

Lesotho Presentation on the 8th Alternative Mining Indaba in Cape Town on the 7th February 2017

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➤ Challenges

- ❖ Kolo Diamond Mine started by retrenched Basotho men from South Africa in 1992 in a small scale using pick axe and spades.
- ❖ In 1994, they decided to partner with a South African white man and started using machines and blasting.
- ❖ In 2002, the government intervened and stopped the mining company because of the internal conflict of the Mining Directors.
- ❖ Then the government established Mining Act of 2005 under which the mining company is given three years of prospecting.
- ❖ The same company under a new name Angel Diamond was given a license to extract diamond in the same mine in 2006 until 2009 after which they could be given Mining Lease if they were intending to undertake full scale mining. But they declared that they could not continue because there was no adequate diamond.
- ❖ In 2014, the same company came back under another name, Reskol Diamond to do what is called trial mining as per Mining Act of 2005 which is still three years until April 2017. Now the company has already expressed its intention to undertake full scale mining.
- ❖ Since the introduction of big machines and blasting in 1994, the community started to be negatively impacted. Their houses cracked, too much dust affected their lungs and many cases of TB reported, the sound of the blasting affected hearing of the children.
- ❖ The environmental impact assessment and prior community consent were never done.
- ❖ The community stood up and matched to the mining company to hand in their petition and the company did not listen to the concerns of the community.
- ❖ Then the community approached the Minister of Mining, who then sent the Mining Commissioner to the mine to ascertain whether the community concerns were founded. The Commissioner found out that the community were correct with their concerns.

- ❖ The government and the mining company agreed to remove the affected people around the mine without consulting them and decided to build them houses few kilometres from the mine where there was no drinking water and road.
- ❖ The Christian Council of Lesotho intervened by visiting the mine, and the affected community.
- ❖ Then the Christian Council of Lesotho held a Mining Indaba on the 24th October 2016 and affected communities of all diamond mines were present through Maloti Community Forum representing five other diamond mines.

➤ **The Successes**

- ❖ The following day, on the 25th October 2016, the District Administrator in which the Reskol Mining Company is mining convened a meeting between the community, chief, Government Mining Board, councilors and Mining Directors.
- ❖ Then it was agreed to set date for the meeting between the mining company and community Executive Committee to start to plan together as to how the mining company would respond to the needs of the affected community, something that never happened before.
- ❖ In that meeting the mining company committed to do the following:
 - 1) To undertake consultative displacement of the affected people
 - 2) To engage in a water supply project for the community around the mine.
 - 3) To build the roads in the village.
 - 4) To install electricity to the households.
 - 5) To build a community hall.
 - 6) To ensure recruitment transparency by doing it together with the community Executive Committee so as to create employment for the community.

➤ **A Way forward**

- ❖ It is critical to promote trust between the community, government and mining companies.
- ❖ Accountability has to be encouraged in the mining industries.
- ❖ Enhancing dialogue between the mining companies in order to know the community priorities.

- ❖ Enhance capacity to physically audit and monitor production and exports.

KHOTSO! PULA! NALA!

PEACE! RAIN! PROSPERITY