

# WOMEN IN MINING (WiM) NEWSLETTER

The Minerals Council fully supports the  
**16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based  
Violence and Femicide campaign**



**STOP**  
Abuse of women

**#MiningMatters**

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## FOREWORD FROM OUR WOMEN IN MINING

PROJECT LEAD AND HEAD OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT AT THE MINERALS COUNCIL, DR THUTHULA BALFOUR



Dr Thuthula Balfour

**Welcome to the November issue of our newsletter! In this issue we focus on awareness of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in South Africa.**

The stories in this newsletter stress the value of men as allies in the struggle against GBVF. We trust our readers will find this newsletter to be a comprehensive resource that will enable them to take initiative and change the world for the better. In addition, this publication includes an analysis of the recently published GBVF Response Fund Annual Report and features articles from our member companies on their responses to GBVF.

GBVF is a pervasive problem that affects communities worldwide, with South Africa having unacceptably high levels of GBVF. It is imperative that we shed light on this scourge and work tirelessly towards eradicating it. Through this newsletter, we aim to educate our readers about the various forms of GBVF, including physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse. By increasing awareness, we hope to encourage individuals to speak out against GBVF, support survivors and advocate change. GBVF is not just a mining problem. It is a national one. Mines reflect the societies in which they operate, but we can make a difference by addressing the problem at work and beyond the mine gates in our host and labour-sending communities. However, mining cannot resolve GBVF alone. We must work in close collaboration with all stakeholders if we hope to make a difference.

While it is crucial to acknowledge that women are disproportionately affected by GBVF, it is equally important to recognise that men play a pivotal role in ending this violence. We bring you an article that highlights the importance of having men as allies in the fight against GBVF.

As the festive season approaches, it is essential to prioritise our health and safety. The Minerals Council Health Department has provided us with valuable tips to ensure that we stay safe while we enjoy this festive period. Some key recommendations include drinking responsibly, personal safety and mental well-being.

**By adhering to the health and safety tips, we will all contribute to a safe and enjoyable festive season for our families, friends, colleagues and all those around us.**

We urge our readers to actively engage with the content and share it with their networks. Together, we can make a difference and create a society free from GBVF. Let's stand united and commit to ending GBVF once and for all. Take action and be part of the change!



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# UNDERSTANDING GBVF AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS:

## A FOCUS ON THE MINING INDUSTRY AND THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MINING AND METALS (ICMM) CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE AFRICA

GBVF is a serious matter involving harmful acts or threats directed at individuals based on their gender, and often resulting from unequal power dynamics and societal norms. It can manifest in physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological ways, violating human rights and often involving misuse of power. The mining industry, with its male dominated workforce and isolated operations, is particularly susceptible to GBVF.

A 2022 Rio Tinto report into workplace culture revealed instances of sexual harassment, bullying and abuse of power at some of the company's operations, which can be viewed as common in the global mining industry. A Gold Fields 2023 report included first-person accounts of members' experiences working in the mines, highlighting the complex and sometimes endemic nature of GBVF in the industry.

GBVF in mining communities causes physical and psychological harm to survivors, disrupts community trust and impacts negatively on production, especially where perpetrators or victims are staff members at the mine operations. It perpetuates discrimination and inequality, with women often marginalised and relegated to secondary roles, reinforcing patriarchal understandings and power imbalances, further exacerbating the issue.

A widespread misconception is that GBVF exclusively affects underprivileged populations and mining workers underground, where violence is a means of gaining power. However, studies reveal that the problem affects people of all racial and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as those who work in the highest levels of companies, including boards and their executives.

The ICMM has published a position statement on preventing and addressing GBV in the mining industry. A case study in South Africa emphasised the need for a comprehensive approach, including support services and preventive measures to tackle the root causes of violence.

One of the major factors identified in the study was the gender imbalance in mining towns. The concentration of male dominated industries creates an environment where women have limited employment prospects and face a higher

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risk of experiencing GBVF. Furthermore, the study revealed that the patriarchal norms and attitudes prevalent in mining communities contribute to the perpetuation of GBVF. Traditional gender roles and power dynamics often reinforce unequal power relations between men and women, making it difficult for women to report incidents of violence or seek help.

