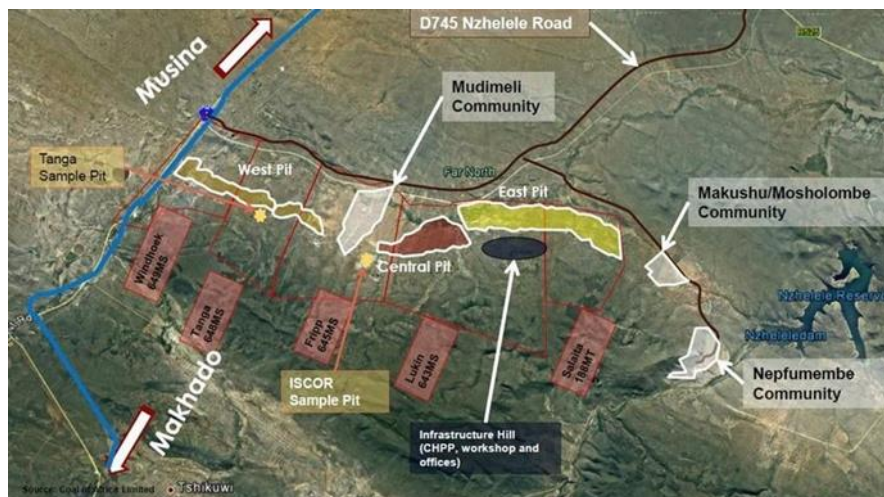


Figure 4: Makhado Mine and some of the affected communities

Source: Coal of Africa Limited



Figure 5: A map showing the mine site in relation to the village

Source: Google Maps

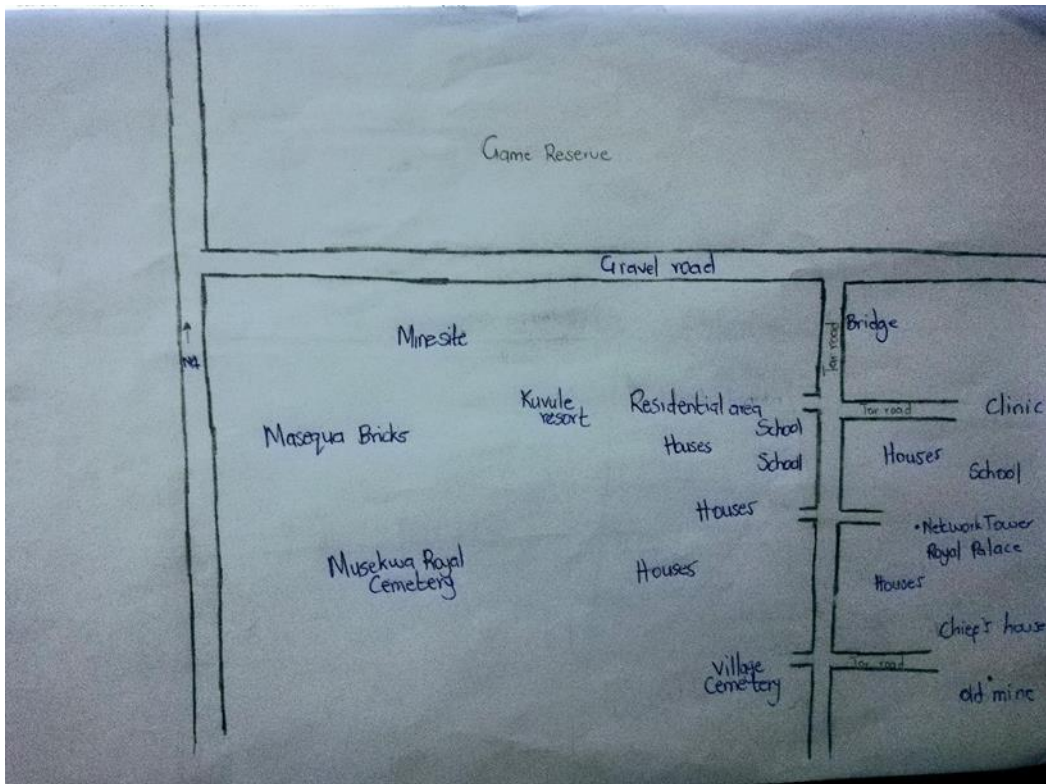


Figure 6: Sketch map of the host community

Source: Researcher

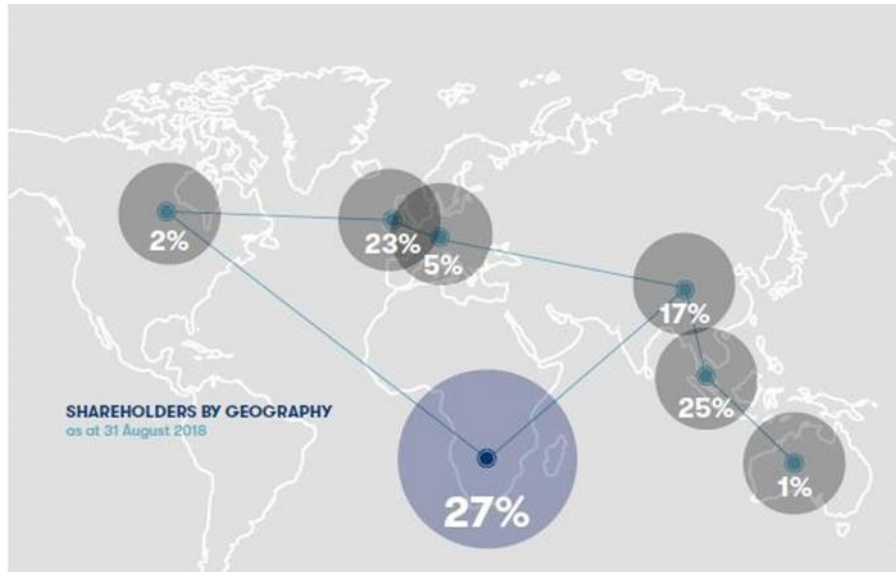


Figure 7: Global networks of the shareholders of the company

Source: MC mining Integrated Report, 2018:2

The figures above show some of the ways in which mapping as a research method was used to show the research site in which the study was taken and to show networks between countries to analyze the global geographies of how a local place in South Africa plays out in the global.

### **Participant Observation**

Participant observation is an important data tool when conducting studies that involve human behaviour because they help conceptualize the study, it involves the researcher going into the field interacting with the participants as well as participating in the community's daily activities (Kothari, 2004). This research method allowed me to go into the field and observe how people perceive and conceive their community. Through observations, I was able to see how people interact with their community in terms of infrastructure development and unemployment in the area by assessing the number of people waiting in those communities.

The research had initially intended to conduct basic observations. However, as the fieldwork proceeded, I then decided to take part in the daily activities of the community. My participation in this fieldwork included me walking around the community to observe people going to school and work as well as taking part in water collections at various main taps. This allowed me to

gain insight one of the challenges that participants addressed which is water. Fetching water takes hours and in some instance, money and this will be explained in the next chapters.

### **Focus group discussions**

Focus group discussions are a beneficial method when one wants to know how people address different matters within a group. Moreover, they are important to understand the socio-cultural aspect of the community at hand as a group because it allows issues to be raised and be addressed collectively. One of the objectives of this study is to map out global geographies to show the networks that exist between the mine, the host community, surrounding communities, the national level and finally the global level. Participants of the focus group discussions were asked to map out the mine concerning the community as well as where they think the mine comes from. After their results, I then told participants where the mining company comes from and they asked them to show where that is on a map. The use of focus group discussions to achieve this objective helped capture the real-life data in a social setting. I conducted two focus group discussions of six to eight people with me being the facilitator.

### **Oral history, desktop study documents, and document analysis**

To gain more insight into the mining project, information about the mining project as well as the relationship between members of the community and the area in which the mining project is situated. I made use of a literature review, oral history, and content analysis. Oral history will be used wherein I asked participants about the history of the area to build knowledge about the community. Due to the growing media coverage of China deal with South Africa, I also made use of published and aired documentaries about the mining project as well as policy documents.

Sources of data are an important aspect of the methodology. Data source refers to the origin of the data that will be used to achieve the objectives of this research project. The research methodology made use of two sources of data, field data and desktop data. The research is trying to trace the geographical networks to which the mining project in Makhado is connected to. This was not an easy task to do because even if I was able to ask the local people about the networks the other stakeholders (i.e. MC Mining) were not able to take part in this research study. This is because the mine is connected to at least four other countries. I, therefore, relied on the reports and brochures supplied by the company, the internet and newspaper articles.



Some of the information that is used in this research study was provided by people who are involved in the mining company. I also made use of government reports to assess South African policies and legislations that have to do with the mining industry. Therefore, content analysis was used as a way of assisting in achieving the aim of the research that is to understand the link between global networks and local expectations in the Makhado area, in the context of a new mine being built.

This research also made use of fieldwork data to accomplish the aim and objectives of this research study. I went to the field site for further interaction with the community and the local people as well as the place in which the mining project is situated. I made use of different methods to collect fieldwork data to observe the community, gain more insight on how the local people perceive the mining project, and how the local people view the networks in which the mine is connected to. This is important because it allowed me to observe what the communities know about the mining project, their expectations as ‘promised’ by the mining company as well as how the community is responding to the development in their village.

### **3.5 Data Analysis: Content Analysis**

Data in this research study was analyzed by examining analysing different themes. After data collection, I categorized maps and the interviews according to the objectives of the research study. Categorizing these data allowed me to generate themes that will achieve the objectives and the aims of this research study. Moreover, the categorizing of data helped me generate arguments that were used in this dissertation.

### **3.6 Ethical Consideration**

This research study was carried out in compliance with the University of the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC-non medical) requirements. I applied for ethical clearance and was granted the ethics certificate (H19/07/25) to continue with fieldwork. Due to the study involving people, it is regular for people to expect any form of compensation for taking part in the study, therefore, I clarified that this research is purely for academic purposes. Before engaging with people about the research study participants were provided with a participant information sheet that included the research title, aims, and objectives as well as the significance of the study. Furthermore, due to the information sheets written in English, I

explained verbally the information sheet in Tshivenda. I also clarified to the participants that taking part in the research is voluntary and they can withdraw anytime.

Participants were required to sign a consent form to show that they have agreed to take part in the research as well as being assured of anonymity and confidentiality. However, during the focus group discussions, people knew each other, and views were shared among them. Before the focus group discussions, I explained that the participants needed to respect each other's views and keep the information confidential. Additionally, I also recorded the interviews, but I only did that with consent from the interviewees.

### **3.7 Limitations**

As mentioned earlier that I had to ask for permission from traditional authorities before I could ask permission from the participants it is quite clear that traditional authorities are 'gatekeepers' of this community. Although getting permission from traditional authorities, on one hand, can be seen as being respectful, but it is also a limitation towards the research because it prevents one from getting access to people who were critical of traditional authorities. This is because the traditional authorities suggested people to talk to with regards to the study. Therefore, not only are traditional authorities 'gatekeepers' of the community but for me as well as a researcher. This was discussed in the previous chapter on the role that gatekeepers have in social science research.

Going into a field that has a high level of unemployed and interviewing people about the mining that people have job opportunities expectations. The first thing that they thought of is that I was there to register their names for jobs or register their homes for relocation purposes as nothing has been going on for some time. While introducing myself people seem to be interested in taking part in the study however once they are required to sign the consent form, they become concerned. I realized that this is because of the contestations around the mining project and therefore they think that I was working for a particular group of people fighting over the land rights and will use their response for court cases. Moreover, during my honours project, I realized that people agree in taking part in the interviews but when they realize that they must sign a consent form they withdraw from participating. This means that I cannot interview them.

This research involved people's behaviours and their perceptions, with the mining project, said to benefit seven communities around it, the research did not involve every community member of the seven communities. Thus, individuals that will be interviewed do not represent the views of the communities at large and as a result, those views and perceptions cannot be generalized. Some of the residents did not permit me to interview them because I was not going to compensate them with anything.

Focus group discussions are not an easy qualitative method to achieve. People were resistant in taking part in the focus group discussions because of the contestations around the mining project. This is because there was a fear that people might go out and tell other people about what was explained within the group.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the methodology as well as data collection methods that were adopted in this research study. This study adopted the qualitative research design and used different methods to gain more insight to achieve the objectives of this research study. This chapter also includes how data that was collected during fieldwork was analysed. Ethical considerations are an important part of a research study that involves human participants and therefore this chapter discusses ethical matters.

Additionally, when conducting this research, I encountered limitations; these limitations were also addressed in this chapter. In the following chapter, I introduce the findings of the research and give an analysis of those findings. The findings are divided into three chapters, but these chapters are related to each other. Firstly I discuss the globalised geographies of mining in Makhado, secondly, I argue that although there is a potential of a mining-led growth local people continue to be subjects of development and finally I argue that people remain cut off and seen as subjects because of the interface between traditional authorities and global networks. The traditional authorities act as gatekeepers between the mining company and the community. I also discuss and analyse how people interpret and perceive the representation of the location.

## **CHAPTER FOUR – THE GLOBALISED GEOGRAPHIES OF MINING IN MAKHADO**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter argues that mining is a globalised industry. The global connections and the South African political system is geared towards extracting wealth from the globalized system. This chapter contributes to placing and mapping how these relations take form. This chapter discusses the concerns that carefully traces the implications of the global-local relations and networks as they land and come to be translated into the local and grounded sense. Network connections due to globalization channelled through cooperation increase the intensity of mining politics. The value of this chapter is to contextualise the tracing by making visible the otherwise not explicit global relations that are at play in what ultimately emerges in very situated and everyday effects. It focuses on the intersection of the mining industry between the national and the global imperatives by integrating mineral exploitation, Black Economic Empowerment, and capitalism.

The scale and power theme outlines this discussion and the maps in this chapter help us understand the networks that exist at different scale while taking into consideration the 'power' that exists within those scales. Movement is fluid across scale, the local, national, and the global influence each other. It is thus necessary to pay attention to how the diversity of contesting interests for mining operations pursue different scalar arrangement by analysing the political agenda of stakeholders acting at different scales.

This chapter analyses the government's interest in the Makhado project and does this by evaluating the involvement of the government through the distribution of mining rights. It locates the mine within the broader geography of mining within South Africa and globally. Moreover, the impacts of mining in local areas are connected into the broader global networks even though these impacts are experienced as locally they connect the local and the global. On the other hand, while outside countries make a profit from local communities, local people are cut-off from the global. The scale is socially and politically contested, it is restructured by dependent socio-economic, cultural, environmental and political processes (Delany and Leitner, 1997).

To further analyze the involvement of the government this chapter outlines different mining policies of South Africa. This chapter finally looks at the background of MC mining Company

including the mines that the company is responsible for in Limpopo. What this chapter argues is that the Mudimeli village in Makhado, a small, impoverished community is captured into global economies and networks. While one can see the circulation of capital, it seems like a promise of potential development. What we ultimately argue is that the village is in an uneasy situation.

## **4.2 The National Context**

The increase in mining is due to the demands of minerals from old and new centres on industrial production. The neoliberal reforms at the national scale stimulate foreign direct investment in mining. Mining industries in South Africa are given mining rights at the national level under the MPRDA. According to the South African government, one needs permission from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy to mine minerals within a certain area. Mining rights are granted in line with protocols such as the operation being in line with the Mining Charter, the mineral can be mined optimally as well as no unacceptable pollution or damage to the environment will occur as a result of the operation. The Makhado mine is connected to the national scale through legalizations. With globalization and the rapid diffusion of technologies, the government needs to make sure that mining companies are governable for the sake of people and the economy. Moreover, South Africa owns a stake in the MC Mining Company which in turn connects the local and the national.

The growing economic importance of the resource sector has led to significant growth. Like many other African countries, the benefits of the mine are seen at the national scale, this is because the government is the channel of the benefits of the economy including that of the local communities. In other countries, according to Chuhan-Pole et al., (2017), the mining companies agree with the government that they will give all the benefits meant for that country including the local benefits to the government through monetary values wherein the government will then use that money to better the local communities. This is the reason why the government continuously chooses industrial projects for monetary value over people and agriculture.

On the other hand, this can be a bad thing, it creates room for corruption. According to The Conversation (2019), this is because money meant for South Africans is missing in our government. Much of this money is lost through tenders wherein tenders are awarded to people that do not know their way around the work at hand. Moreover, these tenders are given to

people who are known to the government officials, this then leads to extra money being paid to the tenders wherein the officials will then get their agreed cut illegally. Moreover, mining benefits are not necessarily used to improve the livelihood of the mining communities, but those benefits are redirected to other projects.

Regardless of the coal, diamond, platinum and other mineral operations in Limpopo, poverty persists. While mining to some extent can reduce poverty and enhance infrastructure, it is the major economic activity in Limpopo (Statistics South Africa, 2019) they are large operations and therefore this has an impact on hosting communities. When analyzing the impact of mining on communities and it is important to look at the historical relationship between mining and poverty. The Limpopo province is the furthest province of South Africa; however, before 1994 it was not a province but rather a collection of villages which was independent states separate from South Africa. These homelands were given to blacks after land dispossession, moreover, this development created enclaves within the country of South Africa. Due to the lack of opportunities in the homelands of Limpopo, these homelands economically depended on the Republic of South Africa.

Coal mining has existed in South Africa for over a century and has been the main source of electricity generation and essential to the overall economy. While South Africa has many coalfields, which have been explored and exploited, the coalfield in the Northern part of South Africa has recently gained much attention (Hancox and Gotz, 2014). As much as about 70% of the remaining coal resources in South Africa may be in the four coalfields in Limpopo and these resources include both the thermal and coking coal. The mining operation in this research falls part of these coalfields.

The two coalfields that are closely connected to the mine operations in this paper are the Soutpansberg coalfield and the Limpopo coalfield. The Soutpansberg coalfield is situated at the Soutpansberg Mountain Range in the Limpopo province. There is a colliery underground mine that is currently operating and is operated by Exxaro. This mine is known as the Tshikondeni mine and began operating in 1984, this mine is situated 140 kilometres east of the Musina town. The second coalfield that also has a relationship with the mine is being built in the Limpopo coalfield. The Limpopo coalfield is situated 60 kilometres west of the Musina Town. This coalfield consists of the MC Mining of the controversial mine on the borders of the Mapungubwe Vele colliery which is currently operating. It is within this coalfield wherein we find the mine captured in this paper.

