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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Development and the Mining Industry in Namibia: Critical Reflections through a Relational Lens

Dr David Littlewood

Queen's University Management School,
Queen's University Belfast

25 University Square, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT7 1NN

Tel: +44 (0) 28 9097 3160 Fax: +44 (0) 28 9097 5156

Email: d.littlewood@qub.ac.uk

Abstract

The mining industry has been at the forefront of the global CSR movement. Through initiatives like the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) project, and institutions like the International Council on Mining and Metals, the industry has ostensibly sought to transform the way in which it does business and its interactions with social and environmental issues. This paper discusses CSR in the mining industry in Namibia. Mining has a long and controversial history in Namibia, and some mining companies operating in Namibia have engaged in CSR activities for over 30 years. This paper considers the relationship between CSR in the mining industry in Namibia and development. In Namibia, the mining industry is widely heralded as the 'cornerstone' of the economy. The industry is suggested to make an important contribution to national development through avenues of taxation and employment, and also increasingly as a more direct development actor through CSR. In this paper the mining industry's contribution to development in Namibia through CSR is critically examined. This analysis draws upon relational understandings of responsibility. Discussions are based upon fieldwork undertaken in Namibia as part of PhD research.

Introduction

"To give away money is an easy matter and in any man's power. But to decide to whom to give it and how large and when, and for what purpose and how, is neither in every man's power nor an easy matter" – Aristotle

The role and responsibilities of business to society have long been debated, and industrial philanthropy has existed since the industrial revolution. However current notions and practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s as part of wider global transitions associated with the rise and proliferation of neo-

liberalism (Sadler and Lloyd 2008). Advocates of CSR suggest that it represents an important avenue through which the private sector can contribute to international development. Reflecting this position CSR has been embraced by international institutions like the World Bank and United Nations (UN), and also national development agencies like the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). However it remains unclear how far the optimism surrounding CSR and its potential development contribution is warranted, while critical academic research in this area is still limited (Fox 2004). This gap has been recognised by a number of authors who call for the development of a critical research agenda on CSR and development (Hopkins 2007 and Frynas 2008). The research presented in this paper engages with these questions and uncertainties. It critically examines CSR, development and the mining industry in Namibia. Discussions are informed by relational understandings of responsibility. The paper is structured as follows. Background is first provided about the mining industry, and the CSR activities of mining companies in Namibia. The relationship between CSR and development in the mining industry in Namibia is then critically discussed. What is meant by a relational understanding of responsibility is then outlined, after which this understanding is employed in discussion of the relational responsibilities of mining companies in Namibia. This paper is founded upon fieldwork undertaken in Namibia as part of PhD research.

Mining and Namibia

Namibia is often described as having been the last colony on the continent of Africa, only gaining independence from South Africa in 1990. While Namibia's colonial history ended 21 years ago, it began in 1884 when the area that would become Namibia was annexed as German South West Africa. During the First World War this territory was captured by South Africa which was later granted a mandate to administer Namibia. At the end of World War II it was decided that this mandate should be replaced leading to eventual decolonisation and independence. However the government of South Africa refused to surrender its mandate and instead occupied Namibia. Throughout its occupation Namibia was administered as a de-facto South African province. Bantustan homelands were established in various parts of the country.

Mining has a long and controversial history in Namibia and occurred during both German and South African occupation. Mining began in earnest in Namibia in 1906 with the establishment of the Tsumeb copper mines. Soon afterwards in 1908 diamonds were discovered on the South West (Skeleton) Coast of Namibia precipitating an informal diamond rush. In 1911 in a bid to control this rush regulations were enacted declaring the diamond area as Sperrgebiet, or 'Forbidden Territory'. Mining activity and access into the Sperrgebiet was heavily restricted and remains so. In 1920 the various diamond operators in Namibia were bought by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, and the company Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM) was formed. CDM gained exclusive mining rights for the Sperrgebiet. Both copper and diamonds have been mined in Namibia since this time, with diamond mining in

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Since the 1970s and particularly over the last decade the mining industry in Namibia has diversified. In 1970 and 1976 respectively the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine and Rössing Uranium Mines were opened. In 1989 operations began at the Navachab Gold Mine, and in 2001 at the Skorpion Zinc Mine. The last 5 years have witnessed a Uranium Boom in the Erongo region with a number of new mines opening. Historically diamond mining has been the paramount mining activity undertaken in Namibia. However in 2008 for the first time since independence tax receipts from non-diamond mining exceeded those from diamond mining.