### The ICMM recommends interventions to prevent and address GBVF in mining communities,

### including promoting gender equality, strengthening legal frameworks, and providing safe reporting mechanisms.

Engaging with local communities and stakeholders is crucial for context. Addressing GBVF is a moral imperative and strategic investment in the mining industry's sustainability, enhancing relationships with local stakeholders and enhancing social

licence to operate. In order to effectively address GBVF in mining communities, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach that combines prevention, response, and support. This includes: implementing gender-sensitive policies within mining companies, providing training and resources for employees on preventing and responding to GBVF, establishing community support systems for survivors, including access to healthcare, counselling services, and legal aid, and conducting ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of interventions.



Anglo American Platinum, Dishaba Mine

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# BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR A SAFER SOUTH AFRICA: INSIGHTS FROM THE GBVF RESPONSE FUND

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**In an exclusive interview with Ms Sazini Mojapelo from the GBVF Response Fund, we delved into the organisation's funding model, education and awareness campaigns, inclusivity, challenges, and future plans in the ongoing fight against GBVF in South Africa. The GBVF Response Fund has been making strides in combating this pressing issue, with a commitment to lasting change and support from various stakeholders.**

In an effort to combat the GBVF epidemic in South Africa, President Cyril Ramaphosa established the GBVF Response Fund in February 2021. The fund is dedicated to accountability, total transparency and good governance standards. While maintaining its independence, the fund closely collaborates with civil society as well as the South African public and private sectors on programme implementation. The fund is well equipped to carry out its objective since it is run by an independent, distinguished Board of Directors and employs a talented executive team, while also being the only fund that mobilises financing dedicated solely to GBVF prevention and activism at such a large scale.

Initially established as an interim structure, the fund was set up to pave the way for the establishment of the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, after Parliament passed the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill. The fund received an extension until 2027 from the Presidency, ensuring a steady stream of financial support. Long-term donors have also pledged their commitment for this period, underpinning the sustainability of the fund's initiatives.

## Empowering through education and awareness

The GBVF Response Fund has launched its flagship National Social Behavioural Change Campaign, "RESPECT," aligned with UN

Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 17. This campaign aims to increase awareness and encourage action against GBVF, rooted in the philosophy of Ubuntu and emphasising respect as a key element. By adopting a 'whole of society' approach, the campaign aims to shift behaviours around GBVF, to ultimately eliminate it. To measure the impact of these initiatives, the fund will likely employ various metrics, including the number of people reached, behavioural changes observed, and reduction in GBVF cases over time.

The GBVF Response Fund is committed to ensuring inclusivity and representation of marginalised groups in its initiatives. It primarily supports women's organisations at grass roots level and includes persons with disabilities, children and the LGBTQIA+ community. The fund also emphasises gender mainstreaming and extends its reach

**Although challenges persist, the fund's commitment to lasting change and partnerships is a beacon of hope in the ongoing fight against GBVF. Together, stakeholders and communities can build a safer, more inclusive South Africa.**



# BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR A SAFER SOUTH AFRICA: INSIGHTS FROM THE GBVF RESPONSE FUND *continued*

to rural and peri-urban areas, ensuring that no one is left behind in the fight against GBVF.

While the fund has made significant progress in addressing GBVF, it has faced challenges that necessitate attention such as enhancing partnerships and collaborations across sectors, encouraging private sector involvement, and reinforcing the fund's role as a national convener. Addressing government support and policy implementation challenges, particularly within the policing system, remains a crucial area of focus.

## A vision for a safer South Africa

The GBVF Response Fund's future plans are centred on mobilising and allocating more resources to community-based organisations, enhancing prevention efforts and providing better care for victims of violence at grass roots level. Private sector involvement will be fostered through public-private partnerships, and support from private sector entities will be increased through the private sector coalition. The fund is also committed to expanding Thuthuzela Care Centres through collaboration with key partners.



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# MEN AS ALLIES

## IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GBVF

**In the ongoing battle against GBVF, the significance of men as allies cannot be underestimated. Their active participation, understanding and support can foster a transformative change, breaking the cycle of violence and creating a society where everyone feels safe and respected. This article highlights why it is crucial to have men as allies in the fight against GBVF and explores the ways in which they can contribute to this critical cause.**

Often understated, is the role men play in the fight against GBVF in society and the workplace, as well as in dismantling and debilitating patriarchal systems that perpetuate violence and discrimination. Men are in a prime position to stand with women and be a voice of change, by challenging harmful gender norms and contributing to building a safer and more equitable society. Men's involvement in GBVF prevention efforts is key to addressing the root causes of violence. By actively promoting and modelling healthy and respectful relationships, men can help change societal attitudes towards gender roles, fostering an environment that rejects violence and supports gender equality.