In Limpopo, the mining company owns a couple of mines that are relatively close to one another namely the Makhado project, Greater Soutpansberg project (three different projects) and the Vele Colliery which is was operating before it was closed down. The Greater Soutpansberg project is nearby to the Makhado project whereas the Vele colliery is situated 65km from the Makhado project and has been in maintenance since 2013. Although the mining company owns mines in Limpopo, it is also responsible for another colliery project in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa is known as the Uitkomst Colliery. The figures below show the mining projects and operations under MC Mining.

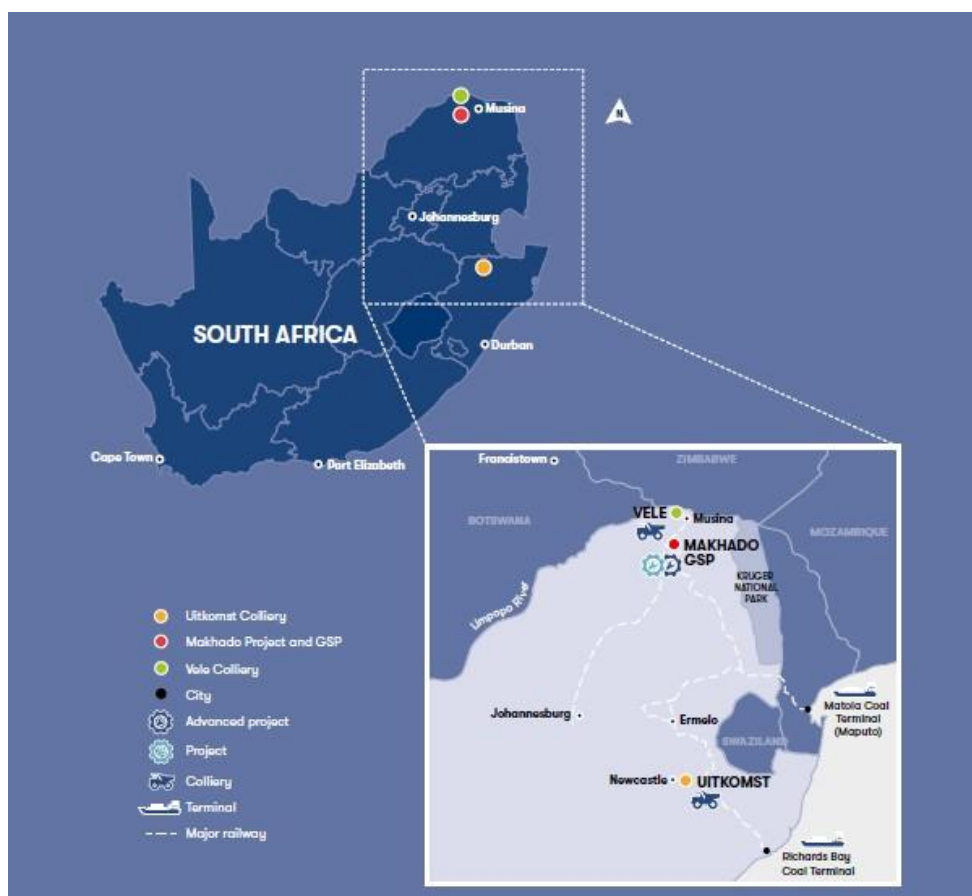


Figure 8: MC Mining operations and projects in South Africa

Source: MC Mining Annual Report, 2019: 5

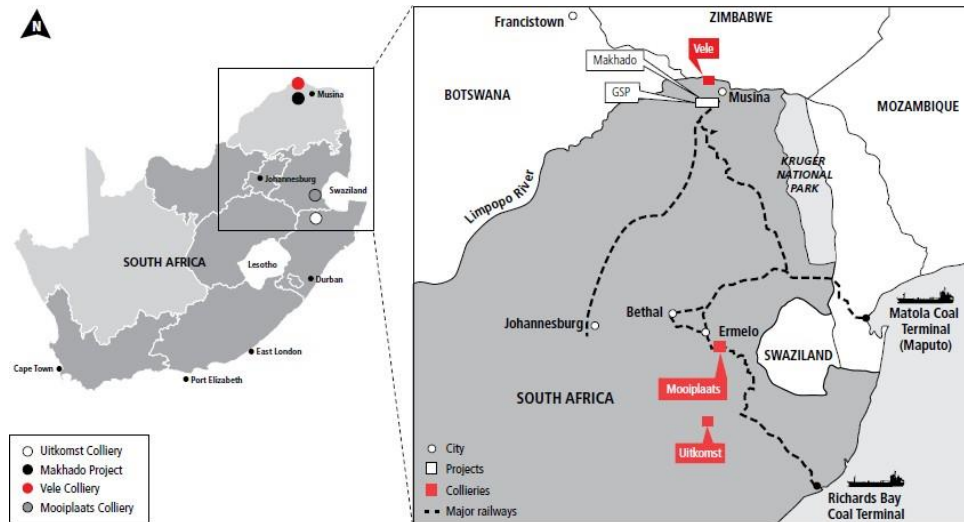


Figure 9: MC mining operations and projects in South Africa

Source: CoAL Integrated Report, 2018: 24

Furthermore, the government backs the project because the developers argue that the project will enhance the wealth of the local people as well as the country. The following government stakeholders according to MC Mining Annual Report (2019) are involved in the Makhado mine project; Makhado and Musina Municipalities at the local level, Limpopo Economic Development Environment Tourism and Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (now Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development- DALRRD) at the provincial level, and DMR (now DMRE), Department of Water and Sanitation (now Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation), DEA (now Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries), Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (now DALRRD) at the national level. Although some of these departments have been merged the company still uses the old names, I have shown the new names in brackets.

Mining in South Africa since the democratic era has changed drastically in terms of laws and policies that have to do with the mining industry (Makuluma, 2011). However, this change is being challenged by a lack of information, people not adhering to the laws coupled with corruption. The mining industry in South Africa affected many if not all departments, either directly or indirectly. The industry is regulated through two departments, namely, the department of mineral resource and department of water and environmental affairs. The miscommunication and disjoints between departments can be assumed as one of the reasons why as a country we are failing to implement those policies and to make sure that companies follow the laws and policies. For example, mining is one of the principal sectors that contribute to the economy (department of finance), those finances help better the community and the



country as a whole in terms of infrastructure and health to mention a few (department of rural and settlements) when there are proper shelter and infrastructure this has a positive impact on health (department of health), however, the department of health only comes into the mining industry after people have been negatively affected by the mine proceedings. This is just an example to show the relationship or cycle within departments the list does go on.

The government has pursued to promote black economic empowerment through beneficiation policies. Therefore, the BBSEE was developed to establish a framework that makes sure that any mining industry offers real benefits to local South Africa. This charter calls for ownership participation of historically disadvantaged South Africans (HDSA), this refers to companies that are owned by HDSA, as well as any community or persons that were discriminated pre 1994 (Mining Charter, 2010). The Makhado project has considered this wherein black industrialist Yoright Investments (Pty) Ltd own 6% in the Makhado project. The company is owned by Mike Nkuna a black entrepreneur. The shareholders' grouping includes HDSA (IOL, 2015).

Broad-Based Socio-Economic Empowerment Charter for the South African Mining and Minerals Industry is better known as the Mining Charter. The objectives of the mining charter are stated as follows (Department of Mineral Resources, 2010):

- *To promote equitable access to the nation's mineral resources to all the people of South Africa;*
- *To substantially and meaningfully expand opportunities for Historically Disadvantaged South Africans (HDSA) to enter the mining and minerals industry and to benefit from the exploitation of the nation's mineral resources;*
- *To utilize and expand the existing skills base for the empowerment of HDSA and to serve the community;*
- *To promote employment and advance the social and economic welfare of mine communities and major labour sending areas;*
- *To promote beneficiation of South Africa's mineral commodities; and*
- *Promote sustainable development and growth of the mining industry.*

Not only is the mine benefiting companies owned by HDSA, but the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) owns 5% of the Makhado project. This shows that the Makhado mine is connected to different scales and stakeholders. The IDC is a state-owned development finance institution that contributes to the economic growth and empowerment of South Africans by

promoting entrepreneurship. According to IOL (2019), MC Mining Annual Report (2019) MC mining has been funded by the IDC for the funds to construct the first phase.

Due to the mining industry involving land rights, mineral rights as well as traditional authorities structures it is therefore important to have strong legislation to regulate this industry. These legislations redress the historically racial discrimination of access to the industry wherein it appeals to the equitable and sustainable development of the mineral and petroleum resources of South Africa (Corruption Watch, 2018). Moreover, the MPRDA allows the government if in any case, the mining company poses a threat to the community and the environment to force it to abandon the mine projects.

According to the community members, the mining company did not follow proper channels to develop strategies such as the social labour plan. Some of the community members are aware of the documents that need to be submitted to the government so that the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DME) (previously the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR)) can assess if the mine is viable. The SLP set out how the company intends to share the benefits. The community should be provided with someone aware of the SLP to explain to the community. According to Corruption Watch (2018), SLPs can be poorly executed and communities often complain about a few procurement prospects for local entrepreneurs and prejudiced recruitment. Additionally, according to the community they were not contacted about anything and only find on the company's documents. Moreover, only those who can read and have access to the internet can get information. This has then led to community members concluding that mining certificates were gained without proper consultations but were gained through political forums.

According to the company's stakeholders, the involvement of the government and the dismissal of appeals confirms the government's support for the project and the potential of the mine to drive sustainable socio-economic transformation for the local people as well as the country of South Africa. The government backs the project because the developers argue that the project will enhance the wealth of the local people as well as the country. The mine covers five farms of which only two are owned by the company, the community resides on one farm and the other two farms are subject to the land claim process according to the residents. Therefore, the mine has not gained surface rights but they have fenced out the area although the process will commence once surface rights are protected. However, during my research, I learnt that MC Mining was able to gain the remaining surface rights in 2019. This shows that the community is not aware of what is happening to the surrounding farms and the mine that will affect them.

The table below summarizes the regulatory authorization and surface rights that MC Mining has been granted.

Table 2: Mining Rights and Authorisation

Regulatory Authorisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Mining rights The mine gained valid and executable in 2015 and were issued by the Department of Mineral Resources.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Authorisation The mine gained valid and executable in August 2013 and were granted by the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. It was however amended, extended and transferred to Baobab Mining and Exploration which is the company's subsidiary in July 2016.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Water Use Licence The mine gained valid and executable rights in January 2016 were issued by the Department of Water and Sanitation. It was however appealed in April 2016 but was dismissed by then Minister Nomvula Mokonyane in May 2016.
Surface Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> Mining Rights covers five farms. MC mining owns two farms of the area in which the mine is situated, the community resides in one of the farms and the other two farms are subject to land claims. In 2019 MC Mining was granted rights to the two other farms in which the east and central pits will be allocated.

Source: Makhado Mail, 2017

To reorganize and restructure scalar structure, stakeholders jump scales from local to national to global as an effort to leverage power across certain geographical scales and reassert power on other scales. In this section, I have demonstrated that the Makhado as a small town in Limpopo is implicated into national and regional networks as well as the implications of those

networks. The section achieved that by looking at the government's interest in the mining industry through different legislations and policies.

### **4.3 The Global Context**

In the previous section, I have demonstrated how Makhado is implicated into localised networks through mining charter, legislations, and BEE strategies. What this section seeks to achieve is to show how Makhado is situated in the global through mining capital as well as the implications (tensions and contradictions) of the networks that exist between the mining charter, legislation and the BEE strategies. The Makhado mine project not only captures into networks between the local and national scale but extends to the global. The mine is connected to the global through the MC Mining Company because shareholders of the company are all over the world, countries out of Africa. Potential investors of the proposed factories in Musina also connect the mine to the world. Moreover, it has been proposed that the coking coal from the Makhado project will be exported through the Maputo port in Mozambique whereas some are to be sold locally. Additionally, the coking coal will be delivered to Musina and then to ArcelorMittal's operations in Vanderbijlpark and Newcastle (IOL, 2019).

Although the Company only operates in South Africa, the principal listing of the company remains on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), with subordinate listings on both the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) of the London Stock Exchange (LSE) and the Johannesburg Stock Exchange Limited (JSE) (CoAL Integrated Report, 2017; MC Mining Annual Report, 2019). Moreover, according to IOL (2019), the Makhado project has secured the first coal take-off with one of the world's largest marketers and producers of seaborne traded coal, Chinese owned enterprise Huadong Coal Trading Centre. CoAL, operating in the Limpopo and KwaZulu- Natal provinces of South Africa, is transitioning into a sustainable, multi-product coal producer and developer. The company strives to achieve a balance between adding value to shareholders, coupled with best practice in safety, health and environment and equitable social development to empower local communities. Due to a global production network, the following figures show the networks of the company globally through shareholders.

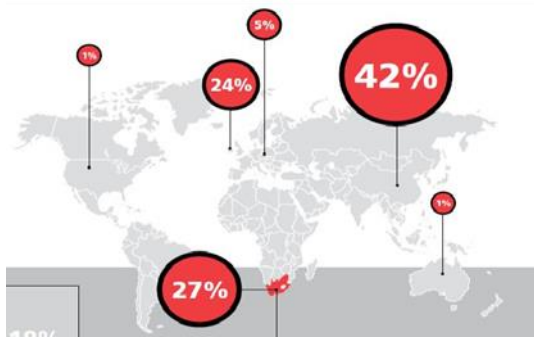


Figure 10: Shareholders by Geography



Figure 11: Shareholders by geography

Source: CoAL Integrated Report, 2017:2 Source: MC Mining Integrated Report, 2018:2



Figure 12: Shareholders by geography

Source: MC Mining Annual Report, 2019: 4

The name of the company in the area has changed from Coal of Africa Limited to Metallurgical Colliery Mining Limited (MC mining Limited); however, the community is not aware of the name change. The mining company changed its name to reflect its significant long term metallurgical prospects (MC Mining Integrated Report, 2018). According to the CEO of CoAL Mr David Brown, the company has moved from being a project development only to an operational company and geographic focus which is a step in the right direction (MC Mining Integrated Report, 2018). The company is a producer and supplier of coal products to the steel industry. According to the CEO they have complied with all legal obligations which include

keeping the communities involved and engaged in the process but like any other case, people will always oppose the project for their vested interest (MC Mining Integrated Report, 2018).

Permitting a mining project in South Africa, especially for coal is long and demanding. This is because in this case of the Makhado mine there are a lot of environmental objections coupled with land claims (Finweek, 2019). According to the MC mining Integrated Report 2018, in 2016 the government announced the Makhado-Musina Special Economic Zone (SEZ). This project will accelerate economic development in the Vhembe district by expanding the manufacturing and mineral sectors. According to Zoutpansberg (2018), the Makhado-Musina SEZ will include a cement plant, coal-fired power plant amongst other projects and MC Mining will be the supplier of coal for the 4600MW power plant. However, the company does not take into consideration that the Vhembe region is involved in the agricultural sector for both subsistence and commercial reasons.

Due to the large-scale industrial development by Chinese investors targeted by President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa in the nearby town, there is a national relevance to continue with the mining project. "He (Brown the CEO) is looking to raise R1.7 billion MC Mining needs to build Makhado. But in terms, its impacts on the lives of ordinary South Africans living in Limpopo Province the deal is highly significant" (Finweek, 2019: 40).

Over the years, China has become the prime driver of mineral prices and African countries have become key beneficiaries of this process since the country itself is unable to meet its annual demand for resources. Africa plays a critical role in providing the Chinese economy with key minerals. China has shown a growing interest in the mining belt of Southern Africa comprising of Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique because the areas are well endowed with copper, gold, and iron amongst other base metal. The connection of the areas to Limpopo has contributed to the MC Mining project wherein coal that is obtained from the mining project will be transported to Musina Town then to Mozambique and finally to different countries including China. This is because Zambia has the most advanced level of engagement with China. Additionally, MC Mining has collaborated with China Railway International Group Co Limited (CRIG) for funding for the engineering, procurement, and construction for the Makhado project (MC Mining Annual Report, 2019). The CRIG is a global company listed in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

It is evident that different levels of power exist within network and these maps show that power is distributed in a network situation. There is a need to be aware of different levels of power

and how these affect the decision to allocate or control resources. Globally, the north continues to extract natural resources while locally the state who holds power over mining communities continue to allow corporations from the north to extract those resources. This then shows that the flow of power influences networks that exist between state and this can be seen on the maps above.

According to Zolkiewski, the functional interdependence of resources, power structure, knowledge structure of the network and intertemporal dependence are the important forces of networks. Therefore, understanding these forces promotes a deeper understanding of networks. Power is the central force of network and power relations are the foundation of society (Castells, 2011). The multidimensionality of power which can be manifest within networks show political networks. The maps and the networks that exist between different stakeholders involved in the mine in Makhado show that power in the network society is exercised through networks. It is therefore important for these stakeholders to be aware of power.

According to Castells (2011:774) “networking power refers to the power of the actors and organizations included in the networks that constitute the core of the global network society. Connections between the political leadership networks assert a geopolitical strategy. To understand the corporate today and its power there is a need to understand the history and how they have been a fundamental part of how the state has governed and continues to govern social life. The government exist by delegating power to achieve certain goals. The state has acquired a privileged place in our political understanding as the epitome of political authority

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

Evidently, in this chapter, I have argued that mining is a globalized system and South Africa is connected into that system in different ways. I have outlined the extent of global geographies to which the Makhado project is connected to. Like many other mines in South Africa, this mine is owned by a foreign company but forced to work according to the legislation of South Africa. As shown in this chapter the project also shows the elements of scale and power. This mine shows the networks in which the community is connected to, locally, nationally and globally. The politics of scale in mining highlights distinctions that exist between the national power that exists in the form of gatekeepers (government and traditional authorities). This shows how territorial units are constructed and reorganized. The findings of this chapter have

located the mining activities both new and old within globalised geographies of capital and how these land in place.

Not only is the mine connected to South Africa and Australia but also connected to other countries through shareholders. Additionally, the national scale is connected to the mine through the Industrial Development Corporation, the Traditional affairs act and the Yoright investments of the HDSA. In this regard, it is interesting that even after the apartheid era communities continue to be cut off. This chapter also made use of sketches and mind maps to show networks that exist at different scales to show how power and state corporation relations play out in the mining industry. This shows that there is a relationship that exist between power, networks and the state- corporation relations. The following chapter discusses the finding of the promises of infrastructure, expectations of the local community and what the mine has done for the community thus far.