This reversal is partially attributable to the growth of non-diamond mining, but also reflects the long term decline of Namibia's land-based diamond mining industry exacerbated by the global financial crisis. For over a century mining has been central to Namibia's economy. In the present the mining industry accounts for nearly 50% of Namibia's merchandising exports and around 16% of GDP (COMN 2010).

“An added bonus”- CSR in the Mining Industry in Namibia

In this paper CSR is used to refer to policies, practices and engagements by mining companies in Namibia with social, environmental and development issues going beyond legal requirements.

“Corporate responsibility is responsibility above and beyond tax and royalties, these I think are an added bonus. It is not regulated in Namibia. It is an added bonus the company is doing it out of their own free will, they're doing it because they feel that they need to do something above and beyond what they have already contributed”(Interview with Namibian government representative)

This interview quotation nicely illustrates the Namibian government's current approach to the governance of social responsibility in the mining industry. Before independence the laws governing the mining industry in Namibia were taken from South Africa. These laws, and the wider institutions which existed in Namibia at this time, allowed mining companies considerable leeway in their business practices and interactions with social, environmental and development issues. Since independence, the government of Namibia has passed various pieces of legislation pertaining to the mining industry and its legal social, environmental, and development responsibilities. Significant legislation includes: the Minerals Act (1992), the Affirmative Action Act (1998), the Diamond Act (1999), the Environmental Management Act (2007). This and wider legislation passed since independence sets down basic legal requirements for mining companies operating in Namibia. However beyond adherence to these basic standards social, environmental and development responsibilities are largely unlegislated in Namibia. Mining companies are 'encouraged' to engage with wider social responsibility issues. For example Namibia's Mineral's Policy (2002) identifies voluntary corporate social responsibility as an important vehicle through which mining companies can contribute to local and national social and economic development. In this Policy the Namibian government commits to 'encourage' mining companies to engage with these issues, however there is no legal requirement that they must.

Mining companies in Namibia have engaged in CSR activities for over 30 years including before the country's independence. The CSR activities of mining companies in Namibia during this period are particularly controversial and open to charges of “greenwash” given the wider context in which they were operating. Before independence mining companies' engagements with CSR were for the most part in the form of charitable giving and corporate

philanthropy. CDM had a Chairman's Fund while Rössing Uranium was particularly active through its development vehicle the Rössing Foundation. The Rössing Foundation was established in 1976 partly in response to the negative publicity Rössing and its parent corporation Rio Tinto were receiving for their operations in Namibia. The Foundation was funded directly by Rössing Uranium, and at its height ran training and education centres across Namibia. It was involved with numerous other development projects across the country. The Rössing Foundation continues to provide development support to communities throughout Namibia in the present day. Since independence the fortunes of the Foundation have fluctuated according to the wider business performance of Rössing Uranium. The 1990s were a difficult decade for the Rössing Mine and its ability to fund the Foundation was reduced. This affected the Foundation's activities. The Foundation downsized and restructured with a greater emphasis on alternative funding and self-sufficiency. Since 2003/4 the global price of uranium has risen, leading to an improvement in Rössing Uranium's business performance and an extension of the mine's lifespan. Rössing has been able to invest further funds in the Foundation leading to a re-expansion of its activities. In interviews for this research it was apparent that Rössing and the Rössing Foundation are widely viewed as a best practice benchmark for CSR development support in the mining industry in Namibia.

