



# MARIKANA



## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Marikana as a town was formed around the 1870's. The people were later forcibly moved by the Apartheid government to Wonderkop in the 1960's. White farms established themselves with assistance of the government who built the Buffelspoort dam. Platinum mining began around 1976 and since then Marikane has become a place of mine shafts, squatter camps and badly built RDPs.

Marikana town is 30 minutes drive from Rustenburg

The following mines operate in Marikana: Xtrata, Lonmin, Carisa, Aquarius, MPC, Grinaker, IMM, Angloplat, Letwaga Crushers and Tharisa which is 20 years old.

## IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

- Lack of Housing
- Squatter camps
- Air pollution
- Water: bilharzia has been found in streams in close proximity to squatter camps. there is no signage next to bilharzia infected streams
- Farmers are complaining about impact of mines on their water
- No signage on roads
- Noise from blasting and mine operations
- Cracked houses
- Poor and over-utilised health services, small clinic
- High Unemployment
- High Crime
- Corrupt police
- Lack of schools, children have to travel long distances
- Roads destroyed by mine vehicles avoiding toll road in need of repair
- No recreation facilities
- No old age home
- Destruction of agricultural land by mining and landlessness
- Local government failing
- Flow of sewage from Lonmin mine settlement into streams
- No consultation between mines and the community
- Forced relocations by mines



## HIGH MAST LIGHT

Marikana West and RDP housing settlements are enclosed by farms, mining activity and informal settlements.

The Lonmin Mine operating less than a kilometer from the Marikana West RDP housing settlements donated the high mast light in 2008. They did not properly transfer this asset to the Marikana Municipality. When the light stopped working in 2009 the Municipality could not take responsibility for the light as they say that this is not part of their assets.

The community before the installation of the lights had problems of crime like house breaking, theft, rape cases and mugging of residents at night but the problem is recurring since the light went off.

## UN-MAINTAINED SEWER SYSTEM:

The blocked sewer lines and overflows out of the sewer lids pushes the waste into the streams in the surrounding areas. The streams around the community have been verified as being contaminated with bilharzia by Lonmin Mine in 2009. The water in the streams are used by some community members to bath and wash clothes. Little children swim in this river. The bilharzia threat and the sewer waste increases the health risks which includes those of water-borne diseases.

In October 2010 an eight year old young boy had contact with the water from the stream near his mother's house in the RDP settlement and shortly after the incident the boy's skin started peeling. Since then he continues to have an itching penis.

## “LIVING OUT ALLOWANCE” AND BLOCKED SEWERS

One of the big reasons for blocked sewers in Marikana is that there are more people living in yards than was planned for. This increase in the number of people is due to the mines. The mines and mining contractors do not provide houses for their workers. They give them a living out allowance. Since there is no rental accommodation in Marikana people rent little rooms in the backyards of existing houses.

The living-out allowance of the mining industry is around R1800 per month and R800 for construction company employees. With this amount of income they cannot afford suitable accommodation, food and transport. This results in the mushrooming of squatter camps which are havens for health risks, crime and environmental degradation.

## LIVING OUT ALLOWANCE AND SQUATTERS CAMPS

Squatter camps are a common sight in Marikana with the likes of Skierkerlik, Storm Huise, Brampie, Group Five, Donkerhoek, Big House, Phatsima, Erasmus, Mabhomvane, Madrateng, Meditlhokwa, Tshilong, Swart Koppoe, Nkaneng (Wonderkop).

Squatter camps increase due to flawed housing policies applicable in the mining industry (the living-out allowance housing policy), low wages paid by industry and companies contracted to the industries. These contracted companies do not have housing for their employees as they move from place to place time and again.

Squatter camps are a horrible sight and undermine human dignity and rights as there is no delivery of services such as water, sanitation and waste collection.



Waste is everywhere and rot produces horrible smells which eventually attracts flies, known for transferring diseases.

Squatter camps are not safe in that young women/girls looking for ever elusive employment in the mines away from their guardians/parents end up in prostitution. This results in unsafe sex practises as men use their financial supremacy to dictate terms and conditions in the transaction. The weakness of these girls lies mainly in the food, accommodation and so on. Hence the increasing rate of HIV and AIDS is at a shocking level around mining communities.