Men can use their privilege and platforms to amplify the voices of women who have experienced GBVF, acting as advocates and allies. By doing so, they address the systemic barriers that often silence survivors and facilitate dialogue that drives social change. Engaging men through educational initiatives that raise awareness about GBVF and its impact can promote empathy, understanding

and responsibility. Providing fundamental information about consent, and modelling healthy relationships and non-violent conflict resolution allows men to be more informed allies. Men can question and challenge the social norms that perpetuate toxic masculinity, which often contribute to GBVF. Initiating conversations about healthy masculinity and redefining social expectations can help break free from harmful stereotypes that fuel violence. Men can actively intervene when witnessing or suspecting instances of GBVF, whether in public or private spaces. By not remaining silent bystanders, they send a powerful message that violence will not be tolerated. Additionally, creating safe spaces where survivors can seek support without judgement or discrimination is essential.

Beyond the battle against GBVF, there are several advantages to men actively participating as allies. This may be accomplished in the workplace by fostering dialogues that will strengthen critical thinking and by developing transparency and good communication. Building a trustworthy environment is also important since it improves connection and safety for vulnerable and intimate areas. Organisations can work towards providing programmes that are tailored for men, this will enhance the understanding and engagement of the programme. By addressing GBVF collectively, men and women working together, foster a spirit of co-operation and partnership across the gender spectrum. This shared effort helps build strong connections and relationships between genders, leading to a more inclusive society.

When men take a stand against GBVF, they become powerful role models for future generations. Their actions inspire others to follow suit, creating a ripple effect of change that paves the way for a society free from violence and discrimination.

Men's active involvement as allies in the fight against GBVF is not only essential, but it is also an imperative. Through education, challenging harmful gender norms and promoting healthy masculinity, men can contribute significantly to the eradication of GBVF. By taking a firm stance against violence, men can help create a society that champions gender equality, respects the rights of all individuals and treats everyone with dignity and empathy. Together, we can build a future free from the scourge of GBVF.



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# WOMEN IN MINING

## GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION DASHBOARD



**The Minerals Council Women in Mining Leadership Forum has established a Gender Diversity and Inclusion Dashboard, through which member companies contribute essential data regarding their policies and initiatives aimed at addressing gender diversity issues in the mining industry.**

This initiative is crucial for promoting transparency and accountability in the sector. All member companies of the Minerals Council are required to

submit data on a quarterly basis, with a subsequent report released at the end of each quarter. These reports serve as valuable tools for evaluating and highlighting the main findings of the data submitted.

The insights gathered from the Gender Diversity and Inclusion Dashboard play a pivotal role in assessing the progress made by member companies in terms of gender diversity policies and practices across their operations. This continuous monitoring and reporting mechanism offers an avenue for tracking and improving gender diversity, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and equitable workplaces in the mining industry.

By encouraging members to actively participate in this initiative, the council promotes a collaborative effort in striving towards gender equality. This not only aligns with global gender diversity goals but also supports a fundamental shift in the mining industry's culture. Achieving greater gender diversity and inclusion is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic move, which can lead to several positive outcomes, including reduced instances of GBVF.

In today's society, GBVF are pressing issues that affect many people, predominantly women, and marginalised genders.

However, there is growing recognition of the pivotal role that greater gender diversity and inclusion can play in alleviating GBVF. The premise here is that by promoting equality, respect and empowerment, irrespective of gender, organisations and communities can create safer environments and foster positive change.

It is important to note that achieving gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace is connected to broader societal issues, such as GBVF. For instance, companies that prioritise gender diversity and inclusion tend to exhibit improved organisational cultures, where respect for all individuals is emphasised. This shift in corporate culture can contribute to a broader cultural shift, reducing tolerance for harmful behaviours and attitudes associated with GBVF.

The Minerals Council's Women in Mining Gender Diversity and Inclusion Dashboard is a critical tool in advancing gender diversity in the mining industry. By encouraging member companies to actively participate and contribute to this initiative, the Minerals Council is not only fostering more inclusive workplaces but is also contributing to the broader societal goal to reduce gender-based violence and femicide. This approach is supported by research, which indicates that greater gender diversity and inclusion can have a positive impact on mitigating these pressing issues.