Since independence mining companies in Namibia have on the whole become more active in their development activities. For example, following the creation of Namdeb in 1994 the Namdeb Social Fund (NSF) was established, largely replacing the previous CDM Chairman's Fund. Since 1994 through the NSF Namdeb has donated over N\$20m (£1.7m) to charitable causes across Namibia. The company has also made numerous separate charitable donations and in 2004 established the Oshipe Development Fund which provides business support and low interest loans to Namibian entrepreneurs. In 2009/10 a Namdeb Foundation was created replacing the NSF and Namdeb's other social funds. Its creation can be seen to reflect the perceived reputational and development success of the Rössing Foundation. Other major mining companies operating in Namibia have also become more active in charitable giving, with many also attempting to replicate the Rössing Foundation model. In 2009/10 for example the Skorpion Zinc Mine which has previously donated funds in quite an ad hoc way decided to establish a Skorpion Zinc Foundation. The fieldwork for this research ended in 2009. It is thus difficult to determine the impact of the global financial crisis on the mining industry in Namibia as a whole and on these kinds of charitable contributions. However corporate reporting and company websites indicate that such support has been substantially reduced and in some instances has been suspended.

Over the last 10-15 years CSR policies and practices within the mining industry have become more sophisticated going beyond charitable giving. Reflecting wider international trends 'sustainable development' has been almost universally adopted as a 'core business value' by mining companies in Namibia. Sustainable development departments and staff positions have been created, and sustainable development has become central in social reporting by

mining companies and in reporting by industry bodies like the Chamber of Mines Namibia. As part of this sustainable development drive companies have begun to think more broadly about their role and responsibilities in society. Through CSR, mining companies in Namibia have begun to address the issue of local preferential procurement. In encouraging such procurement Namdeb, Skorpion Zinc and the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine have led the way, jointly creating the Namibia Preferential Procurement Council (NPCC). A further illustration of this expansion of CSR can be found in relation to mine closure. Mine closure legislation in Namibia remains problematic. Historically this has meant that mining has often left behind negative social and environmental legacies. However on both an individual and collective basis mining companies in Namibia are engaging more readily with responsible mine closure planning through CSR. At an individual level for example Rössing Uranium has become heavily involved in the sustainability drive of the Arandis mining community. The company is working with the Arandis local government and the Rössing Foundation through the Arandis Sustainable Development Project (ASDP). At an industry level through the Chamber of Mines Namibia companies have collaborated in the creation of best practice closure guidelines. These guidelines are a step ahead of legislation and policy. The evolution and current state of CSR within the mining industry in Namibia has been outlined. In the following section the industry's role and contribution to development in Namibia through CSR will be more critically discussed.

“Adding value?”- Mining Companies and Development Assistance

Through CSR mining companies in Namibia are playing an increasing role in development. Through social funds mining companies are supporting development projects and the activities of NGOs. Through semi autonomous organisations like the Rössing Foundation they are actively involved in development activities. In other instances mining companies are running ‘in-house’ development projects. There are many different modes and models of activity currently taking place. However while recognising this variation, and the variation that exists in the type and quality of development support being provided by companies, a number of common areas of concern with such support were still identified.

Development support provided by mining companies in Namibia has historically been quite ad hoc, lacking a wider plan or strategy, and separate from the activities of other development actors or the state. The Namdeb Social Fund provides an example of these problems. For many years the NSF provided large numbers of once off, often relatively small donations to charitable causes across Namibia. It is almost impossible to quantify the social impact of these many contributions. However question marks over the extent to which they were ‘adding value’, or represented good value for money were raised during interviews for this research. In the final years of the NSF a decision was made to try and reduce the number of donations made and to be more strategic with funding. Nevertheless in 2007 the NSF still provided support to over 40 projects nationally. The NSF was managed part-time by staff within Namdeb's communications department. They had insufficient capacity, and

