



Information by the Bench Marks Foundation

The information below was received during our research for our report: 'Floating or Sinking' Social Licence to Operate (SLO) Kumba Iron Ore Limited.

This information, together with the information within our report, raises questions as to how a company such as this has been referred to as the flagship of Corporate Social Investment for Anglo American and received the 'best employer' in the mining category award through Deloitte's Best Company to Work for Survey and the Corporate Research Foundation institute's Best Employer Survey in 2012.

Interviews were undertaken after the strike that occurred at the end of 2012

A community member who is part of the Dingleton Relocation Working Group (RWG) said that although he is part of the RWG, he believes that everyone has been taken for a ride. He said that Kumba doesn't listen to anyone.

He also said that Kumba has divided the community with the relocation as they approached individuals. 80% of the people signed up for the relocation saying they would sign and move out. The remainder said they would not do so because it would be a case of moving from one mess to another.

He says that true empowerment in a community enables people to sustain themselves for years to come. Kumba, he said, must give the people, especially the youth, opportunities such as jobs. He said that the youth should be part of the process of relocating.

An ex-employee of Sishen Mine, Shimi, was severely injured during the strike in 2012. He said that he broke his spinal cord on that day; he was on a large truck at the time hoping to hear from the mine. Instead of the mine coming to speak to the strikers, they sent the police and their security company to get rid of the people. They hit Shimi with a gun and he fell from the truck. Despite opening a case with the police nothing has come from it. When he spoke to the chief inspector, he was shocked to hear that there was a strike. The police were told to close up the mine; they weren't told there was a strike.

Shimi said that the Chief Inspector was also surprised to hear that live ammunition was used and that people were shot at. Another of the strikers was shot in the stomach and his kidneys were damaged.

During the period of Bench Marks research, Shimi had not yet heard anything more about his case. He feels that the mine is shunting him aside because of his injuries which may raise questions. He feels that the police department is on the mine's side and not neutral.

When asked how the mine is as an employer, Shimi said that it wasn't good. There are very few black people in management positions, and these are mostly there for window dressing. In addition, the communication between workers and the mine is not good. They are not upfront and never explained the Envision payout at all. It's also this kind of poor communication that caused the strike in the first place.

He also said that the unions are a problem too. They instructed the people to go on strike, but every time they meet and ask why they told them to go to the mountains to strike, they deny having done so.

He said that the strikers lost their jobs, but nothing happened to the union. They still take money from them monthly, but they have no salary.

Two other workers, brothers, from Sishen Mine, also highlighted the security company's heavy-handedness. They said that members of Vetus Scholar, the security company, regularly beat up community members and workers. The

company confiscates passports and on various occasions, the security company came to the brother's house and tried to attack one of them. Fortunately on two of those occasions, the brother they were targeting was not there.

Another incident that occurred was when a person, who the security company mistook for the brother, was shot. The gentleman was driving his car and the bullet went through the windscreen. The driver lost control of the vehicle and it rolled. The security company surrounded the car with their vehicles, but luckily the driver escaped and went to the police station.

It was at the police station that the driver found out that the security offers were in fact looking for the brother.

The brothers also said that the security company has placed cameras throughout Mapoteng. They can see everything as the cameras are mounted in high locations. Mapoteng lives under surveillance.

The brother was one of the delegates negotiating with the mine on behalf of the workers. He was employed by Kumba.

The brothers also spoke about the various people who were injured during the strike by the security and police. One of the strikers was shot while hand-cuffed. Another went back to the mine but was shot in the stomach by the security.

One of the big issues brought up by the brothers who were retrenched after the Envision payout, is that they are not able to get another payout. The Envision scheme runs over two phases. During the first five years of the scheme, they were able to get paid out, but if you are no longer working for the company, you are not eligible for another payout - even though they have their share certificates.

When asked what type of employer Sishen was, the brothers said that they ignored the voices of the workers. They imposed their ideas and wishes on the people. With regard to salary increases, they upgraded those of the office workers, HR and the security personnel but not those on the ground and underground.

The brothers said that the intimidation by the security personnel extended to many areas including the gym. A security officer saw the brother working out with another worker. The worker did not know that the brother was one of the strikers. The security officer called the worker over and asked why he was training with him.

He immediately left the brother and went to train away from him. The next day the man was fired. As they had exchanged telephone numbers before the incident, the man phoned three days later and told him what had happened and asked why he hadn't told him he had been a striker.

The brother has been marked by the security company and the mine even though he no longer works there and does not see a way out of the situation.

For more information on interviews and on the situation at Sishen Mine and the surrounding areas, contact the following:

Bench Marks Centre:	Lead Researcher for the Bench Marks Foundation:
Professor Freek Cronjé Director for the Centre 018 299 1753 (Potchefstroom Campus) or 082 931 2567 Email: freek.cronje@nwu.ac.za	David van Wyk 082 876 5954 Email: d.vanwyk58@gmail.com