## **CHAPTER FIVE – THE CITIZENS AND SUBJECTS OF MINE DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSE OF PROMISES MADE ON THE GROUND**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Overall, In the previous chapter, I have shown how mining is globalised. This chapter shows how local communities that are affected by mining continues to be cut off from access to the benefits of global economies. This is due to the injustices of apartheid, but what we see is that the policy of the political apartheid has not necessarily improved even though on paper it says that people are citizens it has not improved their position. People continue to be subjects of much larger forces over which they have little say and control. Previous studies have shown that community development of mining is double-sided.

This chapter focuses on two central themes: the examination of the promises of infrastructure and the grounded impacts as well as the contestation. The significance of this chapter is to show the tension that exists between the promise of infrastructure and the consequences by examining the promises of infrastructure or developments and the grounded impacts as well as the emergent contestations. Mines do influence the economic and infrastructural growth of communities. However, this is coupled with economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts. According to Akpalu and Parks (2007), community development involves people working together to stimulate economic growth making use of existing resources to better the local community. According to Chuhan-Pole et al., (2017), multinational companies rarely improve the livelihood of local communities; however, some companies adhere to their promises.

Additionally, according to Mathabatha (2011), the mining industry can be a great driver in which the ordinary people's aspirations for empowerment can be met. Furthermore, it can either promote or hold back community development. This chapter analyses how the community has access to global networks and how they perceive these networks through the developments that the mining company has brought to the community thus far. The chapter starts by historically locating the community which was produced during apartheid as a traditional community which was cut off from proper forms of citizenship and proper forms of access to the economy.

It does this by demonstrating the issues of transport in the Mudimeli village to give a broader understanding of the material and civic nature of the community and the gatekeepers, which will be explained further in chapter six. Transportation allows for broader access to the market

base. Investment in infrastructure to improve connectivity is the most effective way of delivering long-term growth. Drawing on the potential risks of mining that affect water and electricity reveals how exploring the community through infrastructural lens allows us to better understand the mining community. Due to land claims and the potential risks of the project, the Makhado project has sparked contestations in the village. Therefore, this chapter ends off by analyzing and discussing the emergent contestations.

### **Transport at the mining community**

Key nodes and links in transportation networks are important to locate the Mudimeli village and to understand the experiences and local expectations in terms of infrastructure. Transport plays an important part in economic growth and globalization. It enables forms of exchange and in turn, establishes development. The connectivity that is provided by the links in transport promotes inclusion. Due to the intensive use of infrastructure, transportation is an important tool for development. The high transport infrastructure and connected networks are associated with high levels of development. It is a critical ingredient in economic development. The relevance of this section is to then show how transport infrastructure influences networks and shape infrastructural lens of this community.

The homelands system was established during the apartheid era wherein the majority of black communities were moved to prevent them from living in urban areas. It was a system that was used to remove black people in 'white' South Africa. Although the blacks were citizens in their independent, homelands they still had to report and depend on their kings and traditional authorities (King, 2005). The transport system in this community is used to explain how the homeland system works, it is about who knows the traditional authorities. One would assume that this kind of ways to access resources ended with apartheid, but it is continued. Even after apartheid and promises of political and economic freedom, forms of being cut off and being subjects as Mamdani attest continues.

This section shows how the local community is connected to other spaces and places through the mode of transport and does this by explaining the modes of transport in this community including the history of transportation in the community. Transport is an important phenomenon when looking at the local scale because it connects the local community to the rest of the country and world as a whole. The spatial network in this community is constructed by local streets, district roads as well as the national road.

Transport in this community shows how the community has been historically and continues to be dependent on outside forces. Access to resources and facilities in this village has been through different stakeholders such as royal families, the government, and now the mining community. The role that transport has in this community can be used as an example of Mamdani's work of citizen and subject. This is because the citizenship of people as individuals is not recognized but they are recognized as subjects of traditional authorities. When we look back to the apartheid era this community has always depended on traditional authorities as their access to resources. In theory, these people have rights, but in practice, their rights are often not recognized. With the mine project in the village, traditional authorities are still at the forefront. The following figure shows the networks that exist between the Mudimeli Village to nearest towns and Gauteng province through means of public transport.

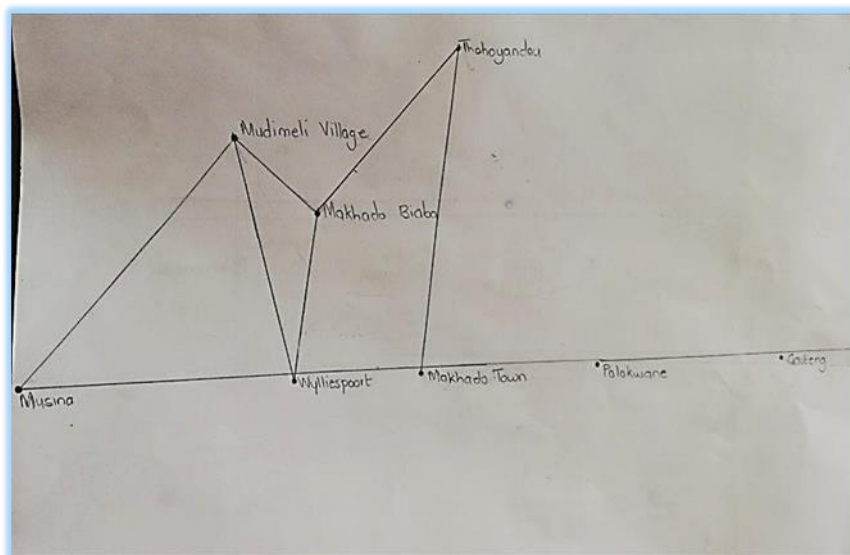


Figure 13: The networks (by public transport) of the local community

Source: Researcher and participants

The researcher in collaboration with the participants drew the above map. This map shows how the bus connects people to different small towns in the area and finally to Gauteng province. Gauteng is at the far end of the networks that people are aware of. What these people are not aware of is that although the public transport facilities in their community end in Gauteng there are broader networks that the mine has exposed their village to. Moreover, some people have never been to Gauteng. The map shows that there are active networks locally and those are the

networks that the majority of people are aware of, but the networks start to fade away as soon as one leaves Makhado town.

### **Transport during the Apartheid regime**

During the homeland administration, Venda was under the leadership of King Patrick Raamano Mphephu and transportation around Venda belonged to different elite Venda families. During the apartheid regime, King Mphephu was under the Venda National Party and therefore to own a transport route, you need to be in favour of that party. There were two bus companies, Mphugana transportation, and Fani Denga Mabirimisa bus service. The owner of the Mphugana transportation was in favour of the opposition party, Venda Independent Party. This led to contestations between different transportation companies wherein some people ended in prison. The Mphugana transportation was then banned at Mudimeli that led to the owner losing some of his property while he was in prison.

### **Transport post-apartheid**

The owner of the Mabirimisa bus service was in favour of the King's party and therefore the company was allowed to continue transporting community members. It is still the bus company that transports people from the Village to Makhado town. However, years after the owner of the Mphugana transport passed on his family has tried to re-establish the company but has only been able to buy one taxi which is helping now working hand in hand with the Mabirimisa Bus Service. After the establishment of the mining company, transport owners became interested in the area and so transport seems to be growing a bit as compared to before the establishment of the project. Of the two hours that I spent near the main road, I got to see only two public means of transport, one bus which is the Mabirimisa bus and one taxi minibus other than that of the Mphugana transport. In the early days, people did not have cars. Only families that were well off had cars, cars that were in that village were less than five. Therefore, due to the shortage of transport, on this very day according to some participants, the first thing that people do when they start working is to buy a car.

### **The relationship between the bus company and the mine**

Being the only bus company that is operating in the village the Mabirimisa Bus Company has now formed a relationship with the mining company. The company has established a school

that will empower the community members through enterprise development in partnership with RAIZCORP. The school will benefit the village and as well as the communities around the mines, therefore, there was a need for transport to transport students from different villages to the school. The company was responsible for paying the bus fee for each student.

There is only limited transport bus per day that transports community members. The bus leaves the village in the morning every weekday which means that if the bus leaves then it is either you will not go anywhere or one will have to resort to hitch-hiking, there are a few cars in the village. The bus connects the ordinary members of the village to the rest of the world. This is because there is only one road that connects the village with the N1 and the nearest town. This allows people to go to different provinces as the bus company also has buses that take people to Gauteng every day.

In this introduction, I have situated and gave a background of the mining company. I have done this by historically locating the community through networks that connect the community to other places through the transport link. I have argued that the transport background during and after apartheid continue to show the elements of citizen and subjects as argued by Mamdani. It also locates the mining community in terms of transportation infrastructure. In the next section, I will unpack infrastructure to show some of the promises that were made to the people and developments that were influenced by the mine and how people are responding to that mine-led growth development.

## **5.2 Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is an important phenomenon when analyzing the development of a community because infrastructure such as roads, sanitation, and educational facilities are the heart of the communities. This is because better infrastructure, better education, and roads link people to better economic opportunities. According to Lemanski (2019), infrastructure is seen as the core lens for understanding a place. Additionally, political struggles are facilitated through infrastructure. Infrastructure plays an important role in mediating practices and perceptions of citizenship for the local and the government (Lemanski, 2019). This section uses infrastructure as a useful material way through which to explore unequal and exploitative relations. These sections will evaluate infrastructure in the village by unpacking the roads facilities, water facilities, health facilities, educational facilities, power supply, entertainment facilities and new housing developments.

### 5.2.1 Road

According to the South African National Roads Agency SOC LTD (SANRAL) (2019), roads are an important driver for development and create opportunities for many citizens. Moreover, people who were previously disadvantaged and excluded from job opportunities and education are now given opportunities through road networks. For the longest time, the community used gravel roads, the distance between the N1 tar road and the villages is about 7 kilometres. People had to drive for about 7km to access the tar road. A tar road was constructed recently at the village, the main road that runs between houses, one street leading to the clinic and one leading to the chief's house.

The village had a gravel road until 2018. However, the tar road that was constructed does not run from the N1 but 5km away from the N1. The tar road was constructed after the bridge to access the residential area was swept away. Although the tar road ends about 5 km from the N1 community members are happy with the development thus far. This is because when asked about development in the area since the mining development the first thing they mention is the tar road. However, it seems as if the community members do not know who the stakeholders behind the construction of the road are. This is because one of the interviewees mentioned that the mine project has done nothing for the village and when I asked about the tar road, she expressed that the mining company is not responsible for the construction. Moreover, the tar road begins about a kilometre away from the mine gate. The municipality is the one responsible for the construction. The Makhado municipality constructed the road. However, because the mining company promised the community tar road majority of the community thinks that the mining company constructed the road. This has led to some people vouching for the mine to go ahead. Some of the residents expressed the following about the tar road that was constructed and the one to be constructed:

*"I know that a road will be constructed from the mine to N1 but that will only be built to transport mine inputs and outputs"* (Participant, August 2019)

*"The outputs will be transported to Musina using the N1 which will damage our roads and cause more traffic"* (Participant, August 2019)

*"As it is, there are many trucks and overloaded cars from beyond borders of South Africa that use the N1 that contribute to accidents so adding more trucks will make everything worse"* (Participant, September 2019)



Figure 14: Tar road at Mudimeli Village

Source: Researcher



Figure 15: Gravel road from Mudimeli Village to N1

Source: Researcher

From the above figures, roads at Mudimeli village are not in good condition. There are no mining operations taking place yet therefore once the operations take place one would assume that the state of the roads would worsen. Additionally, this is because previous mines at the village and South Africa as a whole has damaged road facilities and usually leave it in the hands of the government.

### **5.2.2 Water and Power Supply**

Limpopo is a critically water-scarce province. The critical ecological sensitivity of the province is threatened increasingly by the expansion of mining industries. As a country, South Africa has been facing a water conflict for some years now and coal mining is right in the middle of this (Groenewald, 2012). Although the government has agreed on prohibiting mining in ecologically sensitive areas, it seems as if this is only on paper and no one practices this. Coal

mining is water intense and deadly because it pollutes water supplies that spread into rivers. Water and power supply are the two most important infrastructure in the Mudimeli village, but these are not adequate now.

Like many other communities in Limpopo, the Mudimeli community is at the coalface in the fight over water. The right to water as stipulated on the bill of rights could be violated because of high water consumption and pollution. Although the mining company got a water license from the Department of Mineral Resources there is no clear indication or view as to where the water will come from. Mining requires large quantities of water; coal mining needs water to wash coal and to help control dust. The community has access to electricity powered by Eskom. The Mudimeli village got access to electricity in between 2006 and 2010.

The coal seam in this area has been known for decades. However, due to the lack of water in the area mining was on hold. Nevertheless, the mining company is willing to go ahead with the mining process regardless of the water issue. This also one of the reasons there is opposition. Moreover, according to the company's documents the water supply during the construction road will from boreholes, and the Nzhelele Dam being the water source during the production phase. MC Mining claims that it will construct boreholes or provide water to the community through the municipality tap water network. However, this is difficult to believe because as it is the municipality is failing to give people water daily and the company is failing the community before mining operations.

When asked about the challenges that are experienced in the community, water scarcity is the first thing that every participant mentioned. There is no enough water for the community to sustain themselves and their livelihoods. Not only is the community in this battle over water but the farmers around the area as well. Exerting more pressure on the water that is already strained will not be good for both the community and farmers. One of the participants expressed the following:

*"There is no enough water for us as the community, how can we allow coal mining to take place here?"* (Participant, September 2019)

Due to water shortage in the area, some families have boreholes in their yards. The residents fear that they will have to drink contaminated water or that their boreholes will dry up. The consequences of drinking contaminated water are numerous.

*"There is no water in this village. We can go for weeks without water and once there is running water there are long queues at the main taps."* (Participant, August 2019)



Community members complained about having to wait in long queues to fetch water and when they finally do, they have to take the water buckets or bottles, normally 25 litres back home. They do these using wheelbarrows, renting out a donkey cart or place the buckets on their heads. The following pictures show some of the methods of fetching water practiced at Mudimeli Village and surrounding communities.



Figure 16: Donkey Cart fetching water Figure 17: Wheelbarrow from fetching water  
Source: Researcher

Community members also rely on rooftop rainwater harvesting. This is the process of collecting water from places such as the roof, stored in buckets or tanks. They do this by putting their tanks near the gutters attached to the roof as shown in the figure below. The rainwater can last for months if mixed with disinfections. However, rainwater harvesting in the community is limited by the amount of rainfall because it hardly rains in most seasons.

*"It has not rained for the past six months, we have to rely on community taps and buying water from those with boreholes at their homes"* (Participants, October 2019)



Figure 18: Water harvesting method

Source: Researcher

The mining community, as well as the surrounding communities that are to benefit from the mine, have water challenges. As it is, they rely on boreholes, community taps, and rainwater harvesting. No methods are reliable, drilling a borehole at home is expensive, and only the elite can afford to have one. With the community having to share its water source with the mine the condition might worsen. Moreover, the power supply that will be used at the mine will be sourced from the Paradise substation. This means that there will be a greater strain on the power supply.

The access to water is almost certain to worsen with the mine. This then raises questions around the consequences for access in an already precarious context with a municipality already struggling to deliver. The operation of a water intense operation in municipality facing scarcity that is informed by climate and governance raises challenges and questions about the longer-term consequences for communities. Regardless of load shedding that is currently faced in South Africa people in villages around Makhado have been faced with power cuts over the years. On the other hand, communities are going to share power supply with the mine the issue of power cuts might worsen.

### 5.2.3 Health Facilities

Constitutionally, health rights are recognized in South Africa. The health rights of South Africa include both human beings and the environment in which those human beings live in. Although there are legislations that are put into place to protect the health of people and that of the environment companies do not adhere to mining legislation. Moreover, these legislations are just a formality because the government still grants mining rights to companies whose mining operations are within a kilometre from the first house. Mining inevitably causes a decrease in agricultural production when this is so then there is food insecurity in communities that depend on agriculture. Food insecurity has negative impacts on young and old people because it causes malnutrition and old age diseases.

The access to health care services is important in South Africa, therefore, the building of clinics and hospitals is of importance. Although, there is no hospital in the area or nearby there is an active clinic in the village. However, like any other public health facilities in South Africa, the clinic is faced with lack of medication. The limited resources according to the community are not good for old people in need of medication for high blood pressure and diabetes. The young participants acknowledge that due to the influx of people in the village, there might be pressure on the clinic, which might worsen the existing conditions. The mining industry has an impact on the lives of people, both those working at the mine and those living around the mine. The most common health risks are caused by smoke and dust wherein people acquire respiratory diseases such as asthma and tuberculosis. The influx of people from different places also contributes to the increased spread of HIV/AIDS. There is one clinic in the village and if the mine goes ahead, there will be pressure exerted on the existing health facilities.

According to the youth, the government has to make sure that there are proper health facilities and medication. It is part of the government's duty. On the other hand, the old people assert that the opening of the mine might help the existing clinic. This the influx of people due to the mine could be a good thing according to the community because this might lead to the mining company building another clinic or contribute towards building a hospital. As well, a study conducted at Ghana and Mali suggests that the mining industry has a positive impact on children's health, mortality rates decrease faster. This is due to the improvement of wages, electricity and advanced infrastructures (Chuhan- Pole *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, these outcomes are worse for the mining areas in Tanzania. This is also the case with lung diseases and coughing.

#### **5.2.4 Educational Facilities and Development**

Education is also one of the rights that are recognized by the constitution of South Africa. There are three schools in the heart of the village, two secondary schools, and one primary school. One of the schools I saw was not in good condition, with broken windows and weeds right next to classes. At first, I thought it was an old school that was closed down. According to the community members instead of the mining company establishing the Makhado Center of Learning they should have fixed the existing schools first. They named things such as, build sports grounds, and donate computer facilities and built a library that will be of use for everyone in the community.

The sports ground that is currently available to the community has no running water and a toilet, therefore, people have to bring their water and rush home when they have to use a toilet. Subsequently, this sports ground is also used by schools while hosting other schools from outside which then leads to the school asking the nearby houses for toilets. On the other hand, some of the participants are optimistic that MC Mining will provide these infrastructures as it has done in other mining communities such as Musina and Ermelo. The building of new facilities would also have helped to keep young people from the streets to minimize alcohol intake, drugs, and teenage pregnancy in the community. This is one of the dynamics that shows the communication level between the community and the MC Mining that will be shown in chapter six.