lacked the skills and expertise to follow up on donations, to assess their effectiveness and impact, and in some instances to ensure that donations were used for correct purposes. A situation where development assistance was managed by communications departments or part-time by staff with other responsibilities was not unique to Namdeb. It occurred in other mining companies in Namibia with similar concerns identified. The intertwining of communications and development was also found to be problematic in some cases, in relation to their relative prioritisation and the extent that donations were managed to maximise public relations benefits over social impact. The NSF provided funds on request. This approach meant that donations were often discrete, were not part of any overall plan or long-term intervention, and often failed to engage with wider government development planning or development interventions by other actors. The NSF generally eschewed ongoing support. It adopted this approach to avoid the creation of dependency, but also because of the high volume of requests received and its limited capacity to engage with a project over the longer term. While understandable, this approach limited its social impact.

Through the creation of the Namdeb Foundation, and foundations by other mining companies in Namibia it is hoped that these issues will be better addressed. In the case of the Rössing Foundation while these problems are still apparent, strides have been taken towards addressing them. For example in the Foundation's Whole School Development Project (WSDP) it has signed a moratorium of understanding with the Namibian Government identifying respective roles and responsibilities, and is working closely with local government actors, communities, and wider stakeholders to improve educational provision and attainment over the long-term. Planning, consultation and the identification of development problems and their causes was undertaken prior to the creation of the WSDP, which has been tailored to compliment the Namibian Government's wider Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). A similar long term, integrated and collaborative approach is in evidence in the Foundation's involvement with the ASDP.

Another area of concern in relation to the development activities of mining companies in Namibia relates to their sustainability. The example of the OBIB training centre illustrates this point. The OBIB centre was an 'in house' community training project run by Kumba Resources, then owners of the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine. Staff and materials were paid for by the company with little thought to long-term self-sufficiency. In 2007 when Kumba began to experience financial difficulties the centre closed. The current owners of the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine, Exxaro, have sought to re-open the centre as a community enterprise. Such an approach will hopefully ensure that the centre and its positive social impact can continue after mining. Similar problems were experienced on a larger scale by the Rössing Foundation during the 1990s. The Foundation was and to a large extent remains reliant on funding from Rössing Uranium. During this period Rössing's financial difficulties meant that it had to reduce its financial support to the Foundation. The Foundation was forced to disengage from many of its development activities and projects, and most of its education centres were handed over to other organisations or Namibia's government for alternative

use. This transition was more and less successfully managed in different cases. Some projects blossomed, for example through the creation of the autonomous organisation Mud Hut Trading various women's craft producers assisted by the Foundation have been able to continue selling products into the present day. However in many other instances self-sufficiency was not possible and alternative funding sources were not found resulting in closure. Company funding and support for development projects can fluctuate rapidly. This has again been in evidence in the mining industry in Namibia since the onset of the global financial crisis. Development projects should be designed with self-sufficiency in mind and a clear plan for disengagement, in the mining industry in Namibia this has not always been the case.

Further concerns were identified in the development activities of mining companies in Namibia. One limitation encountered was that because of the public relations and reputation enhancement rationale underlying development assistance, collaboration between companies to use resources efficiently, to maximise their cumulative development impact, and to avoid duplication was limited. While there was communication between companies, for example the Skorpion Zinc Mine had approached the Rössing Foundation with the aim of replicating the WSDP, collaboration could be improved. In the Erongo region discussions between new and existing uranium mines on a joint development vehicle have never really got off the ground.

Concerns were also identified in relation to accountability, monitoring and transparency of development assistance. As previously discussed the capacity of some mining companies to monitor and assess the impact of their development support has been and remains limited. However the voluntary nature of such support means that accountability for its social impact rests with the companies themselves. Companies face few if any consequences for development failures, recipients and communities cannot hold them to account and have little prospect for redress. Mining companies in Namibia are audited on a variety of issues, however auditing of their development activities or wider social impact largely does not occur. The lack of transparency which surrounds such development support presents a further barrier to external accountability. Social reporting by mining companies in Namibia has grown considerably over the last decade in line with global reporting trends. Such reporting is however often quite superficial and lacking in detail particularly in relation to social or development impact.

