



# THLABANE

Thlabane is a township just outside the Rustenburg town center. It was built in the 1960's for black people living in the white town of Rustenburg. Thlabane is located on the side of a large Xstrata Smelter.





**POLLUTION**

Fumes from the smelter pollute the air and leads to respiratory problems in the community. We know of a case where a doctor certified that a child's chest problems was related to the fumes from the smelter. Dust from the slime dam leads to rusting of roofs of houses alongside the graveyard.

**XSTRATA WORKERS IN COMMUNITY**

Workers from far away live in backyards and in a squatter camp in Thlabane. This contributes to overcrowding in Thlabane and social problems. The sewer system in Thlabane is stressed. Single men living in the community contribute to the expansion of shebeens and encourages prostitution which expose these men and young girls to HIV aids.



**TEMPORARY WORKERS CREATE SQUATTER CAMPS**

Unemployed people seeking work in Xstrata have created a squatter camp called Yizo Yizo in Thlabane. The squatter camp has led to many problems.

- There are health problems due to the absence of any services (water, sewage etc.)
- There are social problems such as crime
- There is potential for xenophobic conflict since many of the unemployed are foreigners from countries such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique. There has already been a conflict over an allegation that a Zimbabwean gang was active in the area.

**XSTRATA ONLY TALKS WITH COUNCILLORS**

There is a feeling among people in the community that Xstrata prefers to relate only with councillors and not the community. In community meetings, the councillors object to criticism of Xstrata. People in the community believe that councillors defend Xstrata because they get rewards in the form of money and contracts. There is a case where an asthma case linked to the fumes from the smelter, given to an MP was abandoned because the MP received a contract from Xstrata.

**1. SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

We experience many social problems in Tlhabane township. We believe that rather than strike up deals with councillors, Xstrata should assist the community to deal with these problems.

- Tlhabane, as one of the oldest "townships" does not have proper recreational facilities ( parks, sports ground etc)
- Alcoholism is increasing at an alarming rate
- Teenage pregnancy has tremendously increased.
- Many young people resort to drug abuse.
- There is no proper sanitation at all the recreational facilities that are there. NB: There are no toilets at all in the so called parks in Thlabane.
- Shebeens outnumber churches in our township.
- Recent funerals are mostly of young people.
- We would like to propose that the Tlhabane Sun which has recently been auctioned be developed as a community center.

**2. MANIPULATION OF THE TENDERING SYSTEM**

Municipal infrastructure projects such as paving the sidewalks can be used to develop work for young people as well as small business opportunities for people in Tlhabane. However these tenders are manipulated by people in the Municipality officials to benefit their friends and themselves.

**3. TITLE DEEDS**

The community has been fighting for title deeds for their properties for some time but they have not been successful.

**4. WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Waste management is a big problem in Tlhabane. This is due to a lack of awareness on the part of the community and a poor service by the council.





Rustenburg community groups

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