Most of the mining operations in Limpopo are situated in most rural isolated communities. These communities according to Mathabatha (2011) have high illiteracy rates. This is also the case with the host community and surrounding communities. However, in these communities, there are educated people, youth that is still at school and dropouts, and, old people with little or no education. The mining company has introduced ways to alleviate the skills of people in the host community and surrounding beneficiaries' communities. The mining company has established an educational programme and has since then provided mobile classrooms at the mine. The school is known as the Makhado Centre of Learning and its motto is 'kha ri gude, let us learn'. The vision of the school is:

*"Striving to be Makhado Colliery's indispensable partner to develop skills, build capacity, and foster social cohesion within and amongst our beneficiary communities. Recognising the role of education in addressing inequality and poverty, the Makhado Centre of Learning seeks to be responsive to the educational and developmental needs of our beneficiary communities by providing relevant education and training programmes, which are reflective of the dynamic environment in which we operate. The Makhado Centre of Learning aims to empower our*

*communities to derive maximum benefit from the opportunities offered by the Makhado Colliery"* (Makhado Mail, 2017:12). Below are some of the pictures from the Makhado Centre of Learning.



Figure 19: Makhado Centre of Learning

Source: Researcher

The school first class was on the 2nd of October 2017, according to the Makhado Mail (2017) the school consisted of ten students from each of the seven beneficiary communities, four students that were selected by the then King of the Vhavenda T.R Mphephu Ramabulana and two of MC Mining employees. Stationery was provided to the students including a monthly bus ticket as mentioned in chapter four. However, community members that were not selected to take part have spark anger accusing that people were selected through nepotism. Conversely, the company would not have been able to take every member of the seven communities. According to the company, the school was established to equip the communities with skills, resources, and opportunities to achieve a meaningful social-economic transformation.

Although this educational programme is a good initiative to the beneficiary communities which are rural communities with no water and tar roads some community members feel that the mining company introduced the school to bribe them into agreeing to the mine going ahead. According to the participant who was involved in the mining industry suggested that these mining companies know that one of the ways to grab people's trust is to establish programmes such as educational training and endorsements such as bursary. On the other hand, there is a rumour going around in the village that people who have finished training are still waiting for the certificates and that those certificates are not accredited. This rumour is going around though on the Makhado Mail (2017) an article suggested that the training is merSETA accredited.

The company has also introduced an enterprise development programme to help create jobs through small and medium enterprises in partnership with RAIZCORP (Makhado Mail, 2017). The programme was introduced for long-term achievement through economic growth. The vision of this programme is "To act as a strategic mechanism to empower our beneficiary communities by creating and developing sustainable businesses through innovative and inclusive interventions" (Makhado Mail, 2017:17). When I visited the school before my Masters' program for something not related to my academics I did find a representative from RAIZCOPRP busy with the programme. When I interviewed the community members, some thought the enterprise programme was the same thing as the learning centre programme. On the other hand, some suggested that the programme has helped some people to establish their small companies because some have also bagged small cooking tenders in the company. Some people have since then registered their businesses and have registered their business on the MC Mining database.

The company has also introduced two bursary funds bursary fund, the MC Mining Bursary Fund to help develop students for the mining and engineering sector and the Makhado Colliery Bursary Fund for the good achievers within the Makhado project area. The residents of Mudimeli village have known about the bursary since 2008. In 2018, bursary forms were also accessible at different local schools. The bursary is for undergraduate achievers, at the beginning of my studies I was told by one of the employees at the mine to enquire if they fund postgraduate students from the local communities but I was unfortunately told that the bursary only funds undergraduates. However, while I was going through the company's documents (MC Mining Integrated Report, 2018: 34) I read two stories of two postgraduate students who were funded by the two bursary funds.

In 2019, MC Mining launched an artisan programme to help students from the beneficiary communities complete their technical training. The programme currently has three students (MC Mining Annual Report, 2019). During the interviews, I realized that the majority of the residents are not aware of technical courses that might be of use at the mine. These courses include boiler making, fitting and turning and diesel mechanic. Although it is an individual's responsibility to research on different careers the community suggested that the company should have advised them on some of the careers that are needed in the mining industry.

Although there is room for improvement educationally through building more schools with better infrastructure there is also an ability of the mine negatively affecting the education system of the community. This is because young people that see opportunities for working unskilled labour jobs will leave school to seek work opportunities at the mine. Moreover, according to the study of Ebenstein, and Roth (2012), pollution affects cognitive outcomes and educational achievements due to bunking off school. With young people leaving school, the community will be stagnant as there will be no skilled people in the community. This also contributes to the exploitation of the community and its members by the mining company. The company has introduced skills development initiatives that have helped the community and continue to. However, there are discrepancies involved and these initiatives have sparked social problems within the community and surrounding communities and will be shown further in the emergent contestation section.

### **5.2.5 Employment Opportunities**

Mining is said to be one of the industries that employ a lot of people in South Africa. This section unpacks employment opportunities by discussing the employment opportunities of local communities to date, Local Economic Development, resort and game reserve, informal economy, renting out rooms and finally shows how different stakeholders will benefit from the Makhado mine. It also argues the negative and positive effects of mining employment through the formal and informal economy. The majority of community members are unemployed. Therefore, they are excited about the employment opportunities that the mining project will offer individuals and the community as a whole although the mine has not started operating people are working.

The Makhado mine will benefit seven communities including the host community. The following figure shows how each community including the BEE beneficiary and the IDZ will benefit from the mine project.

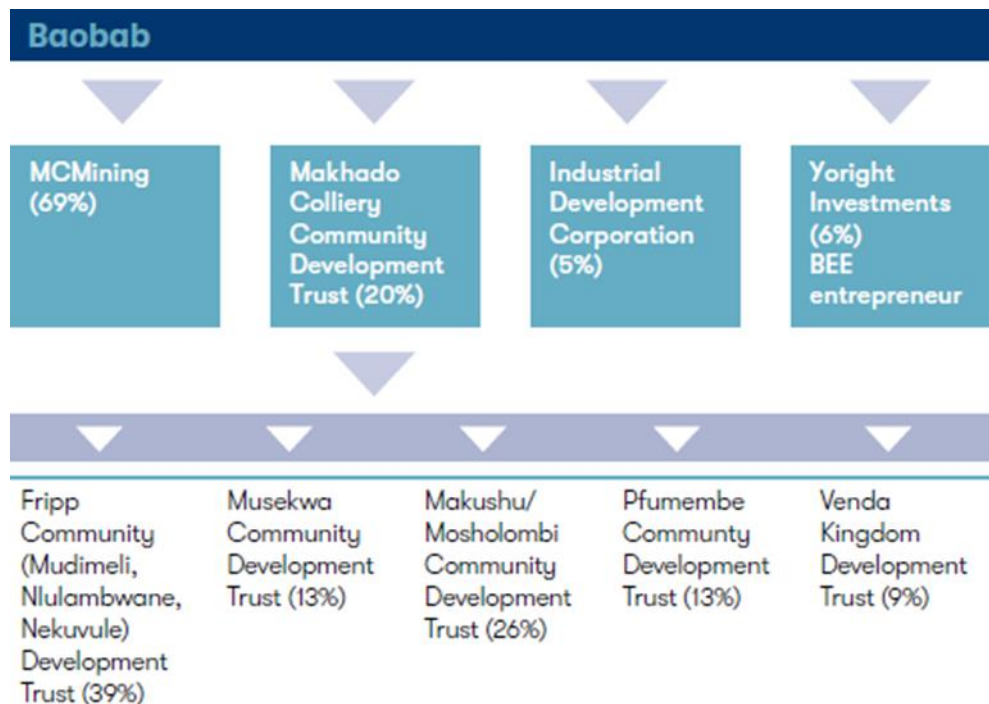


Figure 20: Beneficiaries of the Makhado Project

Source: MC mining Integrated Report, 2018: 26

The Makhado Centre of Learning has employed at least ten people from the host communities and beneficiary communities. According to the company's annual reports, the mining company will employ 750 people during the first 12 months of construction and 650 people will be employed during the mine operations. As to date, at least ten people from the seven beneficiary communities have been employed. The centre has administrators, leaders of different skills development programmes and securities. Although the administrators and security guards are not all from the host community, members of the community are glad that as a community they are going somewhere.

Local Economic Development (LED) is about local communities working together to achieve sustainable development through proactive access to increase employment and the quality of life (Mathabatha, 2011). One of the components of LED is Small and Medium Enterprises (SME). Although most of the small businesses that are linked to the mine are not associated with the mining company the company has urged people from the hosting community and surrounding communities to register small and big companies to provide services to the mine. The local labour demand framework as explained by Moretti (2010) builds on the premise that opening a new business generates a new job in the local economy which may generate



additional jobs through increased demand for local goods and services. The opening of the MC Mining project did not only open employment opportunities within the company itself but ordinary community members have also started their businesses that are directly and indirectly attached to the mining project.

When I asked one of the employees of MC Mining before my Masters’ programme I was told that I can register my businesses of any kind that I see could be beneficial to the company and I can then submit my documents that my company can be on the database. The way the database works is that once there is an opportunity that best fits your qualifications and or company one is then called for interview and training as any other job opportunity at any company. The following picture is an invitation that was sent to people through different media platforms.



Figure 21: Invitation to register to Makhado projects database

Source: participants 2019

Different tenders are given to community members as well as the communities that surround the mine. People were told to apply for different small tenders such as the provision of stationery, cooking tenders, cleaning tenders, and security tenders. However, since the mine has not started operating people are currently taking part in cooking tenders during meetings. Community members are excited about registering their business. However, they fear that in practice most of the local people lack skills and education that will place them in first place for employment opportunities wherein they will suffer employment discrimination.

There are two resort developments, one along the N1 and one near the mine project. Although these resorts might be under threat because of the mine they will open employment opportunities for the local residents. The resort along the N1 has employed people from the host community as well as those from surrounding villages. The community members believe that as a village they are becoming more modern because of the new resort that was built after the mining development. The resort is situated next to the mine with modern swimming pools and it has the ability to host conferences and weddings, which will attract people to their village. These will then mean that more people will be employed and in turn increase the economy of the village. However, a resort next to the mine might be under threat due to the impacts of the mine that will be discussed later in this chapter.



Figure 22: Board showing the new resort  
Source: Researcher

When I visited the mine before Masters, during the day there was a woman selling snacks at the gate opposite the road. When I recently visited the mine the lady was not there. I then asked around during the interviews and one participant mentioned that she might not be selling there anymore as she was there because there were students on that day. Moreover, the working conditions of vendors there are unbearable. This is because their road is a gravel road and so when cars pass by all the dust goes to the vendors and the products they are selling. In addition to this, there are also sanitation concerns. The participant jokingly said that the vendor's stall is directly next to a game reserve that has lions and although no dangerous incidents have been reported for years, one can never know what will happen next. As much as the company stresses out that it is promoting small businesses, they should have allowed the lady in as there are no spaza shops within the learning centre premises, even if it was just for a temporary time. The following picture shows a warning sign on the fence of the game reserve.



Figure 23: Warning sign of Lions

Source: Researcher

One of the key networks responsible for transmitting benefits to the local community and the surrounding communities is through the direct employment of the ordinary members of the community by the mining company than through sub-companies. The employment of people by the company is one of the things that the youth are fighting for particularly in high education institutions and this is known as insourcing. One of the things good about this is that the ordinary people such as security guards and cleaners do get benefits from the company than them being subjected to little or no benefits of the subcontracts. An example of insourcing can be seen at the Wits University wherein general workers can enrol themselves for different courses and earning double in not triple of what they were earning before they were insourced. However, the insourcing of people also has an impact on local tenderpreneurship companies because local companies will not have opportunities in the community. Moreover, due to technological advances, the mining industry does not employ many people as compared to when the mining industry started taking off in South Africa.

Like in many places, the influx of people means more residential infrastructure. Residents have taken advantage of the mining project by renting out some of the rooms at their house. These rooms are old two-room houses that the families used to live in before extending their houses or building a new house altogether. The local members are aware that there will be people from outside who will be seeking accommodation once the mine begins operating. Although the mine has not officially begun operating different people are there on contracts either mine-related, water and road constructions. While interviewing people on a weekend, there were people at their yards and I was told that those people are renting around the community. According to the contractors, renting in the community is much cheaper considering that they

are not from around. Moreover, the issues of transportations in the area are one of the reasons why they are renting.

There are residential vacant stands that are being sold closer to the mine. People are buying those stands with the idea to build rental houses to mine workers as a way of generating money. This is also one of the ways in which the local community will indirectly benefit from the mining project once it takes off. The construction of these houses on vacant land and existing yards, according to Lemanski (2009) people build these houses as a livelihood by renting them out. Backyard rooms help sustain a family financially while providing accommodation to those that do not afford high rentals in the city. In this case, it will be people from near and far communities who will be working at the mine.

Agriculture is an important sector in South Africa and Africa as a whole. Although mining has a negative impact on agriculture, mining operations can also impose a positive impact on agriculture. This is because of the mobility of sectors, the increase in wages in some sectors leads to an increase in demand in locally produced goods such as agricultural produce. This in turn benefits the agricultural sector.

Both the mining company and the local communities have implemented many strategies to develop the community. With that said, these strategies are coupled with shortcomings, gaps, and uncertainties. Accessing the venue for one to register is a challenge because of the transport issues as discussed earlier. Moreover, people with qualifications that could be of use at the mine even before projects take-off have been on the database for more than five years. Outsourcing is cost-effective for the sustainability of the economic impact. According to the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (2002), the contractors and their employees spend most of the time in the local economy, which means that monetary injection increases. This however in the mining communities of South Africa poses a threat to increasing poverty, the influx of people and poor living conditions. Foreigners or people outside of the local community and the surroundings also take the managerial positions.

Additionally, community members assume that their other fear is that local businesses, more especially those of people from villages that are not well established may be unable to provide some of the industrial services of the mine. This will then put them in the position of fighting for positions with well-established national and global companies that have been in the industry for years. In turn, this will contribute to the profits of the national and global scale rather than the local scale whereas the loss of livelihoods, environmental impacts, and social ties are felt

at the local level. The informal economy is one of the ways that people use to better their livelihoods, but these people are often excluded from workplace policies and government legislations. This then means that people have to adhere and cope with any working conditions that they are faced with. The mining industry attracts a lot of informal economies and it is therefore important for the company to include them in their strategies.

The discourses of networks particularly social networks are visible with the issue of vacant land near the mine. There is vacant land next to the mine project that the Kuvule clan (family fighting over land) is selling to people. Although people have built shacks in that area, there is no access to electricity and water yet. Moreover, people are buying those house stands to build rooms that they will rent out to migrant miners once the mine starts operating. However, even people from outside are being sold those stands. This means that people from other communities will indirectly benefit from the mine operations.

Although some community members emphasized that they should be selling land to community members, selling to outsiders is inevitable because there are chances that outsiders will send the residents to buy on their behalf in exchange for something or only because they are relatives or friends. On the other hand, mining communities all over South Africa have been complaining about cracks on their houses due to the blasting at the mine. Although one of the participants who are involved in the mining company mentioned that the company would inform the community of the dates and times in which the explosions will take place it does not take away the negative impacts that come with those explosions and the community cannot do anything to protect their houses. The cracking of walls then puts the lives of the community members in danger. People are forced to fix their walls now and then, which can be expensive.

During my honours degree, my research focused on the backyard rooms of Cosmo City. Throughout my study, I was exposed to the negative impacts that are brought upon the community through backyard rooms. The host community has a water challenge, this has been the case for decades, the introduction of the mining project and new people in the community will continue to put pressure on available water. The community does not have sewage pipes, legal dumping sites, and running water. The increase of people will then contribute to illegal dumping sites than those that are already there. If by any chance the municipality or the mining company introduces sewage pipes they should construct this bearing in mind that there will be new people in the community once the mine starts operating. This is because during my honours study I realized that the existing sanitation structures were built looking at the number of houses there and not thinking of the possible influx of people. The reason why there is

damage to sanitation and water in communities with backyard rooms is that the infrastructure was not conducted to cater for more people.

Limpopo province consisted of a large rural population that takes part in both subsistence and commercial agriculture as a livelihood. The MC Mining project is situated around agricultural farms. Once the mineral operations finally begin pollutants from those operations will decrease agricultural productivity. This, in turn, aggravates the local economy to those that depend on agriculture as the source of income. The farms around the mine project employ people from the host communities as well as the surrounding communities who are beneficiaries of the mine.

If the mine goes on there is a great possibility that some people will lose their job because of the reduction in agricultural productivity. This also has an impact on agricultural output and household consumption. The government is focused on tackling the unemployment issue and building trade relationships with investors from outside and will do anything to quick fix the situation. According to the community, the government must look into the near future rather than the short-term fix because mining will destroy the land in such a way that agriculture and farming will be impossible. One of the residents who work at one of the local farms expressed the following:

*"I have registered my name on the mining company's database because if this mine goes on there will be job loss from at the farms"* (Participant, September 2019).

Mining operations impose negative impacts on agriculture. Pollution from mining operations affects agriculture in different mechanisms. The pollution could openly affect the yield and health of crops. Additionally, pollutants from the mining operations could harm water and soil. Moreover, through the effect of health and yield of crops, negative effects on water and soil could affect productivity. The mine is situated in the green band of the Soutpansberg mountain range. The local farmers have reached out to the mine and the DME in relation to their concerns over the mine. According to one of the farmers, the department is not doing much to help the situation all the department has ever said to them was that they have heard their complaints and will look into it. There is not enough for farmers that they have to rely on the boreholes however now they have to share underground aquifers with the mine. One of the farmworkers expressed the following:

*"We were told that the mine will go on whether we like it or not"* (Participant, August 2019)

The influx of people in the community has the potential of damaging the environment and its resources due to the pressure exerted on it (Moretti, 2010). The loss of natural resources has an impact on women because they generally depend on natural resources to keep their household going. These natural resources include water and firewood. Moreover, mining has always been associated with masculinity. Therefore, women are excluded from most of the benefits.

This section has unpacked infrastructure facilities in the mining community focusing on facilities that will be implicated by the mine as well as any changes to infrastructure that has been done since the mining development. This section aimed to show that mining has a potential of improving infrastructure but at the same time do more harm to existing infrastructure than improving. It closes off by discussing the discrepancies of the employment opportunities as well as the impacts of the informal economy such as backyard rooms and the direct impacts of coal mining. I argue this by discussing how mining affects the pillars of sustainability namely the environmental, social, and economic pillars.

### **5.2.6 Other direct environmental, social and economic impacts of mining**

Like many other industries, coal mining is associated with environmental degradation, loss of social ties and influx of people at the host communities. This section provides an analysis to address the impact of mining on host communities and the livelihoods of those people. Once a decision has been made environmental and social disturbances take place. Mining operations can stimulate the economy of the host communities by creating economic multipliers on the local economy and in return, there is a potential to reduce poverty. However, the use of natural resources through sustainable and unsustainable ways has the ability to improve the wellbeing of the people but in some countries, poverty has substantially increased.