Previously in this paper it was suggested that CSR in the mining industry in Namibia CSR has begun to move beyond philanthropy and charitable giving. Limitations were again encountered in these wider CSR engagements. Concerns were identified in the way mining companies were addressing issues of mine closure and mining community sustainability and viability after mining. Voluntary company engagements with preferential local procurement and procurement from previously disadvantaged Namibians was also found to be problematic, even recognising the inherent difficulties of such procurement in a small

country like Namibia. These limitations will receive further critical attention later in the paper informed by a relational understanding of responsibility.

A Relational Responsibility

Relational ways of thinking about space, place and identity are increasingly prevalent within contemporary human geography and across the social sciences. Massey (2004) draws upon these developments to outline the case for a relational understanding of responsibility. Massey (2004) discusses the relational constitution of space, place and identity, arguing that recognition of their relational constitution brings with it a relational ethic of responsibility. Massey (2004) uses the example of London and the relational construction of its place identity to illustrate her arguments. She highlights how both historically and in the present London can be conceived, and is constituted and reproduced, through its relationships with other places. Massey (2004) highlights the unequal power dynamics and often contestable and potentially exploitative nature of these relationships. Central to Massey's work is the breaking down of distance and to a lesser extent time as a barrier to responsibility. This theme is echoed in recent development studies writing, for example Corbridge (1998) argues that states and citizens in the industrialised world have responsibilities for the development claims of distant strangers in developing countries. These claims are founded on the complex causal relationships that connect people living in different places, for instance through market transactions, supply chains, and displaced pollution effects. Massey (2004) calls for a more reflexive politics of London that better recognises the spatial and temporal relations that inform its existence, of its relations with other places, and the global inequalities through which much of its wealth and status has been built and is maintained. She argues that recognition of these interconnections brings with it ethical relational responsibilities. In this paper I call for a more reflexive CSR within the mining industry in Namibia. For greater understanding of the spatial and temporal relationships through which mining companies have and continue to operate in Namibia and the responsibilities which derive from these relationships. In the following discussions it is argued that if CSR within the mining industry in Namibia is to make a more meaningful social and development contribution, it needs to reflect and engage more with companies' relational spatial and temporal responsibilities, and better recognise the way in which mining companies may be implicated in the creation of social and development problems.

Reflexive CSR

Declining former mining communities and ghost mining towns can be found across Namibia. These communities illustrate the way in which mining companies in Namibia may be implicated in the creation of social, environmental and development problems. Previously in this paper it was discussed how the mining industry in Namibia had taken the lead in devising closure guidelines. Individual mining companies have also in some instances been active in their efforts to encourage community sustainability and viability. For example,

Rössing Uranium and the Rössing Foundation are both heavily involved with the Arandis Sustainable Development Project (ASDP). However while these closure guidelines are a positive development they are low on specific requirements, and in particular make no reference to the issue of proclamation.

Company towns are a common feature of mining activity in Namibia. These remote communities are built to house employees and are administered by mining companies. Upon mine closure it is a legal requirement that companies rehabilitate their mining license area and remove any ancillary structures or works; this would include such company towns. However it has been common practice for mining companies in Namibia to handover such communities to the Namibian government, and to have them proclaimed as local authorities. The Arandis community was handed over to Namibia government in 1994. At this time Rössing Uranium was experiencing financial difficulties and desired to reduce its costs in running the town. Since proclamation the decline of Arandis has been stark. It was suggested in interviews that following a second significant redundancy exercise by Rössing Uranium in 2001, Arandis almost became a ghost town. The uranium boom which has gripped the Erongo region over the last 5 years has granted Arandis a reprieve. However the town continues to struggle economically, remains subsidised by the state and social and development problems abound. It is not suggested that Rössing Uranium bears sole responsibility for Arandis's problems. Local government mismanagement has been a recurrent theme in the community's post-proclamation history. The government of Namibia also bears responsibility both for agreeing to Arandis's proclamation, and its subsequent approach towards the community. Nevertheless the initial decision by Rössing Uranium to encourage the proclamation of Arandis must be questioned.

