



Media statement by the Bench Marks Foundation

Women still treated as sex objects in the mining industry

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The only way for women to get employed by mining companies is through offering sex and paying bribes according to workers and community members in and around mines.

This has been revealed in the latest report entitled 'Floating or sinking' Social Licence to Operation (SLO): Kumba Iron Ore Limited released by the Bench Marks Foundation on 3 June 2015 in Johannesburg.

"This is not the first time we've heard this from the people in the mining communities" says John Capel, Executive Director of the Bench Marks Foundation.

"During our research on Kumba Iron Ore, we heard that there is a sense of marginalisation for women and that they feel that the only way that they can get jobs is through offering sex and paying bribes.

"A community member told us that if you want a job at the mine, you have to pay someone and that you have to pay the whole amount immediately. Women first have to sleep with the managers or the men have to 'buy' their wives, girlfriends or daughters a job.

"The community is despondent. Not only do they have this to contend with, but they also feel that educating themselves is useless and a waste of time as they see Kumba giving preference to outsiders who often have less education than they have".

Says Capel: "These allegations about sex with people in influential positions for jobs must be investigated by the South African Gender Commission.

"It's totally unacceptable. And while the South African Gender Commission is investigating this, it must also look into the conditions of women workers and the gender composition especially that of the lowest paid workers".

The research report states that although Kumba says that it supports South African employment equity legislation and promotes equal opportunity through the elimination of unfair discrimination and the implementation of affirmative action measures, the perception by workers for the company and community members is that there has been no real transformation within the company.

Bench Marks Foundation and the Bench Marks Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at the North-West University's report investigates the strengths and weaknesses in Anglo American's Kumba Iron Ore mining company's policies in its efforts to gain and maintain a Social Licence to Operate.

The report also highlights the gaps in the company's Corporate Social Responsibility programmes.

The report is the tenth edition of the Bench Marks Foundation's Policy Gap series. For more information on the Bench Marks Foundation, or to view the last nine reports by the organisation as well as other information relating to the Kumba research, go to www.bench-marks.org.za.

Amongst others, the Bench Marks Foundation calls for a new relationship between corporations, communities and ecosystems; equal participation of stakeholders and those most affected by the activities of corporations in the decision-making processes of companies; preservation and protection of the environment for present and future

generations, and respect for the dignity of every person and human rights policies based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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About Bench Marks Foundation:

Bench Marks Foundation is an independent non-governmental organisation mandated by churches to monitor the practices of multi-national corporations to

- ensure they respect human rights;
- protect the environment;
- ensure that profit-making is not done at the expense of other interest groups; and
- ensure that those most negatively impacted upon are heard, protected and accommodated within the business plans of the corporations.

The Foundation was launched by the Rt Rev Dr Jo Seoka who chairs the organisation and by member churches of the SACC in 2001.

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