Due to mineral operations being a large pollutant, entities especially coal which is the main mineral in this research, the effects of coal on the environment and health can aggravate poverty. Additionally, according to Pickering and Nyapisi (2017), mines are highly profitable but communities undergo massive distractions without reward. These communities experience a high level of poverty and receive poor basic services delivery and often do not know much of the mining deals in their mineral-rich communities. Therefore, while addressing the impacts of mining on local economies it is important to look at both the positive and negative impacts of coal mining.

Moreover, according to the Limpopo Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (2004) recognizes mining as one of the drivers of the economy in Limpopo, they point out that its potential contribution to economic growth, local development, and job creation. However, most mines in South Africa are synonymous with social problems such as poverty, unemployment, migrations, diseases, and illiteracy. Although the government and the mining companies are trying to reverse this, it is hard to comprehend. The mine is situated at an old graveyard that is a few meters away from the residential area. Considering the environmental and health effects associated with mining the residents of the communities around the mine are not aware of the negative effects of mining but of the positive effects. Although people argue that mining contributes to sustainable development and poverty reduction this is still difficult to gauge.

It is only natural for the community to be excited about the positive effects than the harm that will put people, animals, and agriculture in danger. One can also say that the MC Mining is aware of the lack of education in the area, therefore, they could have manipulated the community leaders in the name of job opportunities and community development. However, some villagers, local farmers, agricultural businesspersons, and activists are aware of the negative effects of opencast mining and warn of the massive harm towards heritage because if the mine goes ahead more mining projects will follow in the area.

The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) (previously the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is responsible for environmental matters by drafting regulations and legislation to govern the mining industry and environmental issues. The mining industry is regulated by DME at the national level, it is responsible for implementing legislation and regulations. The DEFF requires Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management Programmes for any activities that will affect the environment.

*"Although the government gave the company mining rights we are only a few meters away from the mine"* (Participant, October 2019)

The social system of the community is important for the social wellbeing of the people and historical sentiments of the community. The mine is situated at a graveyard that is 250m away from the residential area. If the mine goes ahead, more mining projects will follow in the area resulting in the loss of heritage. The negative effects of opencast mining could impose massive harm towards heritage (considering how African people protect their ancestral belongings). Moreover, due to some innovation such as digging up of graves and building of the tar road the community leaders started opposing the mine operations. On the Special assignment program,



a particular family wanted to enter the mine demarcation so that they can access their graves. This means that there are some graves within the demarcation and therefore those graves are at risk. Moreover, People were promised that they will be removed from the village. This puts a threat on the land that families may have accumulated as well as the loss of their livelihood and livestock. This is because people might be relocated to suburban areas wherein their livestock could be at risk.

This section has discussed the potential direct impacts of mining on the environment. I have shown that although the mining industry is globalised the impacts are localised while the global company and their stakeholders enjoy the profits of the mine away from the local communities. The Makhado mine is not the first mine in the community and although the previous mine had its impacts on the community is still faced with some of those impacts and aftermaths of mining. In the following section, I discuss the emergent brought by the Makhado mine project contestation b in the area.

### **5.3 Contestations in the Village**

Due to the lack of representation at the local scale, there are local opponents and contestations. Therefore, Mining villages are always faced with contestations among the residents, traditional authorities, the government, and the mining companies. After the apartheid regime, South Africa had hope that mines will build a better country, an equal and just society. Twenty-five years after democracy and communities are still faced with fights. The Mudimeli villages face contestation around land claims, relocation arrangements, and arguments around water and the developments that MC Mining has brought to the community thus far. This contestation has since then led different stakeholders to court.

#### **5.3.1 Land claims**

The villagers of the Mudimeli village are a community that was relocated to the area from better land that whites saw as agriculturally appealing. The forced off better land down south of the people in the community then led to a breakdown of royal families, which subsequently led to social change as well as displacement of traditional authorities, or royal families. Although these tensions over who is the rightful owner of the land have been going on for years they became visible after the proposal of the mining project. The reason for this is that different people are claiming the land and want the mining company to compensate them.

The community is divided into two groups, those against the mine and those that are for the mine. However, there are also two groups between those that are for the mine and this contestation is mainly caused by land claim feuds. The Musekwa royal family wants the mining company to compensate them before the mine can go ahead but the Mudimeli royal family, Sthakhathakha family, and Kuvule family claims that the land belongs to them. According to community members, that are in for the mine suggest that the poor communication and fights between royal families are holding back the official opening of the mine. Moreover, the poor leadership that these families are exposing to the community and the mining company will not only threaten the peace of the community but will allow for the company to exploit the land while the community benefits nothing while they are still busy with court cases.

Some of the traditional authorities are well aware of the damages that mining does to the environment and the health of the people. There is a need for communication between traditional leaders to discuss the impacts of mining rather than the mine taking off while some parties are still ill-informed about mining. Communication between the two will help the wellbeing of the environment and that of the people. One of the high ranked traditional leaders was for the mine until he was sat down by young people and informed him about the dangers of the mine on people. When interviewed it did show that his stance has since then changed. Moreover, a good understanding of mine within traditional authorities will also help the young and the old to understand the mining industry, the coal industry in this case. The following pictures show the two names of the village. The name of the village is Mudimeli village. However, earlier in 2019 the Nekuvule family erected a board naming the other part of the village as the Kuvule village.





Figure 24: Two names of the village

Source: Researcher

The Nekuvule community that is one of the beneficiary communities, the family wants the mine project to benefit themselves and not any other communities. However, although someone from the family has taken up the opportunity to fight for the Kuvule clan the community has stated that they have not sent him to represent them. Moreover, the clan has elected someone to represent them. This shows that not only is are their disagreements between different royal families but also within those families. Although the Kuvule clan according to the person who is fighting for the Kuvule clan is challenging the BBBEE, the mine will benefit all seven communities according to the company. The communities are situated around the mine project as shown by the following figure.

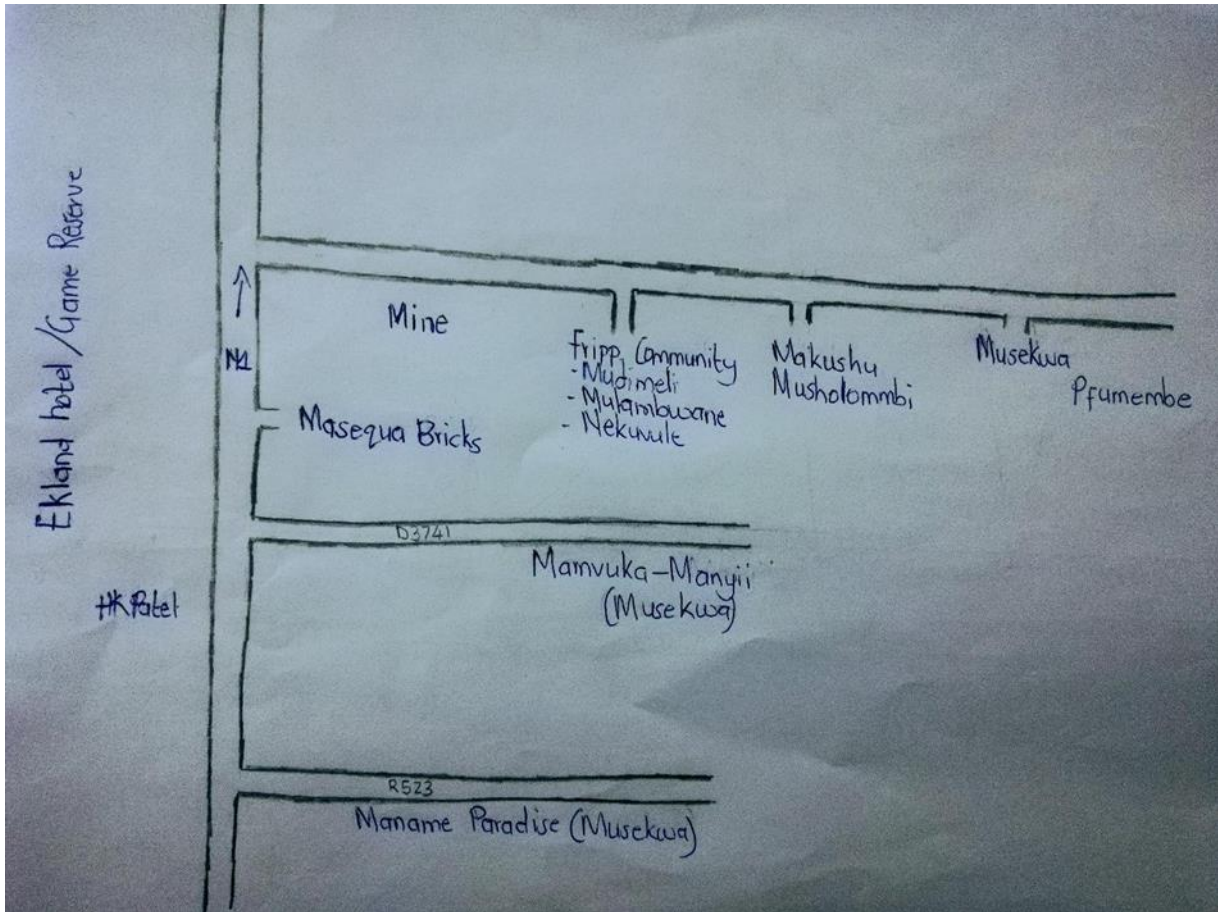


Figure 25: Sketch showing where beneficiary families and communities are situated in relation to the mine

Source: Researcher

It is clear from the above section that beneficiary families and communities are within the same vicinity and share family bonds and facilities such as water and roads with each other. Although these communities live among each other, the mine developments have divided the communities and royal families. This has also led different stakeholders to court.

### 5.3.2 Court interdict

Although there are court cases that have to do with the land in which the mine is situated there are also legal appeals made by environmental activists as well as farmers in the area. Therefore, although the company has obtained permits for the mine, the mine cannot proceed until the court cases are resolved.

### **5.3.3 Relocation arrangements and personal histories**

People are attached to different things especially their personal histories as the village belongs to their ancestors. Black African people protect their ancestral belongings because it is believed that the dead should not be disturbed at their resting place as they watch over them. The mine is situated in a place around three different gravesites, two royal gravesites Musekwa royal family, of the families that were removed from the farms during the apartheid era and the Mudimeli community graveyard. Due to innovations that were implemented wherein it was proposed that graves have to be dug up the community members begun to oppose the mining operations. Therefore, the community activists raised a concern about the sustainability of empowerment. Moreover, relocations disrupt power relations. Therefore the community expressed that power dynamics in new communities might cause rifts.

Most of the participants that are against the mine pointed out that if there can be proper relocation packages then they might change their minds about the mining project. According to one of the participants the company has visited each house with forms to fill in to register their homes, in terms of the kind of house they live in, sanitation, furnishers, and boreholes. This information according to the participant was to be used by the company for compensation during relocations.

### **5.3.4 Split within the community**

Besides water contestations that have emerged between community members, there are things that the community is fighting over and this seems to be breaking the community. This is because there are people that are for the mine and those against. However, within that group that wants the mine operation to go ahead, there are contestations. These contestations are built on relocation arrangements and bursary introduced by MC Mining which has also led to the entrepreneurial school being torched down.

### **Relocation arrangements**

In the mining community, some people are saying if they are relocated to another area then the mine can go ahead whereas some said they would not relocate regardless of relocation arrangements. Most community members agreed to the mining operation after the registered their houses including furnisher and livestock. However, no one has contacted the community in the last three months since then and the mining operations are said to start late in 2019.

However, when this research study was submitted residents are now assuming that the mine might open next year. It looks as if the community is in the dark about the relocation processes because according to MC Mining there will be no relocations, this is despite their promise to the community that will be relocations.

### **Bursary conflicts**

The mining company has introduced a bursary that will benefit the community of Mudimeli and the surrounding communities that were said will benefit from the mine. However, the chief of Mudimeli and the community members want the Mudimeli members to be first preference when it comes to awarding of the bursary. On the other hand, beneficiary communities believe that they are all equal and no community should be given preference.

### **Entrepreneurial school torched down**

Social movements are one of how the citizens of a country communicate with the government (Anand and Rademacher, 2011). According to Anand and Rademacher (2011), there is a relationship between local politics and social movements. "Social movements have been viewed as vehicles through which the concerns of poor and marginalized groups are given greater visibility within civil society, lauded for being the means to achieve local empowerment and citizen activism, and seen as essential in holding the state to account and constituting a grassroots mechanism for promoting democracy" (Bebbington et al., 2008:1). The privatization of land and water often leads to poor service delivery therefore this becomes the primary reason for these movements. With people getting tenders and some being selected to be part of the learning programme there has been a rise of rampant capitalism which in term has led to protest wherein some of the classes of the learning centre were torched down. The burning down of the school also has a political motive to it as it was burnt down on the 07th of May 2019, the night before national elections.



Figure 26: Entrepreneurial school torched down

Source: Participant, 2019

The social movements caused by the mining industry are evident globally and this shows that power relations are facilitated from the local level to the global level. Moreover, these social movements are planned for high stakeholders to react. However, these social movements delay the development and in some cases put the livelihoods of people in danger. For example, when the classes were burnt down people had to miss class. Also, the mining company had to fix the classes using money that they might have used to maybe develop the community. Moreover, due to the fluidity of scale, the social movements at Mudimeli village can be seen as a transnational social movement because not only did it affect the local scale but also the global scale. National and global investors ran at a loss when the property at the local scale was burnt down. The school had to close and was then reopened in July 2019 as shown in the notice below.



Figure 27: Reopening of school after being torched down

Source: Participants 2019

From the above figure, it is clear that MC Mining is trying to make the Makhado Colliery Centre of Learning work. This is because even with the school torched down the company took two months to fix the school for classes to continue.

#### 5.4 Post Mine in the Area

The post mine in the community shows how the promises of infrastructure have played out. The ruins that are left behind are a contrast to the promises made at the start. The promise of infrastructure, anticipation and consequences into the future. All the points in this chapter speak to these questions in some form on the mining development, infrastructural promises and what materializes. Communities around the operating mines in many parts of the Vhembe District were once guaranteed economic development as well as sustainable development however after over several decades people still await for the mine to fulfil the promise. It is debated that this is because that person responsible for those mines do not adhere to the regulations of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) and other regulations of mining. It is therefore important for the mines to take into consideration social responsibilities and working towards sustainable development for the community and the environment.

The government has in place the MPRDA, which effectively nationalized mineral rights and made government the protector to which mining companies would need to apply for mining



licenses. Applications for licenses would be granted conditional on meeting policy requirements that emphasize community development through various instruments. Although South African policies have changed how mining companies do business in the community, communities are still faced with negative impacts of mining and it is quite clear that the government cares about economic gains as compared to the well-being of the communities.

On the east side of the village is a mine dump that was dug up in the 1960s by the ISCOR Company. This mine had an impact on the vegetation in the village as well as dust from the mine coupled with dust caused by trucks. According to the community, there is no positive thing to show that the old mine has done for the village. MC Mining has since then fenced off the pit but no rehabilitation has been done thus far. Pictures of the pit are shown below.



Figure 28: Post mine pits at Mudimeli Village

Source: Researcher

According to one of the participants, the demarcation fence of the old mine has negatively affected them because when it rains they use to fish at the dumps and they use those fish for subsistence. Community members did not see anything wrong with eating fish from the mine dump though they pose a toxic threat to their health. Additionally, the demarcation fence also meant that the cattle could not access water and crops. Therefore, the community has cut the fence so that the cattle can access the dumps for grazing. However, some signs prohibit people from drinking water or swimming in the dumps. On the hand, the community fears that children might play at the dumps.



Figure 29: Demarcation fence at the old mine

Source: Researcher

The previous mine projects in the community took place during the apartheid era. One would assume that due to the injustices of apartheid people had to adhere to living conditions then but this continues even after apartheid. The post mine in the village did not develop the community and so the residents fear that the recent mine development might bring worse impacts to the community than that of the previous mine. The following section discusses contestations in the community that are directly and indirectly linked to the mining development.

## 5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the local Mudimeli community has always been cut off, they have always been subjects to other powers for the development of their village. These powers have disregarded them to extract wealth and achieve political economy from their mineral-rich environment. I have used Mamdani's argument of citizenship and subject to show that even in the post-apartheid era people are still treated as subjects rather than citizens of rights and their access to resources is always through gatekeepers. Through observations, content analysis, and interviews this chapter presented the developments that the mine project has brought to the community.

The infrastructural lens is made in the present, however, they are often incomplete and not fully delivering their potential. They often appear as ruins of those infrastructure promises his included infrastructure, skills developments, and employment opportunities. Mining communities in Limpopo have been historically unattended. Therefore, the demands over the lack of infrastructure and job opportunities are common

Additionally, since the mining industry is a dirty sector this chapter also discussed potential positive and negative impacts that the mine might bring to the host community and surrounding communities. Land claims in South Africa are significantly growing and the host community is one of the communities faced with this. The mining project has caused contestations between various royal houses wherein they are claiming the land for compensation regardless that they are beneficiaries of the mine project and own different stakes of the project. Not only are there contestations among royal families but there are splits within ordinary residents.

The post mine project at HaMudimeli has shown that when a company approaches a community there are different expectations that the community has and these are generally positive developments. On the other hand, the previous mine project in the area has shown that promises are not always fulfilled but these mining companies do more harm than good. At the end of it all, they leave the communities damaged and in extreme poverty. Moreover, locally, the mining company is responsible for four mining projects and one mine that has closed down. The mine has connected these mining communities because issues that were raised concerning the Vele mine that is situated next to the listed World Heritage Site, the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape are similar to that of Makhado mine situated next to functional farms and villages.

In the following chapter, I will show how the gatekeepers' system work and how the community and the mining company never have the full vision of each other because of those gatekeepers' systems. It also looks at how the local community views the global networks that the mine is connected to. It further analyses how the company understand the local expectations discussed in chapter five.

## **CHAPTER SIX- THE ROLE OF GATEKEEPERS AND INTERFACE WITH GLOBAL NETWORKS AND HOW THEY UNDERSTAND LOCAL EXPECTATIONS.**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In the previous two chapters, I have shown how the mining industry is globalised, but at the local level the local community remains always cut off from accessing global networks. They are always driven by perceptions of those on the spaces. The gatekeeping system functions so that the mining company and the community never fully see each other. Over the years mining, communities in South Africa have shown that there is a common lack of transparency and responsibility by traditional authorities and companies responsible for the mine project towards the ordinary residents (Pickering and Nyapisi, 2017). This chapter analyses the interface between gatekeepers (traditional authorities) and global networks, it examines the community's views on the global networks that the mine is connected to. It does this by analysing the role of traditional authorities as gatekeepers, the communication between the mining company and the local community, and the views of local people. Although the mining project has not taken off it is important to look at what the company has done thus far and the communication as well as the agreements between the community and the mining company.