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# Q&A: Glencore Alloys Women in Mining Champions Spearhead Thuthuzela Care Centres Support

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**Glencore Alloys has done some praiseworthy work to support the Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) in their mining host communities. We shine the spotlight on Neo Molelekeng and Ntombizodwa De Toit who are the women in mining champions spearheading the impact-driven programmes that are aimed at eliminating GBVF and creating safe spaces for women and children beyond mining gates.**

**Q: Take us through some of the initiatives that Glencore Alloys has embarked on to support Thuthuzela Care Centres.**

**A:** Glencore Alloys' current initiatives are: building and refurbishing Thuthuzela Care Centres in our host communities in Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the North-West Provinces. Glencore Alloys handed over a new Thuthuzela Care Centre in Dilokong in November 2022. We have completed Phase 1 of the refurbishments of the centres in Emalahleni and Rustenburg. Phase 2 renovations for the two remaining centres are currently underway.

**Q: What inspired the projects?**

**A:** We are committed to respecting human rights as part of our health, safety, environment and community and human

rights (HSEC) Strategic Overview 2020-2023. Our corporate social investment (now social performance) strategic objective includes following the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and addressing GBVF as a human rights violation. Our actions support the National Strategic Plan on GBVF, especially Pillar 2 (prevention and social cohesion), Pillar 4 (response, care, support, and healing) and Pillar 5 (economic power).

**Q: In your experience what is the average time to build a new Thuthuzela Care Centre and to refurbish an existing Thuthuzela Care Centre?**

**A:** It took approximately a year to refurbish the Rustenburg and Emalahleni Thuthuzela Care Centres. Work had to be conducted while the centres were still operational. The Dilokong Thuthuzela was a turnkey project which took a year and a half.



Representatives from Glencore Alloys, the National Prosecuting Authority and the Department of Health at the recent Dilokong TCC handover

# Q&A: Glencore Alloys Women in Mining Champions Spearhead Thuthuzela Care Centres Support *continued*

**Q: How do these initiatives align with Glencore's values and how have you managed to link those to the national partnership to strengthen Thuthuzela Care Centres?**

**A:** Our six values guide our initiatives, especially safety, responsibility, and integrity. We value safety above all and never compromise on it. We act with integrity in everything we do and with everyone we interact with. We take responsibility for our social performance and strive to improve it continuously.

**Q: Who are the key role players internally and externally in ensuring successful support for Thuthuzela Care Centres; how did you managed to rope them in and what were the processes involved?**

**A:** We have internal and external stakeholders who are key to our fight against GBVF. Internally, the CEO, Executive Management, and Operational Leads align our efforts. The Women in Mining Group

Committee and its sub-committees at operations work with the Group CSI to implement, monitor, and campaign for GBVF programmes. Externally, we collaborate with key government departments such as the National Prosecuting Authority Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit, the SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit, the Department of Social Development, and the Department of Health. We also engage with local municipalities and NGOs that are already active in the communities.

**Q: What does #MiningMatters mean to you?**

**A:** #MiningMatters means we have a duty to as individuals within the company to help Glencore Alloys achieve its vision of creating sustainable and resilient communities that can prosper beyond our assets' lifespan. The communities should see Glencore Alloys as more than just a raw material extractor. They should see the value addition beyond mining.

**Q: In your opinion, what is the role of Women In Mining (WiM) Committees in supporting Thuthuzela Care Centres in their host communities and how have Glencore WiM teams positioned themselves to ensure progress in the various centres they support?**

**A:** WiM's main purpose is to drive the implementation of strategies and policies with the impetus towards creating an enabling environment for the advancement of women in the organisation as well as the industry in its entirety. WiM Committees at operations are aligned to the TCCs closer to their operations. The WiM committee members have various professional competencies and extend their competencies to conduct facilities inspections at the TCCs and engage with the staff on challenges experienced, when they visit the centres. The WiM Champions then send a report highlighting matters that need attention and, as a company, we then assist in addressing the identified needs.

