

11 February 2026

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Partnerships For Growth – Mines Fostering Partnerships with Stakeholders

Project 1

The Badirammogo Water User Association in Limpopo is one such example. The Association achieved commercial close of the R8.5 billion Stage One of the Olifants Management Model Programme, which marked the strengthening of a model that is pioneering in South Africa: a true 50:50 collaboration between the public and private sectors, underpinned by shared responsibility, shared governance and shared outcomes. Business, led by the mining sector, and government have assumed a real opportunity to collaborate for economic growth, through investment and expedited policy reform, to transform and shape a better future for South Africa.

Project 2

Another flagship partnership involving the Minerals Council and its members is in the Northern Cape with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and the Vaal Central Water Board to ensure water continues to be supplied to communities, mines, and businesses in the province through the Vaal Gamagara Water Supply Scheme (“the Gamagara Scheme”).

The first phase which refurbished part of the c.400km pipeline that runs from the Vaal River to the far reaches of the arid Northern Cape was completed in 2023. The Northern Cape mines, supported by the Minerals Council, the DWS and the Vaal Central Water Board are initiating the second phase of refurbishment of the pipeline at a cost of R12bn, half of which will be borne by the mining companies. The Northern Cape mines have already spent over R74m to ensure that water continues to run down the disintegrating pipeline. They will consume nearly half of the water the rest will be utilised by communities and other businesses.

Project 3

Steel Bridge replacement project in the Steelpoort Valley, Limpopo where 8 mining companies are working with Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL). The old steel bridge will be refurbished and used as a pedestrian crossing. Total cost is more than R120 million.

In addition to improving vehicular access and safety, the Steel Bridge replacement project in the Steelpoort Valley will bring several other benefits. The refurbished steel bridge, repurposed as a pedestrian crossing, will enhance mobility for local communities, making it safer and easier for residents, workers, and schoolchildren to cross the river. This new bridge is also expected to stimulate economic activity in the region by facilitating smoother transport of goods and personnel between the mines and surrounding towns.

What do we need to enable Greater Collaboration Projects

The question that some might ask is why aren't mining companies doing joint projects all the time.

- The disparate SLP projects deliver limited and fragmented benefits
- The mathematics are compelling:
- Pooled resources enable investments in substantive infrastructure, transformative projects way beyond the capacity of a single mine

Unfortunately, the regulatory challenges are dispelling:

- Social and Labour Plans are per mining right
- Each mine is at a different time in their 5-year cycle
- Mines can be held accountable for delays in a single project
- This accountability can threaten their security of tenure

This is compounded by the fact that different mines face different financial, managerial, stakeholder and other challenges, A mine 3 years into production has a very different outlook to that has existed for 20 years.

We need to start looking at regulations that smooth these differences away and enable collaboration.

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