According to the company the "MC mining operates in a very dynamic, multi-stakeholder environment which includes shareholders, communities, government, environmental groups, and the broader civic society. Perceptions towards mining and its impacts remain negative, and there is increasing opposition to mining projects" (MC mining Integrated Report, 2018: 25). In most cases where there are mines, the host communities do not know much about the companies that are responsible for those projects, this chapter, therefore, unpack the knowledge of people about the company and finally analyses the development models of the company to evaluate whether the company has taken into consideration the expectations of the local community.

### **6.2 Involvement of the Community in Decision Making**

According to the Corruption Watch (2018), the mining industry is a source of wealth for both the national scale and personal level but this is coupled by pain and controversy. People who go through the pain are normally the mining communities that are not even part of the decision-making processes. The community of Mudimeli village was once aware of the progress of the

mine but this has changed over the years and some residents blame this on the ongoing contestations and court cases around the mining project.

According to the community, the exploration and the construction stages are an important phase of a mining project. It is at this stage that the mining company must form a trustworthy relationship with the host community but in this case, MC Mining failed to do this. The relationship between the mining company and the community is sour as it is which will make it difficult once the operations start.

Recalling some events of the past, some participants mentioned some of the gatherings wherein they would raise their concerns about the mine project. Although the company does involve the community it seems as if the opinions of the community are not taken into consideration as compared to when the mine project was proposed to the residents. Moreover, there is a knowledge gap because those meetings were conducted by experts. Additionally, the reports of the company are written in English, compiled according to the Australian Securities Exchange corporate governance principles and the US dollar which makes it difficult for ordinary people to understand.

The community has also raised concerns with regards to the water source that the mine will use during operations because this source is also a water source to different communities. Although they have raised these concerns to MC Mining their reports still mention the Nzhelele dam as their water source, therefore, some residents will have to accept this as they are poor and their opinions do not really matter.

### **Liaison officer**

The community has elected people to represent them at the company, these people are mediators between the community and the company. However, due to contestations, the group that was elected has now divided and some of them have decided to leave. This is because according to the participants, after some of the elected group members analyzed the company, the mining industries and what has played out within the community they want to change a lot of things on the Social Labor Plan and Corporate Social Responsibility. On the other hand, the other group wants the mine to go ahead regardless of concerns raised by the chief, the other group and the community.

### **Traditional authorities**

According to Mamdani (1996:1), African countries are faced with challenges of decolonizing the state, deracializing the civil society and restructuring unequal external relations of

dependency. The direct (single legal order) and the indirect rule (free peasantry) that was practised in South Africa can be applied to explain how traditional authorities are gatekeepers of many communities and are part of the reasons as to why those communities are kept away from the rest. The indirect rule is the system of government wherein countries were colonized; the direct rule is the system after decolonization. During the apartheid years, South Africa was experiencing indirect rule. This was because there was a colonial distinction that cities were meant for whites whereas homelands were meant for blacks. This was done by setting people free from political restriction in an 'affirmative action' - making it fair to every citizen. "The direct rule involved the appropriation of land, destruction of communal autonomy, plus defeat and dispersal of tribal populations whereas the indirect rule involved that land was a customary possession, and institutional autonomy and tribal leadership were either reconstituted as the hierarchy of the local state" (Mamdani,1996:146).

Mnwana and Capps (2015) attest that there is a limited focus on processes that outline the organization of power at the local level. In most communities, the chief is the executor of laws and administrator of his area. One can say they are mechanisms used to control people at the local level. This is because one person becomes the sole decision-maker (Mamdani, 1996). In the case of the Makhado mine project, this has led the community to not be able to access information or ask information directly to the company. Ordinary residents access information through traditional authorities and representatives from the community. Although these representatives were chosen from the community most participants said that they were chosen based on their relationships with the traditional authorities. Additionally, people feel excluded because they are not of royal blood neither are they close to traditional authorities. One of the participants said:

*"We do not know much about the progress of the mine because we do not have connections with traditional authorities. All we hear is gossips going around the community but no one comes directly to us. It is clear that if you have no connections you will forever be left in the dark..."* (Participant, September 2019)

The following diagram shows the flow of information from the company to the affected communities. However, the information does not get to all stakeholders. This diagram also shows the hierarchy of the stakeholders at the mine.

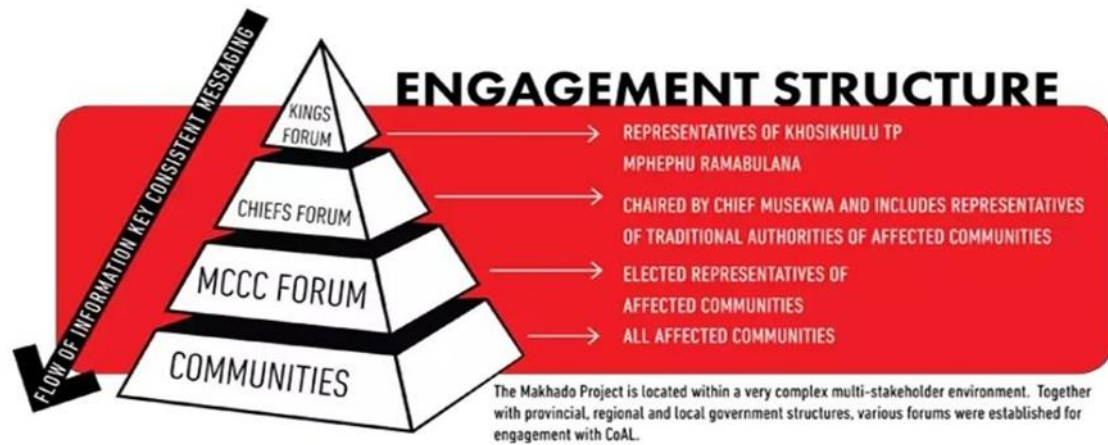


Figure 30: Power relation of information

Source: [www.mining.co.za/sustainability/csr-led](http://www.mining.co.za/sustainability/csr-led)

Traditional authorities at Mudimeli village are vouching for sustainable mining, however, due to the concerns that were raised by the local community they are failing to ensure a sustainable mining project before the mine take-off. It is clear that traditional authorities have power in their communities, but those powers are at the expense of the human and customary rights of the local community. The policies of mining in South Africa such as the MPRDA have helped facilitate the role of traditional authorities in their partnership with mining companies at their mineral-rich land.

According to Mnwana and Capps (2015), "the combined effect of these laws (MPRDA, Mining Charter and related mining legislation) is that chiefs are increasingly controlling the interactions and the traditional communities they formally represent. It is far easier for the mining companies to talk to a single chief than thousands of rural people who are affected by each mining development. As the presumed custodians of communal land, chiefs thus enter into mining contracts and receive mineral revenues on behalf of their rural subjects. With the state's support, traditional leaders have become powerful intermediaries of mining deals and mineral led development in the former homelands."

Various legislations in South Africa have given traditional authorities power in rural areas (Mnwana and Capps, 2015). Most rural communities in South Africa are situated in former homelands that are governed by customary laws. This has led traditional authorities to be sole negotiators in business deals that affect the local community. In black communities, traditional authorities play a very crucial role in the community's development. This is because any development that will affect the community must be reported to the traditional authorities, these

developments generally kick-off only after the chief, and traditional authorities agree. One of the headmen of the communities involved in the mine was once one of the people that the mining company communicated with until he raised concerns about health and environmental issues that the ordinary people would have to endure. This then led to the people like Chief Mudimeli and anyone with any relationship with him removed from the council involved in the mine.

In South Africa, each province except the Western Cape has a provincial law, Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 that relates to traditional authorities. This law calls for the provincial government to ensure transparency and responsibility takes place in the funds of the local community. Therefore, since the provincial government and the premier oversee the management of traditional authorities they play a huge role during the paying of mining royalties to the local communities.

While the host community and surrounding communities are connected through family networks and the royal council, the Makhado mine project has strengthened this connection. This is because the local communities are beneficiaries of the mine project in terms of profit, shares and employment opportunities. Locally, the Makhado mine is not connected to only surrounding communities but to the communities under the Makhado Municipality. This is because when people were invited to register their qualifications on the Makhado Project Stakeholder Management System communities under the Makhado Municipality were invited.

The VhaVenda tribe is one of the tribes in South Africa that has their kingship. The kingdom of the VhaVenda is seen as the owner of the land before chiefs and headmen. The headmen serve as the link between the local people, the chief, and the king. This is the reason why the Venda Kingdom Development is a beneficiary of the mine project, owning 9% of the Makhado Colliery Community Development Trust. One of the traditional authorities who was once involved in the board representing the community initially wanted the mine to go ahead and was promised different things, however, at some point he thought of the local ordinary people and backed down and was then against the opening of the mine. When interviewed he told me that he wants the mine to benefit each individual in that community. He used the Royal Bafokeng mining project wherein even the poorest of the country benefited from the project instead of one of the mining projects in Venda wherein only the chief and traditional authorities benefited. The wealth and social inequality that is being imposed on mining communities have also led to the properties of chiefs being torched in different mining communities of Limpopo.



In the 1920s it was discovered that large tracts of land allocated to the former homelands, particularly those were given to black populations and land that was purchased by blacks contained large mineral deposits. The Royal Bafokeng is traditionally governed (Cook, 2005). One of the black people's groups that purchased land with large deposits was the Bafokeng community. Due to mining extractions being highly expensive and lack of skills within the Bafokeng community, those minerals could not be mined by locals. However, the chief took advantage of the influx of people and companies seeking to mine there by selling prospecting rights. Therefore, this benefited both the traditional authorities and the community altogether. Although some of them do not work at the mines they receive dividends (Cook, 2005).

Since the mine is an open cast mining of coal, coal is a dirty resource that places people's lives at risk as well as biodiversity and indigenous resources. Therefore, according to the participant, the mine will only open if every community member is removed from the village and built a house somewhere far. After the participant raised his concerns regarding the mine they were plots to remove him as one of the traditional authorities in the village. Different families then started claiming that the Mudimeli village is rightfully theirs and therefore they should be leaders of the village. Therefore, the company did not want anyone related to the Mudimeli royal family and the royal council.

Non- Government Organizations play an important role at the local level. They help develop local policies for community engagement and advocacy around the impacts of mining and community development. The farmers around the mine including Petrus Visagie are also against the mine because of risks related to the environment and the health of people. The farm employs residents from the host community and surrounding communities. The people of Mudimeli village, farmers around the mine and ecotourism businesses are opposing the mine and demanding development opportunities. The Bench Marks Foundation, Gaia Foundation, Mapungubwe Action Group, Makhado Action Group and Endangered Wildlife Trust are some of the organizations concerned with MC Mining projects in Limpopo.

According to the court interdict (2018) shown in appendix A, MC Mining says that they have included the community in decision making since 2008. During the interviews, the community said they do know much of what is going on but maybe that can be blamed on the representatives that they have sent to the mine. Moreover, in 2012 the company established a programme known as the Makhado Colliery Community Consultative Forum (MCCCF) to help keep the communication open between the two stakeholders. On the other hand, the community says that they have not seen the use of the forum thus far because the chief of the

most affected community is not part of it. This is because they read about the company online or hear rumours about the progress of the company from the families of the representatives.

*“The mining company is not doing any justice to this community. How can we trust CoAL while Chief Mudimeli is excluded from the forum?”* (Participant, October 2019).

Local conflicts engage in networks with others at different scales. Therefore, conflicts are influenced by political structures. The fancy resort mentioned in the previous chapter has also sparked conflicts between royal families that are fighting over mining rights. According to the community members, the contestations are because of land rights and financial benefits. It is said that the resort is owned by Arabians and traditional authorities were at the peak of negotiations. This shows that the local have limited views and say on what goes on in the area. Moreover, the views of the local people are translated through the lenses of traditional authorities, the local communities interface with the global through traditional authorities. Although people were once excited about the game reserve and hotel developments they are no longer sure about the resort. This is because what they once thought will be their relaxation place away from home might be expensive to the ordinary people but only the elite and traditional authorities will afford. The resort creates the idea of spaces of exclusion and serves as the gate between the local and the global. One of the participants expressed the following:

*“We are now shut out and what we see now are just the fence and the fancy entrance”*  
(Participant, October 2019)

The issues of power, governance and exclusion and inclusion have explicitly shown the relevance and significance of how mining operations are realised and translated on the ground. According to Berger (2003:220), governance refers to the discussion about how to steer the society and how to reach collective goals. Good governance is critical to the success of a community (Baynes, Herbohn and Dressler, 2016). It is about the power to make, implement and enforce decisions as compared to just arrangements about how decisions should be made. Governance allows for the inclusion of society in decision-making, on the other hand, poor governance excludes the local from the wider parts of the society. Moon (2019:5) defines power in governance as the “ability to shape the thinking and/or actions of other actors”. Power is synonymous with influence, “the ability to influence another actor is power” (Moon, 2019). The hierarchy that is evident in the community helps us understand the political structure and outcomes of the mining community. The interactions that exist in the community show how the exclusion of the locals, as well as the influence of gatekeepers, change over time. There is

also an unequal distribution of power among the local people. This is because some people are included whereas some are clueless about the mine preparations.

In this section, I have argued that although the company documents state that the ordinary residents of Mudimeli village are included in decision-making they are not entirely involved in decision making. Moreover, when information about the mine developments gets to ordinary residents it is through a liaison officer and traditional authorities but not directly from the mining company. The section has shown how the gatekeepers system works wherein the community is cut-off and access resources and information through other stakeholders. The unequal sharing of decision-making and development in the area is rooted in the historical processes of exclusion and marginalization. Additionally, there is a need for local people participation to construct a legitimate and socially just mining operation including the government and traditional authorities as well as mining companies accountable for the impacts of mining. In the following section, I analyse MC Mining reports to evaluate and understand how the company understands what the local communities expect from them.

### **6.3 How the Company Understand Local Expectations and the Views of the Community of the Company's Development Plan**

In the previous section, I have shown the involvement of the community is important because the mine directly affects them. In this section, I evaluate community development plans that MC Mining has put in place to help develop the Mudimeli village and surrounding communities. For a mining company to successfully develop a community in which their mine project is situated it is important to understand the local expectations. These expectations are for helping the community work towards sustainable development. Although the mine project has not started operating, it is important to look at the company's development plan. This section discusses and analyses how MC Mining sees the community through models, generic rules and traditional authorities. I achieve this by unpacking the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), community development strategies, Social Labour Plan (SLP) and the community centred sustainable value method of the company.

### 6.3.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

The CSR activities of the company are responsible for infrastructural developments such as clinics, roads, and schools. Therefore, the CSR makes it responsible for the potential growth at the host communities, economically. Good governance is important when it comes to infrastructure development. This is because participation in such projects requires strong relationships. According to Mathabatha (2011), the CSR is obliged to take into consideration the interest of the community while taking responsibility for the impacts of their activities. Additionally, the CSR includes rights (human and environment rights), disclosure of information, and corruption. Moreover, the success of the CSR can be seen at the Royal Bafokeng trust community through the achievements of community development.

However, the formation of the CSR, the SLP, and community-centred sustainable value model at the Makhado mining project was done without consulting the communities and disclosing information, these are the same people meant to benefit from the mining project. This according to one participant who seems to be well informed about how the mining industry operates and how they should be involved with the communities stressed out that they found out about most of the company's community development strategies from documents that the company has published. Below is an example of the sources of information from the company.



Figure 31: Example of the documents published by the company

Source: Researcher

Although one can say that MC Mining is transparent on its social and environmental matters, according to the community, the company does not distribute those documents to people but one can access those documents at the entrepreneurial school or online. The problem with this is that the community is made up of mostly old illiterate people who cannot read English, the documents are published in English. Getting inside the school if one is not a student it is difficult therefore the company's documents are readily available to the ordinary community members.

The community has complained about the development strategies and they wished that the company should have communicated with them because they have now concluded that the company is using strategies that they have implemented somewhere that might not fit within their community. This is because development strategies that have been implemented at Makhado were adopted from Vele Colliery, the Musina mining community. Moreover, they suggested that the company's primary strategy is to make a profit while helping and developing the communities is the least of their worries. The government putting its trust and hope on foreign private companies to better-off local economies is also a problem, these companies often leave communities once they are done mining and this means the community has to go back to the drawing board, economically, environmentally and socially.

### **6.3.2 Community expectation and development**

Community development agreements are important in mining cases because the environmental and social impacts are borne by the local communities (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013). The profits of the mine are generally seen at the national and global scale, this is one of the reasons as to why contestations emerge between the mining company and the local communities. According to the community, there was no community development agreement between them and the company however they just see developments.

One of the participants who sounded knowledgeable about the way things should have been done suggested that if the community development agreements are used to enhance the community they can also be helpful when minimizing the negative outcome of the mining projects. This is because they would have educated people about the mine and its impacts and therefore the community and the mining company will work together for the better of both the mining project in terms of profit and that of the community in terms of environment, social and

economic outcomes. Moreover, community development agreed between the host community and the mining project to help ease the tension between the socio-economic development, protection of cultural footprint and tradition as well as bio-physical environment. Additionally, this is a concern of all the three levels that were explained in chapter four, the local, national and global scale (Rudi, Azadi, & Witlox, 2012).

According to one of the participants, the miscommunication between the two stakeholders is the reason behind the confusion regarding the development such as water and road construction in the community. Some of the community members suggest that the mining company is behind the developments whereas some say the municipality is responsible for the developments. Moreover, one of the participants stressed out that if there was any community development that was communicated with the community done through the community's representatives the ordinary community members were not told about it. According to Haselip (2011), this miscommunication and imbalances at the local level do not only affect the outcomes of the mine and loss of opportunities for the local people but delays the project and undermines the sustainability of the mine. Sequentially, this also leads to the threatening of the economic strength and survival of the mining company leading to the government being unable to adhere to different policies of mining in the country.