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**Q: What are some of the changes and impact you have witnessed in your host communities since your involvement in supporting Thuthuzela Care Centres?**

**A:** Our employees and communities now know about the Thuthuzela Care Centres, which they did not before. We get calls from the communities when there are GBV incidents, and we can assist quickly because of our relationship with the site coordinators and other stakeholders. That is the change we always wanted to see; it is happening gradually. We keep supporting the Thuthuzela Care Centre's awareness programmes, such as the GBV dialogues, the outreach in schools and our operations. There is still more to do.

**Q: What are the lessons you learned in your journey supporting Thuthuzela Care Centres?**

**A:** Partnerships, co-operation and stakeholder engagement are essential for meeting our deliverables. Legal compliance of all stakeholders is also important to establish the framework, roles and responsibilities of each partner.

**Q: What are the tips that you can share with member companies who are embarking on the journey of supporting Thuthuzela Care Centres?**

**A:** It starts with the commitment and consistent executive management support. This journey requires committed staff, not ad hoc implementation because GBVF is a constant. One needs to be enthusiastic, passionate and resolute in working with the stakeholders. Communication is vital, so it is better to over communicate than under communicate. Lastly, a dedicated budget for GBVF is key.





# SERITI RESOURCES'

## RESPONSE TO GBV AND HARASSMENT

Seriti, a coal mining and energy entity, has unequivocally expressed its commitment to a zero-tolerance policy against sexual harassment, sexual violence, harassment, and bullying. This staunch stance applies to all individuals associated with the company, including employees, job applicants, customers, and contractors. The company's principal objective is to foster a workplace environment where the dignity of all employees is respected, and survivors of harassment feel that their grievances are neither ignored nor trivialised. In line with this commitment, Seriti has initiated a multifaceted approach to combat Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) on its operations. This article delves into the New Vaal Colliery's innovative initiatives aimed at combatting GBVH. Seriti is the Sesotho word for 'integrity'.

### Seriti's stance on GBVH

Seriti's resolute opposition to GBVH is underpinned by a multifaceted strategy aimed at creating a safer and more equitable environment within the organisation. This approach includes active communication and continuous education of employees regarding the company's standards of conduct. To affectively discourage unacceptable behaviour, Seriti's Human Resources and Health departments

introduced an innovative initiative known as the Industrial Theater on Sexual Harassment. This strategic move is aligned with the broader Woman in Mining programme, engaging and educating over 5,000 Seriti employees and contractors across various company operations.



### The Use Your Voice initiative:

Under the slogan "Use Your Voice", the Industrial Theater on Sexual Harassment encompassed a range of key focus areas, including addressing issues related to the LGBTQI+ community, harassment between men and women, the definition

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# SERITI RESOURCES'

## RESPONSE TO GBV AND HARASSMENT *continued*

and types of sexual harassment, verbal and non-verbal harassment, bullying, the importance of reporting harassment, the potential consequences of reporting, seeking emotional support, and the significance of intervening as a bystander. This initiative was well received by staff, indicating the commitment of Seriti to foster a safe and inclusive workplace.

### Seriti New Vaal Colliery's Holistic Approach:

New Vaal Colliery, as a significant part of Seriti, has taken its commitment to

addressing GBVH a step further, with an approach that revolves around a holistic strategy that combines well-being, gender equality, harassment mitigation, and diversity. This comprehensive approach extends into the host communities.

### These initiatives are demonstrated through the following programmes:

Youth Engagement: New Vaal Colliery focuses on engaging young individuals in the communities, specifically targeting the "boy child". This often-overlooked demographic receives early education and awareness

about social issues, equipping them with the tools and confidence to report issues directly or indirectly affecting them. Collaboration with key stakeholders – including the Department of Education, SAPS, National Prosecuting Authority, and social workers – is integral to these efforts, ensuring that boys are included and educated about the impact of GBVH.

Community Men's Dialogue: New Vaal Colliery initiated the Community Men's Dialogue in collaboration with various organisations and institutions. These dialogues provide a platform for diverse communities to engage in discussions about the challenges faced by men and boys, focusing on the need for positive male role models, awareness of harmful lifestyles, and addressing GBVH and fatherless homes within the community.

Collaborative Efforts: The campaign also promotes collaboration with local non-profit organisations, traditional healers, community leaders, parents, teachers, and faith-based leaders, recognising that addressing GBVH requires a collective effort. New Vaal's Peer Educators, including male employees, actively advocate for safety, emphasising the societal impact of these issues.