Oranjemund and Rosh Pinah are company owned mining communities in the south of Namibia. Both are currently in the process of being handed over to Namibia's government. During fieldwork for this research Rosh Pinah was booming, however its economy is almost entirely dependent on the wages of mine workers and mine procurement. Oranjemund in contrast is a community in decline reflecting the wider decline in Namdeb's fortunes. In Namdeb's 2010 social reporting it is stated that following redundancies and production holidays taken by the company that year Oranjemund came close to becoming a ghost town. The history of Arandis illustrates the social, development and environmental externalities that can be created by proclaiming these kinds of remote mining communities. Nevertheless mining companies in Namibia continue to foster this process. Post proclamation efforts by mining companies in Namibia to encourage sustainability and viability in these kinds of former company towns must be viewed quite cynically given their role in creating these communities to begin with, and in encouraging their proclamation largely for reasons of cost saving. In this research it was found to be questionable whether Oranjemund, Arandis or Rosh Pinah could ever become viable and self-sufficient.

Rosh Pinah was established in 1970 with the opening of the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine. In 2001 the Anglo American Skorpion Zinc Mine was built 10km outside of Rosh Pinah. Employees of Skorpion Zinc are accommodated in Rosh Pinah. The opening of the Skorpion Zinc Mine transformed Rosh Pinah. Prior to the mines construction a small informal community had existed in Rosh Pinah largely home to contract workers for the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine and the families of low grade employees. Following the construction of the Skorpion Zinc Mine the population of the informal “Sand Hotel” community increased from around 1000 to over 5000. This expansion brought with it a variety of social problems. In 2007 the two companies in Rosh Pinah decided that the community should be relocated to a safer, less cramped site. This relocation was largely successful, although conflict did occur over water provision to the new Tutungeni community several months afterwards. The establishment and later growth of the informal community in Rosh Pinah illustrates the way in which mining companies in Namibia have albeit indirectly been implicated in the creation of social problems. Furthermore while the two companies have acted to relocate the community, they have been slow to address some of the underlying causes behind its establishment, maintenance and continuing growth. Both companies outsource to contractor companies who often fail to provide their employees with accommodation, or pay wages sufficient to rent accommodation. These contract workers reside in the Tutungeni community. Historically lower grade employees at the Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine have also not been provided with family accommodation. This situation has started to be addressed but according to one interviewee there remains a “housing crisis” in Rosh Pinah. This lack of family accommodation has often resulted in the families of mine workers residing in the informal community. The two companies in Rosh Pinah are implicated in the creation and maintenance of the informal Tutungeni community. While they have become more active in providing social support to the community they also need to review their wider employment policies, and their requirements for contractor companies.

It has been argued that mining companies in Namibia are implicated in the creation of social and development problems in ways that current CSR engagements and practices largely fail to recognise. A final illustration of this is the way in which wider questions of the mining industry’s role in Namibia’s national development are mostly absent from CSR agendas. It is taken for granted that mining is the ‘cornerstone’ of Namibia’s economy and central to its development and prosperity. However while the mining industry is central to Namibia’s economy, its role in national development needs to be viewed more reflexively. The jury is still out about the contribution of mining to Namibia’s development both before and since independence. Namibia’s GDP per capita growth rates since independence have been modest with an average annual growth rate of 1.8% (UN 2010). This rate is lower than the global average of 2.4 % and only slightly higher than the average for Sub Saharan Africa at 1.3%. Namibia’s sluggish growth rates in comparison to many countries lacking its resource endowment, suggest that its impact on economic growth has been limited. However, with reference to arguments of the ‘resource curse’ it might even be argued that mining activity

has served to stifle Namibia's growth and development. An in-depth discussion of resource curse theories and how far they apply to Namibia is beyond the scope of this paper. However tentative connections can be made between Namibia's natural resource abundance and its modest developmental performance. It could be argued for example that this abundance has fuelled or at least permitted Namibia's expanded bureaucracy since independence, or that it has stifled alternative economic growth or government accountability for development. Whether these linkages can be maintained requires deeper critical examination. In this paper it is not suggested that mining alone is responsible for Namibia's development problems. It is however urged that the mining industry in Namibia in its engagements with CSR could be more reflexive about these issues and its role in wider national development.