## CARTRIDGES OF EXPLOSIVE ON THE STREETS

After a thunder storm disaster in the RDP settlement the road was built in the community with rocks from the mine dumps. The rocks were crushed for road surfacing. The community is now discovering the explosives cartridges which can be risky to residents if they are detonated. In addition to this the chemicals used to manufacture these explosives could be dangerous.

## NO WASTE COLLECTION:

Dumping is not regulated and there is no waste collection by the municipality. Waste is dumped along river banks and contaminates the water. Waste is also burned. All this affects the health of the community. Some companies are dumping medical waste in the bushes.





## MINING POLLUTION

### AIR (DUST) POLLUTION

According to Lonmin Environmental department they have dust suppression systems on their tailing dams and they monitor the level of dust from the tailings dams. In 2009 we saw a cloud of dust coming from the direction of the new Karee 4 shaft. John Molubi called the mine on their arrival and they all went to where the dust was coming from, the mine shaft 'Karee 4'. The tailing dams did not have the dust suppression system; we proceeded to the dust bucket in the township (RDP). The bucket was full of water despite the fact that Lonmin claimed to monitor the air pollution.

### WATER POLLUTION

Streams around mines are contaminated by tailings dams which are lying everywhere. Mines claim to maintain these tailings dams but this so called maintenance takes place on top only by means of dust suppression if any. Many of these methods use watering. This same water seeps into the ground and end up contaminating the ground water.

Sewage flows into the rivers as a result of poor maintenance. This poses a serious health risk. Suspected cases of water borne diseases have been reported mainly involving children as young as 8 years who happen to swim or live around the river

### NOISE POLLUTION

The residents from RDP and neighboring informal settlements complain about the noise from Karee 4 shaft that goes around the clock.

### POLLUTION FROM THE SMELTERS

People in the village of Wonderkop are worried that the sulphur dioxide pumped into the air from the smelters and other industry is causing health problems in their community. Residents from Wonderkop complain about pollution from the smelters. They complained to the mines but the mines insist that their smelters do not cause any pollution.



## CRACKED HOUSES

Residents who have been living for a long time in the area say that since the mining started they have noticed cracks in their houses. When this is raised with the mine, the mine says that this is due to the weak construction of their houses. The residents say that these cracks are caused by underground vibrations, a sign of mining.



## UNEMPLOYMENT

Residents complain that the mine doesn't want to employ them, since 2008 the mine has not employed anyone from the Unemployed Workers Forum. Recently there have been big unrest among the unemployed which led to battles between with mine security and the police. Residents insist that since mines have disrupted their lives they must provide jobs for them and not bring in outside labour. This has placed the local community in conflict with migrant labourers.

### UNEMPLOYMENT IN WONDERKOP

The village of Wonderkop is surrounded by many mine shafts owned by Lonmin and contracted companies. There is a lot of economic activity around the village. This economic activity brings workers from many African countries in search of work. The unemployment rate swells very fast in Wonderkop in an amazing way. The large number of unemployed young men in the village has led to many problems. People no longer feel safe themselves due to the increasing rate of crime as people are killed, robbed, injured and many are affected by sexually transmitted infections

There have been several marches (strikes) against Lonmin demanding employment. The company responded by employing an agreed number of people. As time goes it was found some communities were left out. This led to further unrest.

## FAILED MINE COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Mining Companies when they apply for mining rights, make a lot of promises. They agree to set up community projects to assist people in their socio economic development. They start projects but they don't give these projects full support and many of them collapse.

Lonmin has been operating for more than 20 years but their CSR has achieved very little in addressing greater social impact compared to the wealth they accumulate over these years of their operations. All of the projects initiated by the company for the community have collapsed and dismally failed. The objective of local economic development has failed. The communities need to be prepared for the harsh realities of times beyond mining.

Aquarius has been here for years but has done no development for the communities so far. Failures of the projects earmarked for the community is caused by the attitude of the companies: to do for, rather than with the community. This entrenches the mine management style alien to the communities and imposes mine management over the community project.