According to O'Faircheallaigh (2013), mining projects often affect the host community as well as surrounding communities. The communities of the neighbouring communities, communities that are supposed to benefit from the mine do not know much about the developments as nothing has changed as yet, however, they know that they will be the first preference when it comes to jobs at the mine. This is because the mining company registered their names back in 2014 before any other communities. Moreover, regardless of them being part of the seven beneficiary communities, they fall under the Makhado Municipality in which the mine is situated. This is because in July 2019 there was an invitation of Makhado Municipality residents to register their names and qualifications for employment database and business registrations for tenders. The residents thought that only people from the seven beneficiary communities will work at the mine.

### **6.3.3 Social Labor Plan**

According to the MC Mining Annual Report (2019: 31), the company has a five year SLP plan. It states that “through the Company's SLP programmes, investments in the fields of infrastructure (upgrading community water supply, upgrading of roads, paving of sidewalks), health (supply of mobile clinic) and education (upgrading of schools, supply of learning and teacher support material, electrification of schools) the well-being of beneficiary communities is improved”. According to the company safety, health and the environment are at the centre of the company's activities. To make sure that every member is involved in the care and maintenance of the company and the mine project the company ensures that safety and risk assessments are done.

On the health issue, the company is focused on reducing diseases such as TB and HIV and Aids. However, concerning the mine projects in Limpopo, the company is focusing on the issues of malaria. This is because the area is prone to malaria, therefore; the company will be involved with the treatment and prevention of malaria especially in rainy seasons. On the other hand, the environment is an important factor and the two other factors, safety and health depend on the environment. For example, at the Uitkomst colliery, the company has a programme that is making sure that they are complying with the regulatory requirements while making sure that there is minimal impact on the environment, principally water resources (MC mining Integrated Report, 2018).

### **6.3.4 Community Centred Sustainable Value Model**

According to the documents of the company, the company strives to progress the sustainable development journey through the four pillars, the people, the planet, profit, and governance. MC Mining is committed to empowering people and plans on doing this by introducing programmes that address education, employment, and services. Additionally, the company has been trying to achieve this because although there are contestations around these programmes they are up and running. While dealing with the mining industry the planet is one of the factors that deal with the consequences of the project, during the process and after mine closure. However, according to the company, the company does not address the challenges that will be imposed on the planet earth. On the pillar of the planet, one would expect the challenges, impacts, mitigations, and adaptations of the mining industry however the company talks about

how economic development is vital for more positive impacts and how they will employ people from the local scale to the provincial level. This pillar focuses on financial progress rather than sustainable environment progress.

On the other hand, the profit pillar does touch on the environment wherein the company strives to operate in ways that their business profits will successfully coexist with environmentalism. Henceforth, environmental programmes are aligned with operational growth requirements. The fourth pillar is the governance pillar; this pillar focuses on the interaction between the company, the host community, the surrounding communities, and key stakeholders. The interaction between these stakeholders will be important to attain, maintain and grow sustainable development. This interaction is also vital for the following sub pillars, these pillars were formed as a model launched in 2015 and was named the community- centred sustainable value model.

"The model recognizes the incontrovertible link between MC mining and our communities and is built on the principle of understanding, collaborating, growing, investing, transforming and empowering communities. The Community Centred Sustainable Value Model forms the basis for our engagement activities and transformative initiatives relating to the beneficiary communities. The benefits of working together for a common goal can be far-reaching and will ensure that the benefits of mining are discriminated through equity ownership, job creation, skills development and capacity development, enterprise development and investment" (CoAL Integrated Report, 2017: 17). Moreover, "CoAL has developed a broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) strategy, which seeks to maximize the benefit of mining for nearby communities" (CoAL Integrated Report, 2014: 18).

The Community Centred Model is focused on the following aspects that will show the ways in which the company understands the local expectation in their documents. I could not interview anyone from the company's and therefore relied on their documents for this model. The model shows that the company strives to do the following.

### **Understanding our communities**

According to the company, they have done a socio-economic assessment in some of the villages. This will help then into building a better community as they will know the necessities of the villages. Although people do agree that the company did engage with them they say that



with regards to what has happened so far MC Mining does not understand the community and its needs.

**Collaborating with our communities**

MC Mining engages with the community through the king's forum, the chief's forum and MCCF and community engagement. The company engages with these stakeholders to make sure the community has access to relevant information about the mine progress and to help mitigate and minimize impacts. The company further communicates with the community through the Makhado Mail. However, according to the community as previously discussed little or no information reaches the ordinary residents.

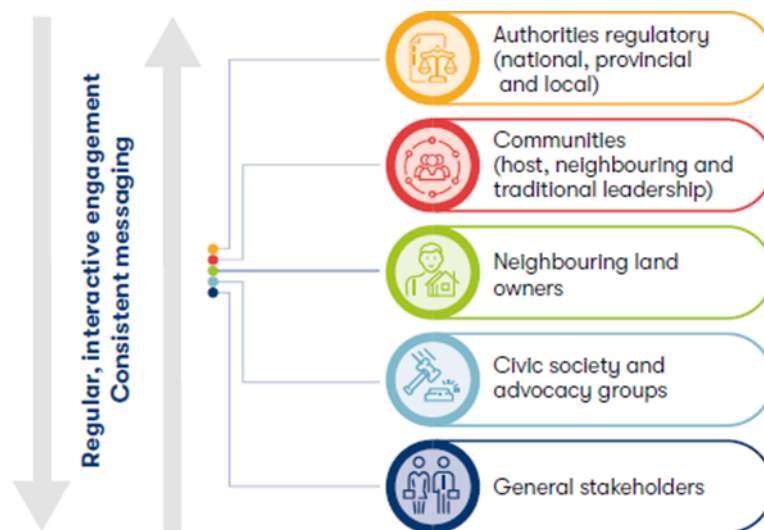


Figure 32: The stakeholders involved in engagement and communication, according to the company

Source: MC Mining Annual Report, 2019: 19

**Growing our communities**

About 20% of the people of the communities have no schooling. The company has since then introduced the centre of learning, a bursary scheme, and an artisan programme.

**Empowering our communities**

The communities own 20% of the company, through the beneficiary trust the company will then use the beneficiary to improve education, infrastructure, and health. Additionally, 60% of

the jobs at the Makhado Project will be obtained from local communities. MC Mining has also introduced a programme to guide entrepreneurs.

### **Investing in our communities**

MC Mining will invest in water supply and the Nzhelele road. In contrast, as discussed earlier, the communities are currently facing water challenges with the Nzhelele dam, their source of water. The company will use the same dam once the operation starts so their promise in investing in the water supply is far-fetched.

### **Transforming our communities**

MC Mining's ultimate goal of the centred model is to "is to transform our communities, improve their standard of living and building sustainable communities" (CoAL Integrated Report, 2017:19).

According to CoAL Integrated Report (2017), MC Mining has the potential to contribute to at least 12 of the National Development Plan's goals and help address the challenges identified of unemployment, inadequate and poorly located infrastructure and inclusive development through:

- Economic infrastructure
- Economy and employment
- Ensuring environmental sustainability
- Developing an integrated and inclusive rural economy
- Positioning South Africa in the world
- Transforming human settlements
- Improving education, training, and innovation
- Transforming society

In this section, I have evaluated the ways in which the company understands the Mudimeli village and the developments that the community expects. Although the company sees the community through models and generic models these models have the potential of developing the community. On the other hand, when one goes through the reports of the company it is clear that the company sees these models of development as a procedure that they have to take with regards to the mining legislation of South Africa. Moreover, according to the community they were not contacted to discuss the SLPs and the CSR activities. In the following section, I analyse how the community see the mining company through maps and representation of geographic knowledge as well as how the community views their location in relation to other places.

#### **6.4 How the Local Communities View Global Networks and Knowledge of People about the Mining Company**

This section analyses how the community see the mining company. The section was generated through participatory observation and focus group discussions wherein participants had a mapping task. This map task shows how people view the global networks that the mine in their village is connected to. This is to show how the local community is connected to the rest of the world. Moreover, this theme also shows how people view and understand the world. It is clear from the previous chapters that the community see the mining company as something that creates inequality, might bring potential promises but also broken promises.

##### **Views of people about the world translated through the lenses of map**

This was generated through focus group discussions wherein participants had a mapping task to show how local people view and understand the global networks that their village is connected to. These maps helped understand the behaviour of the local people on the perceptions that they have of their spatial environment. Participants included youth aged between 23 years and 31 years. Participants were given a layout of the world map with keys to show each place they should show on the map. First, they were asked to show where on the map is South Africa and Limpopo located. This was to help show their knowledge of the world map and if they know where they are located. They were then asked where the mining company

comes from and finally asked to show where on the map the shareholders are located. The following maps show the results of the focus group discussions.

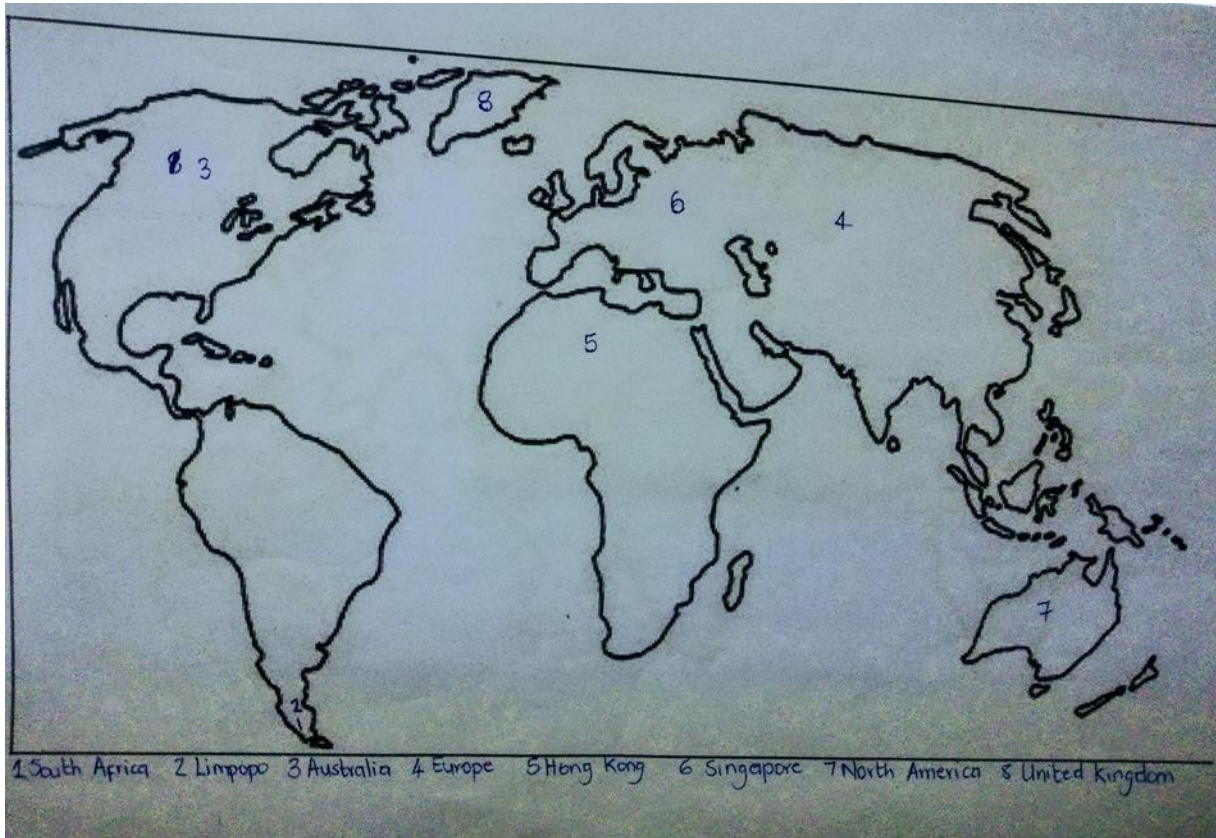


Figure 33: Global networks through geographic representation

Source: Researcher and Participants

Although this person has wrongly identified where South Africa and Limpopo are situated on the world map it is important to note that this participant knew that South Africa is situated at the end of a continent and it is a pointy country. Moreover, South Africa is at the south of the world and away from everything and this is what this participant has shown in this task. This participant is aware of where things are located in relation to where they are situated on the world map.

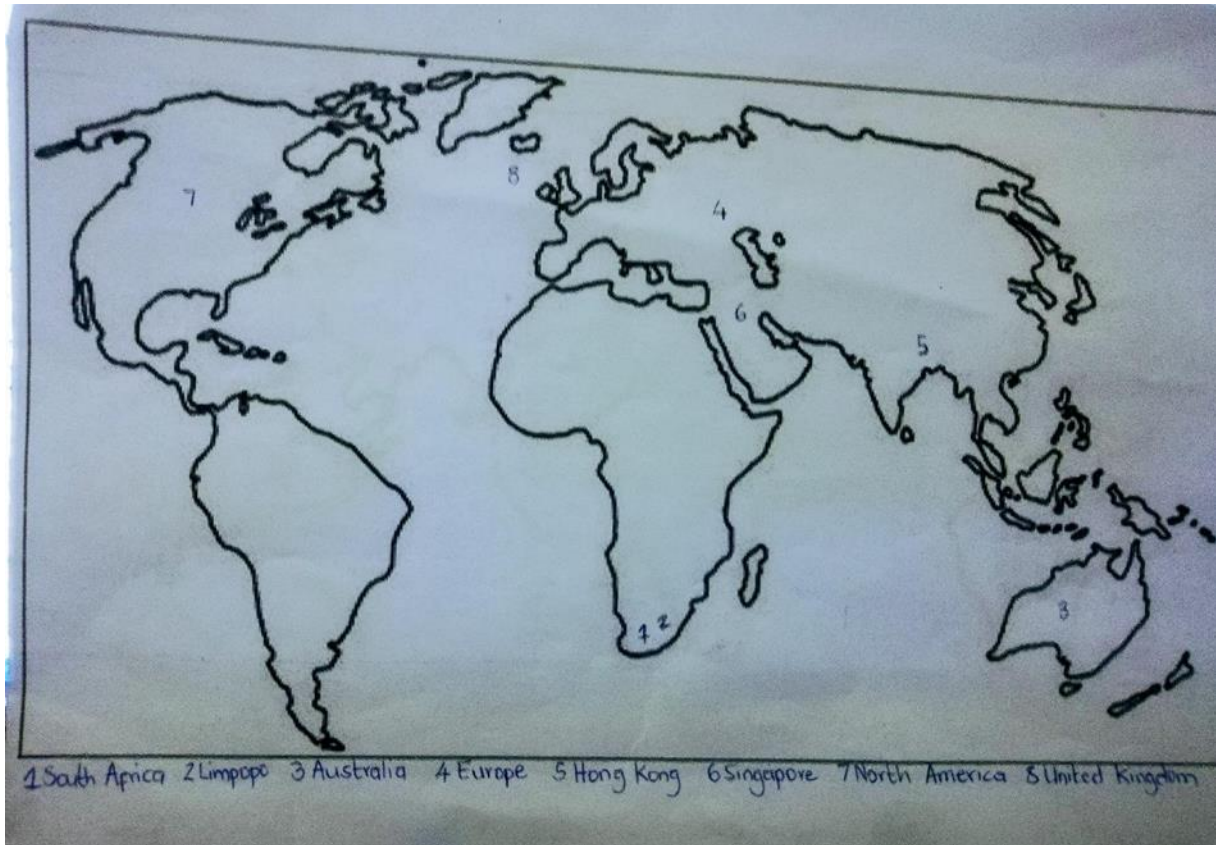


Figure 34: Global networks through geographic representation

Source; Researcher and Participants

This participant has shown that maps are powerful tools that can be used to show one's geographic knowledge and how one view and understand the world. The participant is aware of and understands the symbolism of reading a world map in a scientific geography way. This participant has shown that they know and understand different continents and shapes of those continents.

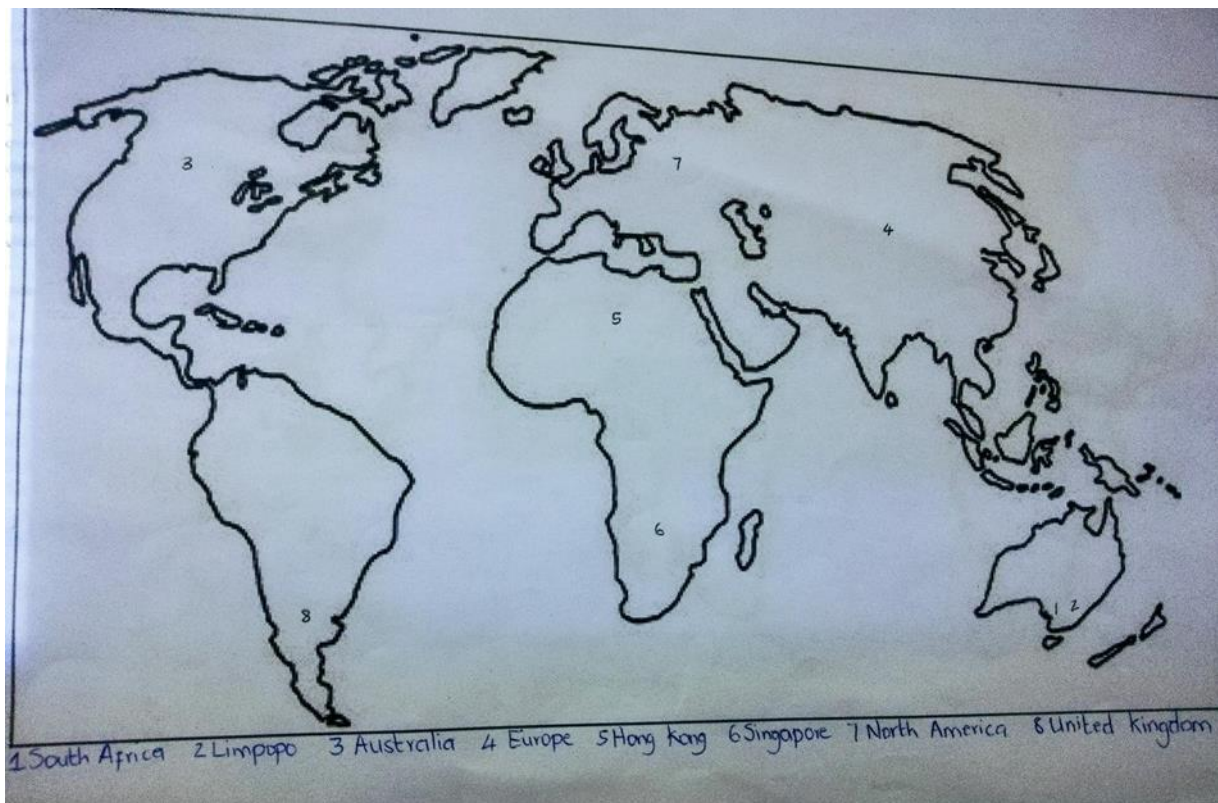


Figure 35: Global networks through geographic representation

Source: Researcher and Participants

As I have said in the first image, it is clear that participants are aware that South Africa is situated at the bottom of a continent. Moreover, they are aware that Limpopo is a province in South Africa and therefore cannot be separated on the map. One can say that this is because of their geography education but the person demonstrates his or her understanding of their location within the broader global location. They have situated South Africa downside far way from other countries.