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# VEDANTA ZINC INTERNATIONAL'S

## COMMITMENT TO WORKPLACE SAFETY AND GENDER INCLUSION

In a world that is increasingly focusing on the importance of workplace safety and gender diversity, Vedanta Zinc International (VZI) stands as an example of a company dedicated to transforming its workplace for good.

We had the privilege of conducting a preliminary interview with VZI, where they shed light on their ambitious environmental, social and governance (ESG) targets, policies, practices and initiatives to eliminate harassment and GBV in the workplace, as well as improve their gender representation in the organisation.



Here are the key takeaways from our discussion:

### Policies aligned with legal frameworks

One of the fundamental pillars of VZI's approach to eliminating harassment and GBV is its comprehensive set of policies. These policies are not just only internally developed but are also aligned with various legal frameworks, reinforcing their commitment to these critical issues. VZI has a zero tolerance approach to for discrimination and harassment in any form.

#### Specific policies that VZI employs to eliminate harassment and GBV include:

- The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy: aligned with the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (as amended).
- Gender Diversity and Inclusion Policy: in accordance with the Women in Mining Gender Diversity and Inclusion Policy Framework (Minerals Council South Africa, 2020).

Moreover, VZI is also guided by the Vedanta Group Policy on Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, as well as The Code of Good Practice on the Prevention and Elimination of Harassment in the Workplace. Notably, VZI is in the process of finalising a new policy for the Management of Gender-Based Violence, Femicide, Safety, and Security of Women in Mining, further reinforcing their commitment to ensuring a safe and inclusive workplace.

### Communication and education

Policies, no matter how well crafted, are only effective if they are successfully communicated to the staff. VZI takes this responsibility seriously, ensuring that its workforce is well informed about the company's zero-tolerance stance on harassment and abuse.

These policies are part of onboarding and induction classes for new recruits, ensuring that from day one, employees are educated about the company's commitment to a safe and inclusive workplace. Furthermore, VZI conducts policy campaigns as needed to serve as refreshers for the existing workforce, using both electronic and printed communication channels to ensure widespread awareness.

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# VEDANTA ZINC INTERNATIONAL'S

## COMMITMENT TO WORKPLACE SAFETY AND GENDER INCLUSION

*continued*

Here are the key takeaways from our discussion (continued):

### Swift resolution of cases

In the unfortunate event of a case of GBVF or sexual harassment, VZI operates with a sense of urgency. This approach ensures that offenders are swiftly dealt with, sending a clear message that such behaviour will not be tolerated in the organisation.

### The Season of Exceptional Care campaign

A noteworthy initiative by VZI is the Season of Exceptional Care campaign. This initiative is not just about the workplace but also promotes safe and healthy practices at home, particularly during the festive season. The campaign, which aligns with the Minerals Council's Khumbul'ekhaya campaign, began in October. VZI's Health, Safety and Environment teams actively engage in site-wide campaigns, including industrial theatres and safety standdowns, to re-emphasise the company's Golden Safety Life-Saving Rules. These initiatives encourage employees to remember the importance of safety both at work and at home, as well as taking care of their health and mental well-being.

The Season of Exceptional Care campaign will continue in 2024, reinforcing safety measures for those returning from their holidays during the festive season. The Season of Exceptional Care campaign primarily targets VZI's workforce and its host and labour-sending communities. Its aim is to promote safe and healthy conditions, not only in the workplace but also in personal lives, emphasising mental well-being. While this campaign is primarily designed for VZI's internal stakeholders, it highlights the company's broader commitment to safety and well-being in the communities in which it operates.



Vedanta Zinc International has taken a strong stance against GBV



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## MPONENG MINE'S

# UNDERGROUND EMERGENCY SANITARY TOWEL VENDING MACHINE

**The Women in Mining (WiM) Committee at Harmony Mponeng Mine has launched the world's first underground emergency sanitary towel vending machine. The significance of this achievement was not lost on DMRE and Harmony's management, who attended the launch event on 25 November 2022.**

The timing of this groundbreaking initiative could not have been more fitting, as it coincided with the beginning of the national 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign. The vending machine is a testament to Mponeng Mine and the WiM Committee's commitment to addressing the unique needs of women working in the demanding environment of underground mining.

The vending machine provides women with free access to sanitary products during emergency situations. This machine ensures that women can continue their work without interruption, even during challenging

moments, thus contributing to their overall well-being and professional growth.