In Marikana we have two projects that was started and then collapsed in Lapologang by Aquarius Mines and the Gilli Lonmin Kibbutza farming project by Lonmin

### LAPOLOGANG

Lapologang is a small township established by Aquarius in 2002, when they moved people off the farms they they had lived on in the Spruitveld area.

Aquarius set up a gardening project where people could grow vegetables for sale and in this way make a living. They set aside land where each family was given a plot of ground to garden. They provided water. But people abandoned these gardens as they were not able to sell their crops.

A poultry project was also set up. People were assisted to keep chickens for sale. The people found that they could not sell their chickens and that they were spending more money feeding the chickens.

A resident from the community said that these projects failed because firstly they were not the ideas of the people but by the mine and that when they were set up the market side was not thought about. The mine simply set up the project to show that they were doing something according to the social labour plan. The mine was not serious about seeing the project through as we all know that setting up a small business of any kind is not easy and requires years of work not six months.

The mine does not work with the community, they work with a few individuals that the Mine officials choose. These individuals only represent themselves and their personal interests. The resident said that when they approached the mine about this, the mine officials said that they were done with the project, they did their share and now it's left to the community.

There is a high rate of unemployment in Lapologang. In the past where the people lived in Sterkwater, they lived on the farm and they had jobs. After relocation over 10km away, there is large-scale unemployment about 40%. Some time when there is a contract on the mine everybody gets jobs. Then suddenly the contract ends for whatever reason then they are left unemployed again. They have no security.



### GILLI LONMIN KIBBUTZA FARMING PROJECT

In 2005 Lonmin Development Trust called a meeting with the community and told those who attended about their plans to set up a "hydroponic" agricultural project. They told us that they were spending R32million rand on the project and that they were doing this with business company Gili Kubbutza SA who would own 26% of the shares in the company. Lonmin will hold the remaining shares. They told us that the aim of the project was to create jobs for local people. At its start the project employed 32 workers.

The project appeared to be going well until we heard stories that there was conflict with the company and somebody had embezzled money.

There was a promise that the company after two years would be transferred to the community. This did not happen.

Then in 2007 the company was closed down. Another company "Bambanani" took over in 2008 but they did not last long. They stopped paying the workers' wages. In 2009 workers were selling the remaining vegetables to survive. The farm was then abandoned.

The problem in both these stories, the Lapologang Aquarius gardening project, and the Lonmin Farming Project, is that the mines do not involve the communities as a whole actively when they set anything up. They rather work with a few individuals and then tell the community what they are doing. These individuals are chosen on the basis that they will play the mines game and not challenge them in any way. The aim of these individuals is to promote their own personal interests.

## RELOCATION OF THE MMADITLHOKOA COMMUNITY BY THARISA MINERALS (PTY) LTD.



BEFORE RELOCATION



AFTER RELOCATION

In 2008 the Tharisa Minerals mining company demolished the shacks of farm labourers living in the Spruitfontein area. Tharisa bought the farm for mining purposes. They promised that they would rebuild the shacks in another area. But they did not do this. A committee of representatives was formed and reported the matter to the Human Rights Commission. Tharisa then built people houses in a new shack settlement.

Each family was built a two-room zinc house. The place where they built the houses was bare and there was no vegetation. The houses were built on either side of a busy road and this created a problem of safety. The people complain that the old houses they lived in had many rooms. The new shacks only had two rooms. Large families therefore have lost their privacy since adults and children are forced to share the same rooms to sleep in.

People used to keep cattle because they had grazing land. Now they have lost this.

People complained that they were forced to use boreholes and a nearby river for additional water since the water they received from water tanks was not sufficient. The people believe that the borehole and river water was contaminated.

The committee representing the people wrote to Tharisa through their lawyers the Legal Resources Center in August this year. They asked the company to engage with them in a meaningful way.

The company asked the committee to prove it was the representatives of the community. They also said that they had proper consultation with the community and the full support of government, the ward committee and members of the ANC branch in the area.

They clearly did not want to talk with the committee representing the community.