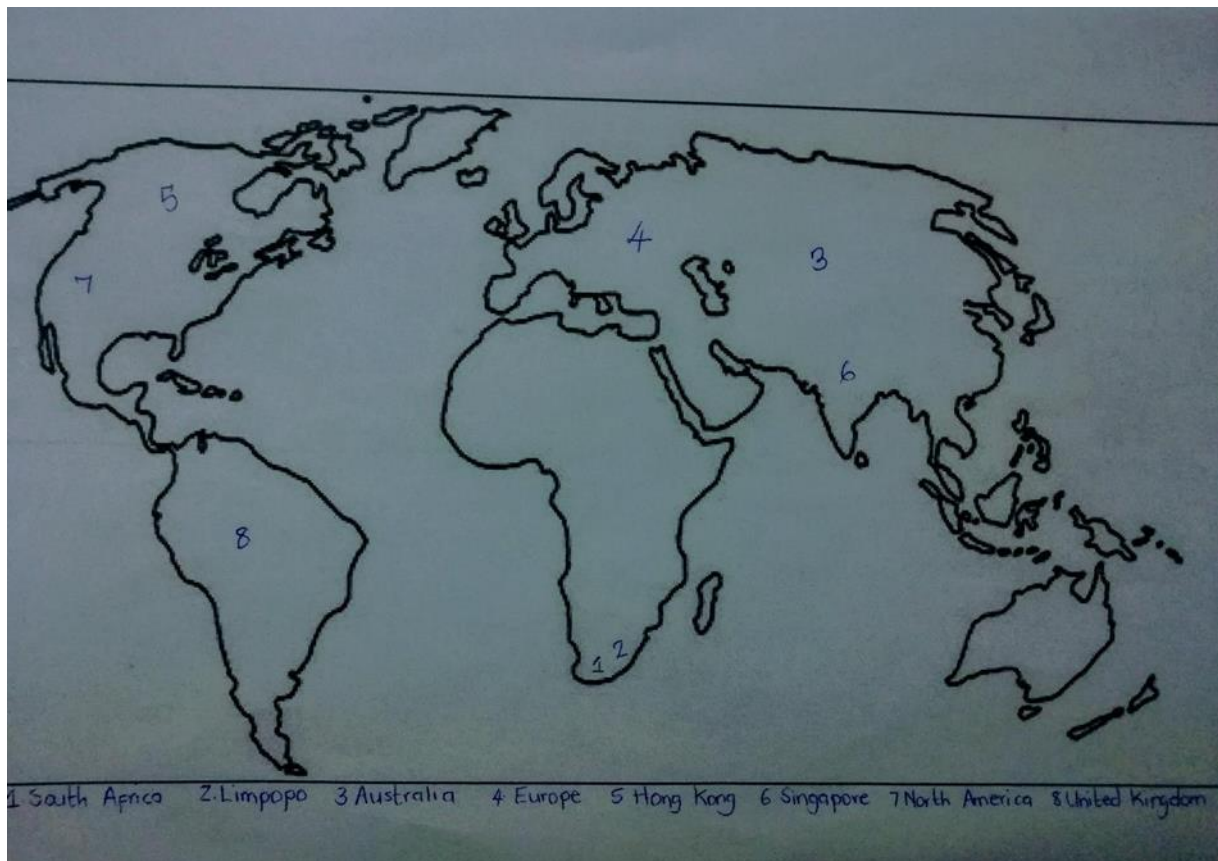


Figure 36: Global networks through geographic representation

Source: Researcher and Participants

The way this participant completed the map task is not different from the other four maps. Although some of the participants could not identify where different countries are situated this participant views and understand where they are situated in the world map as well as other countries. It is clear from the task that participants are aware of where things are located. They are aware that South Africa is located at the south of the world map and have an idea of where they are located.

One would expect that with the age group that undertook the task participants would miss one or two locations but will not miss where South Africa and Limpopo are located. As it can be seen from the map task it shows that people perceive maps differently and their representation of geographic knowledge differs. With regards to the above maps, although some of the participants are familiar with the world map it is clear that people are not aware of where in the world map they are situated. Therefore locating the mining company was rather impossible.

Additionally, as one can see that people found it a bit challenging to situate different countries it does not necessarily mean that people are wrong. However, it shows that peoples engagement with the world differs and how they understand their relationship with the global. Moreover, these maps show that people have a general sense of where things are located. The graphic representation of the world is a way in which people with geographic education understand the world but just because one does not recognise the geographic representation presented to them does not mean that they are not aware of what is going on. Moreover, in the first image, it is clear that the participant knew that South Africa is situated down south and everything else is far away from South Africa, people are aware of the elements of place and distance.

When I asked the participant about what they know about the company all they know is that the company's name is CoAL. They do not know much about the company, where the major shareholders are situated and if they know of the company's offices in South Africa. Of all participants that took part in the focus group discussions, only one participant knew about MC Mining offices in South Africa. Moreover, the participants are not aware that the company has changed its name from Coal of Africa Limited to Metallurgical Coal Mining Limited.

This section has shown how local communities view and understand global networks that the Makhado mine has brought to their village as well as the knowledge that people have about the mine. I used focus group discussion as a research method to argue that although global networks touch down to the local ordinary people are not aware of those networks. Moreover, the representation of geographic knowledge shows that people are aware of where things are concerning place and distance but they view and understand the world in different ways.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This chapter analysed the interface between the gatekeeping system and the global networks. It does this by assessing what the ordinary people know about the mine in their community and their involvement in decision-making. Communication between the company, representatives from the village, traditional authorities and the local residents has dropped due to contestations in the community. These contestations are locally interpreted. Most of these contestations are characterized by the lack of representation of local people in the processes of granting mining company rights. It was shown that space for local people to influence decisions that affect their lives was insufficient. Stakeholders that are responsible for decision-making give the narrow capacity for local people to mobilize their demands. The poor governance which involves the



unequal distribution of power produces unequal access in decision-making. Some of the local residents are aware of the proper strategies that the mine should consult with them before making final decisions.

Using maps, this chapter also outlined how the community understands the networks that this mine has connected them to. The final results show that not many people are aware of the networks that exist between the mine that is located in their village and how connects them to the world. The mining company does not see the community but they see something that their business model must achieve as a procedure. Although the models are meant to develop the community the system is designed to see community development as a procedure of any mining project as stapled by the government. The following chapter presents the overall analysis of this research study and provides new insights on the problem at hand and finally gives recommendations.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN – GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter seeks to present the general conclusion and recommendations of this study. This research study focused on the global geographies of the new Makhado mine project and the local community mine-development expectations. This study aimed to understand the networks that existed between the mine and the different scales of geographies and the expectations that people have with regards to the new mine project. This is to show how mining in South Africa is globalised and how mining is implicated into global economies. It is clear that mining is massively globalised industry but there are key players. This research does not only use theoretical arguments but also make use of methodological argument to show how people engage with their geographies of meaning and belonging.

Drawing from the works of Doreen Massey, Henri Lefebvre and Manuel Castells this study has shown that places and spaces are interconnected and exists within each other. This is influenced primarily by globalization through social, cultural, political and technological aspects. The control over space is a clear representation of power relations in a society. The mine project is situated in a remote village in Limpopo, South Africa but the networks that exist within the mine touch up to the global. This is because of the mining company responsible for the mining project is in Australia but operates in South Africa. Moreover, as shown in chapter four shareholders of MC Mining are from all over the world. The globalisation of mining has local impacts. The impacts are localized and local people are always cut off from the global. The government supports mining development and this is often scalar ambiguity, which examines one scale of resolution that is often viewed from the national context. The mining project is the first MC mining project in the Greater Soutpansberg coalfield area however, the security guard at the old mine told me that MC mining company employed her. This could mean that the MC mining has also bought the post mine in the area or the mining belt in the area.

Infrastructure connectivity has increased due to globalization. In turn, the advances in network infrastructure have fueled the waves of globalization. With the findings in the previous chapter, it is evident that there is a relation between infrastructure and globalisation. The network phenomena help us understand the role of infrastructure in this phase of globalization. The spatial expansion of mining is linked to where industrial mines are established, access to water and new infrastructures such as roads, social relations, political relations and socio-economic expectations are created and reorganized. The physical networks that exist in transport and

communication are interlinked with each other. On the other hand, it remains a question as to whether infrastructure accelerates development and vice versa. A lack of connectivity in the village is a serious advantage in the community. Interconnections are critical for the efficient operation of many networks. The role of not only globalization, but also social networks is evident in this research. Networks are important for individuals to achieve a common goal in a non-institutionalized manner. The local community have emerged as the important go-betweens who are facilitating the acceptance of mining-led-growth by how they view the mine through acceptance and opposition of the coal mine project.

The South African government is involved in the mining industry and this is because the mining industry is a stimulator of our economy. However, this shows the elements of power that exist in mining countries either through the government or through traditional authorities. Not only do networks of mining exist between shareholders involved in the mining project. Different case studies in this study have shown what the Mudimeli community is going through is what other mining communities have gone through. This includes hierarchy or rankings that exist in local mining villages, potential impacts and the contestations that lie within mining communities. The past and present injustices have engendered mistrust of outsiders, however, in this case, the insiders are included, which in this case is the king of the vhaVenda and traditional authorities, and the government and the mining company is the outsiders. The contestation around the mine in Makhado is a result of mismatched principles and values, misunderstandings, uncertainty and inadequate openness that is associated with the mine project. The existence of the powers of the government complemented by policies has negative effects on the local who respond by social movements.

Due to the global problem of mining companies not fulfilling their promises towards the host community this research study also looked at the policies and strategies of the company towards community development. The mining industry in South Africa is protected by legislation. Yet, mining communities are faced with challenges and they struggle to take this up with mining companies and the government itself. MC Mining has the potential of developing the Mudimeli village as well as the surrounding communities. The company has introduced different programmes and employment opportunities to enhance the community. However, the majority of the interviewed residents expressed that they were not consulted with regards to SLPs. On the other hand, if the mine goes ahead the agricultural sector of the North of Limpopo could be endangered and this would mean loss of jobs and agricultural trade partners.

Although the company dismissed people's resistance to the mining project as reported by The Guardian (2017) the interviews that I did in the community demonstrates that there are people who are against the project due to environmental and socio-cultural impacts. MC mining did not carry out proper consultations with the community concerning potential impacts, strategies of community development, regional strategic impact assessment. This is why according to the community, the mining company gained mining rights illegally and it should be refuted hence the local chief, different organisations and farmers are against the mine which has also led them to court. The primary struggles that exist in mining operations is that power and decision making are held by the government that advocates for mining as an economic model of development and the local powers that contests hierarchies in favour of self-determination. Understanding power is essential to understand governance.

Communities are also opposing the mine because of their ancestral graves near the mine, those graves include that of traditional leaders, kings and royal families. The community has a spiritual attachment to the graves of their ancestors, they believe that their ancestors help them to be a sustainable community and their spiritual graves. It is therefore important for the community to preserve those graves. The community has been battling with water issues and although there is a belief that mining helps develop the community, the Makhado mine will worsen this issue. Moreover, the government backs up the mining industry with that mining helps grow the economy, however, when one looks at the history of mining in Limpopo, communities have not successfully and sustainably benefited. On the other hand, mining companies leave the communities worse than ever before with no rehabilitation and proper beneficiation.

The residents of the Mudimeli village remains being cut off from decision making that involves the mine. The community access information and resources through different stakeholders. Even after apartheid, drawing on Mamdani's work people remain as subjects in the community rather than them being citizens with rights. Although the government has introduced the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act 23 of 2009 legislation the ordinary citizens continue being subjects of the traditional authorities. During the previous mine in the community, ordinary people did not have any say of what takes place in their village but this continues even with the recent mine developments twenty 26 years in the democratic era.

Comparing the annual reports of three years, not much has changed, same strategies, same model but over the years the reports included the implementation of the artisanship programme

and MC Mining gaining surface rights. The annual reports take account of matters of sustainable development which includes safety, health, employment, environmental management and CSR information amongst others, the governance of the company and its mines, and annual financial reports. . It is evident that this mining company is using the local to national to global strategy in an attempt to gain access to the community using the CSR.

Most of the researches on mining and mining communities are during or after the life cycle of those mines. More research on mining communities before the mine takes off is needed, this will help analyse where the mining company went wrong in fulfilling their promises as well as mitigating and minimising impacts of coal mining. This research study investigated the issues that are experienced at the local level before the mine project takes off. Not much is known about the mining company, mining industry and the potential impacts by the ordinary in the community. This can be one of the reasons why mining communities suffer once the mine operates. It is therefore important for the government and mining companies to be transparent about information about the project that might affect the community. This study has shown that through networks, spaces and places are connected and are similar but at the same time what might have worked for another community might not work for another.

Corruption poses a threat to the quality of South African democracy and the country's prospects for socio-economic development. The gatekeeper politics threaten the integrity and capacity to deliver. For example, gatekeeping in the ANC refers to how political leaders in positions of authority control access to resources and opportunities to forward their own political and economic ends (Beresford, 2015). Although gatekeeping is not synonymous with corruption, corruption is a pervasive symptom of it. It helps reflect political and social structure through which politics are cultivated, disseminated and contested. It is evident that conflicts occur between scales (international corporations, national government and local actors) and therefore decision-making on mining activities and working conditions are contested in conflicts over mining. Political structures and spatiality influence contestations in mining communities.

On this note, it is advisable that MC Mining should go back to the community and engage with the people and the chief of Mudimeli village, the farmers and organisations involved. Although MC Mining mentions that it operates with the constitution of South Africa it does not commit on preserving every human right, it must, therefore, familiarise itself with the human rights of South Africa as it operates in South Africa. The South African government must develop and implement strategies that will force mining companies to adhere to all South African mining legislation and make sure that no human rights are at risk. Additionally, the fine that mining

companies are given if they violate the rules continue to give those companies a room for violating human rights because they are no serious measures that will be taken against them except that they have to pay fine.

The findings of this study show that the local leadership is at loggerheads with each other wherein people have lost faith and trust in their traditional council. It is therefore advisable that the king, the chief, the headmen and additional members of the council should sit down and sort out their differences. This might be a starting point to help them negotiate and minimise the impacts and benefits of the local people. Moreover, for the mine to develop the community there should be a trustworthy relationship between all stakeholders involved in the mine.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Court Interdict between the mining company and the beneficiary families

[6] Coal says it has engaged with the affected communities since 2008 regarding the establishment of the Makhado Project. In February 2012 a forum called the Makhado Colliery Community Consultative Forum (MCCCF) was established to facilitate interaction between the affected communities and Coal regarding the Makhado Project.

[7] Coal says the MCCCF was established through a negotiated process facilitated by the government. The process involved, among other things, identifying the affected communities, agreeing to a constitution for the forum, and conducting democratic and independently monitored elections of

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community representatives based on an official voters roll. Each affected community is represented in the MCCCF by five democratically elected members. The current landowners of the affected farms are also entitled to form part of the MCCCF.



## Appendix B: Ethics Clearance Certificate

  
UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WITWATERSRAND  
JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

**HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)**  
R14/49 Muzhambi

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**                      **PROTOCOL NUMBER: H19/07/25**

**PROJECT TITLE**                                      The global geographies of mining and local expectations: The case study of a coal mine project in Makhado Limpopo

**INVESTIGATOR(S)**                                      Miss D Muzhambi

**SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT**                                      Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies/

**DATE CONSIDERED**                                      19 July 2019

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE**                                      Approved

**EXPIRY DATE**                                      14 August 2022

**DATE**                      15 August 2019                      **CHAIRPERSON**                        
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Dr A Wafer

**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)**

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature                                      Date / /

**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES**

## Appendix C: Consent Form



### Consent Form Individual Interviews

**Title: The global geographies of mining and local expectations: the case study of a coal mine project in Makhado, Limpopo.**

Researcher: Desire Marandela Muzhambi, 0766779701

Supervisor: Alex Wafer, [Alex.wafer@wits.ac.za](mailto:Alex.wafer@wits.ac.za), 0117176517

Department of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies

University of the Witwatersrand

I ..... agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

I can confirm that I have read and understand or the researcher has explained everything on the participant sheet

Yes	No
-----	----

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw any time

Yes	No
-----	----

The questions about the research that I had were answered in a satisfactory manner

Yes	No
-----	----

I understand that personal information will remain confidential

Yes	No
-----	----

I understand that this research is for academic purposes and data will be stored securely

Yes	No
-----	----

A recording may be taken during the interview

Yes	No
-----	----

.....Name of participant

.....Signature

.....Date

## Appendix D: Participant Sheet



### Participant Information Sheet for Interviews

**Title: The global geographies of mining and local expectations: the case study of a coal mine project in Makhado, Limpopo.**

Good day

My name is Desire Marandela Muzhambi and I am a Masters student in Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my studies I am carrying out a research study on the mining project in Mudimeli. The purpose of this study is to understand the link between global networks and local expectations of a new mine being built. This is because the mining company is connected to different countries. The researcher is interested on the expectations of local people through the mining-led development.

I would like to invite you to take part in an interview. The interviews will take about 45 minutes to an hour of your time. With your permission, I would like to record this interview.

Taking part in this interview is voluntary and will not benefit you in any kind. If you take part in this study and want to withdraw, you are free to do so with giving a reason and you can decline from answering some of the questions. I will be using a pseudonym (false name) to represent your participation, in my final research report.

Any information you provide will remain confidential and will be held securely. This study will be written up as a research report which will be available online through the university library website

Yours sincerely,

Desire Muzhambi

Researcher: Desire Muzhambi, [desiremuzhambi@gmail.com](mailto:desiremuzhambi@gmail.com), 0766779701

Supervisor: Alex Wafer, [Alex.wafer@wits.ac.za](mailto:Alex.wafer@wits.ac.za), 0117176517

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Research Office: Senate House, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor room 10004, [Shawn.Schoeman@wits.ac.za](mailto:Shawn.Schoeman@wits.ac.za)

University of the Witwatersrand