Benjamin Mokoka, Human Resources Leader at Harmony Mponeng Mine, expressed the organisation's delight at being part of this historic occasion.

Mokoka commended the WiM Committee for its pioneering efforts to integrate innovative solutions that prioritise the needs of women in their workplace.

"On behalf of Mponeng management, we are pleased to have been part of this historic moment," said Mokoka, "and we applaud the WiM Committee for leading the way in introducing such innovative measures to ensure that women's needs are given the attention they deserve in our work environment."

Sibongile Fipaza, a member of Mponeng's WiM Committee emphasised the importance of this achievement.

"This is a feel good story that we are all fully behind. We need to remove the stigma surrounding menstruation and engage openly in conversations about periods," Fipaza asserted.

Her sentiment underscores the broader societal shift toward greater inclusivity and sensitivity to the unique experiences and needs of women in traditionally male dominated fields.

The launch of the emergency sanitary towels vending machine at Mponeng Mine marks a significant stride forward, not only for the mining industry but also for gender equality in the workplace as a whole.



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# STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

At this time of the year, we usually turn our minds to a summer break or well-earned rest after a busy year. However, from a health and safety perspective, we cannot take the focus off or neglect our procedures and systems at any time of the year. Safety never takes a holiday, neither does staying healthy.

## Planning for the end of year requires great focus and attention to detail

The end of the year is not a time to take the pedal off and relax. Statistics illustrate that a significant number of injuries and fatalities occur in the months of December and January. You would expect this number to decrease given that more holidays are being taken with fewer workers on the job. Despite the term 'holiday', many organisations use this block of time to perform shutdown or turnaround work.

Most repairs, rebuilding, new plant and equipment, maintenance and even painting and gardening is often performed when there are fewer workers on site. This makes sense as interruptions, temporary restricted areas and even painting, where fumes can be an issue, are best done when fewer people are around. It is during this shutdown period that we need to focus more on risk management techniques, contractor management systems and induction processes for contract workers. Frequently, the work is non-routine, sometimes unfamiliar and often there are rarely any procedures in place for the intermittent work.

## Taking steps to prepare for holiday work

In readiness for the holiday work, a few steps should be performed. This will ensure that gaps are prevented and planning for safety success is achieved.

Here are a few tips:



Set up a roster for available or on-call staff



Seek the assistance of a reputable casual or labour hire organisation to provide trained, experienced and reliable workers



Ensure health checks, that include mental health screening, for the teams that will do temporary work



Induct and train the new workers



Ensure a safety resource is available during the holiday period- safety officers and managers like to enjoy their holidays too

## Returning after the break

Upon returning to work we should look at an orientation or re-induction process, so that people are able to adjust their mindset from rest mode to operation mode. A commencement meeting, with a theme of reinforcing the health and safety message and a quick review of existing policies and procedures, is a good place to start. Like the break-up party we enjoyed before the holidays, get the workers and staff together for a briefing, toolbox or communications meeting at the resumption of work.

## Remember, safety never takes a holiday

While it is important that we de-stress, relax and rest during our holidays, let us remember not to drop the ball or turn a blind eye to our health and safety standards.

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# UPCOMING EVENT

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

**“UNITE!  
Invest to prevent  
violence against  
women and girls”**



On 2 December 2022, The Minerals Council South Africa, National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) Response Fund signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to launch a tripartite partnership to strengthen the support for Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs). In light of the theme of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2023 **“UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls”**, the Minerals Council is hosting a TCCs Day of Learning. The purpose of the event is to provide a platform for Minerals Council member companies, who have pledged towards the partnership, to learn from members who have experience in investing to support TCCs.

## INVITATION: THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES DAY OF LEARNING



**Date:**  
5 December 2023



**Time:**  
09:00 - 12:00



**Venue:**  
Microsoft Teams



Register attendance with Ms  
Lindokuhle Zwane at  
[lzwane@mineralscouncil.org.za](mailto:lzwane@mineralscouncil.org.za)  
by 30 November 2023

Please kindly specify if you will be joining the event  
physically or virtually

**#StopAbuseOfWomen**

**#MakingMiningMatter**



**Women in Mining**

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- Ms Lindokuhle Zwane
- Ms Dimpho Moepane
- Mr Allan Seccombe
- Ms Boitumelo Nkomo
- Dr Thuthula Balfour



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