

Role of mining companies in contributing to Sustainable development goals

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The corporate social responsibility (CSR) of mines to communities in addressing sustainable development goals (SDGs), is a subject that has gained momentum in the past decade but there has been limited research on this subject in the context of Namibia. Given the depleting nature of the mining and minerals industry, mining companies have been called upon to actively take steps to ensure that the livelihoods of communities dependent on their operations continue to thrive and operate post mine closure. This study investigates the progress made by mining companies in fulfilling their role in society's transition to sustainability through environmental stewardship and CSR. An extensive literature review was done and a status quo analysis of their contribution to SDGs with a focus on resource stewardship and corporate social responsibility was carried out. Factors which hinder the implementation of best practices were identified and mitigating strategies were formulated. The major finding is that many companies within the Chamber of Mines in Namibia are undertaking a significant amount of Corporate Social Responsibilities activities which contribute to the (SDGs). The provision of desalinated water to the local mining industry and the local community by one uranium company is one key aspect in meeting SDGs. Through consultation with local communities, some mining companies have established Community trusts, run by local trustees, to prioritise allocation to different community projects, of funds provided by the companies. Other mines have programmes for contributing sanitation facilities and providing livestock as well as training to local farmers. One major recommendation from this study is that the Chamber of Mines should encourage its members to set up a consolidated fund for CSR activities which contribute to SDGs and still leave room for the individual members to pursue their other CSR aspects which are unique to their operations.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, stewardship, sustainable development goals.