

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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### **#MININGMATTERS TO COMMUNITIES**

*Coal mining companies make a difference to host communities in Mpumalanga*

**Johannesburg, 20 June 2024.** Two major coal companies are improving education, creating job and business opportunities, and raising education standards in their host communities in Mpumalanga.

To develop an understanding of the extent of why mining matters to communities and more broadly to the country, the Minerals Council South Africa commissioned a survey of social indicators contained in the public documents of two of its coal member companies, which account for about 27% of full-time jobs in the coal sector. Many coal companies are not listed and do not have publicly available reports on their social indicators.

The two companies reported they had spent R305 million on enterprise development projects in their host communities in the financial year under review, with 281 enterprises supported and 1,103 jobs created.

They also spent R194 million on socio-economic development programmes.

One company's socio-economic development programme established Wi-Fi connections for 37 schools, 14 community hot spots and 20 school laboratories. Laptops were provided to 449 learners. And about 11,000 learners received school shoes while a similar number of girls received a supply of sanitary towels.

Hybrid maths and English courses were designed and implemented for 28 coal mining community schools, as was a teacher training programme. A holistic education programme implemented in partnership with the Department of Basic Education has improved

educational facilities, school management systems and learner outcomes at 24 primary and high schools, and 26 early childhood development centres.

The full survey of 12 Minerals Council member companies in coal, gold, platinum group metals, diamonds and iron ore represented 59% of total mining sector employment in 2023.

Women employed at the two coal companies accounted for 29% of their workforce, compared to an estimated average of 19% across the mining industry. According to the survey, the coal companies had the highest percentage of women employees of the companies in the report.

Women accounted for 26% of the two coal companies' management. While the survey did not break down the categories of management, the 2018 Mining Charter has set targets of 30% of junior management roles held by women, 25% of middle and senior management, and 20% of executive management. The mining industry is committed to transformation to achieve these targets.

Programmes to encourage inclusivity and transformation of the South African industry have been underway since 1994. Until the 1990s, women were by law not allowed to work in core mining jobs. Mining companies are committed to increasing the number of women they employ to make their mining operations inclusive and equitable.

To achieve this, companies are making their operations more conducive to women working in the sector through specific policies and actions. Companies have policies of zero tolerance of gender-based violence, discrimination and bullying. The industry is adopting personal protective equipment and work clothing designed for women, while modernisation of mining operations is making it easier for women to enter the sector which has been dominated by men for more than a century.

The coal companies spent R474 million in a single year on training and development, equating to an average R41,478 per full-time employee, the highest of the five sectors surveyed.

This survey of social indicators offers both a qualitative and a quantitative look at the issues. It does not - and does not claim to - provide a view of the entire industry.

However, it paints an informative picture of the breadth and depth of the social investments and transformation that have become the standard way of operating for most mining companies, and certainly for Minerals Council members, and show why #MiningMatters.

**Click here for more information on why coal mining matters to communities**

<https://www.mineralscouncil.org.za/component/jdownloads/?task=download.send&id=2273>

Visit <https://www.mineralscouncil.org.za/special-features/1396-miningmatters-to-south-africa-and-its-people> for more information about the mining industry's contribution to the country, to employees and to communities.

**For interviews with the Minerals Council on why #MiningMatters, contact:**

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