Mining companies in Namibia are implicated in the development of communities across the country. Mining is centred in three regions in the south and centre of Namibia (Karas, Erongo and Oshikoto). However Namibia's population is concentrated in the capital Windhoek and in four regions in the north (Kavango, Oshana, Ohangwena and Omusati). Before independence these four northern regions were within the semi autonomous 'homelands' of Ovamboland and Kavangoland. Mining companies operating in Namibia during this period would recruit most of their low grade employees from these northern regions. Namibians from these northern regions remain heavily represented within the industry. Before independence most mining companies in Namibia made some use of the migrant labour system. It was common for non-white employees to work 6 months on 6 months off. While working in the mines in the south and central regions of Namibia low grade employees would often stay in poor quality hostel accommodation, while their families remained in the north of the country. Following independence the migrant labour system was abolished, however many mining companies continued to employ some form of long distance commuting policies. The use of migrant labour and subsequent long distance commuting by mining companies created various economic and social interconnections between communities in the north of Namibia and the mines in the south.

A recent consultant's study of risk and the potential impact of staff redundancies at one of the mines in Namibia suggested that the wages of many lower level employees supported over 30 dependents, with these dependents often in the north of Namibia. In another study this figure was a slightly more conservative 10-15. Rippling out from these direct dependents it can be argued that the livelihoods of many others in the northern regions of Namibia are indirectly reliant on purchasing or employment created by mine wages and remittances. The historic and ongoing social and economic linkages that exist between mining companies in the south of Namibia and communities in the north need to be better recognised in the mine closure policies and practices of mining companies. In this research it was found that these wider spatial connections were given limited attention. Problems were identified in mining company communications with these affected communities, in the training and support provided for employees leaving and returning to these areas, and in

efforts to foster alternative economic activities in these northern regions. In their approaches towards redundancy and separation mining companies in Namibia have followed relevant mine closure and redundancy legislation. However as previously discussed such legislation is limited. Distance should not be a barrier to companies' responsibilities in relation to these communities. The historic relationships that exist between mining companies in Namibia and these communities, and the central role played by the mining industry in their development trajectories and those of Namibia's wider northern regions, call for a more robust engagement with these issues through CSR.

A relational understanding of responsibility finally allows for consideration of redress, legacy and mining companies temporal relational responsibilities. Several mining companies presently operating in Namibia were active in the country before independence. Their decision to mine in Namibia, and their activities during this period, were controversial and remain the subject of debate. On the one hand are those who argue that by operating in Namibia before independence these companies profited from Namibia's occupied status, and in the process deprived that majority of Namibia's population the benefits of the extraction of their natural resources. Critics highlight the low rates of taxation paid by companies at this time and their disproportionate profits. A 1987 report by the UN Council for Namibia for example concludes that mining companies in Namibia were paying a 'ridiculously low' rate of taxation, and that from 1946 into the 1970's as much as 60% of Namibia's GDP was repatriated as pre-tax profits. Critics further highlight the industry's labour policies during this period, the inadequate living and working conditions of non-white employees, their complicity with security forces, and their anti union activities. It is even suggested that by operating in Namibia, mining companies indirectly contributed to the maintenance of Namibia's occupation by paying taxes which supported the occupying regime, and which made Namibia's continued occupation desirable. However there are counter voices to these negative interpretations. There are those who dispute these low taxation figures, who highlight the mining industry's contribution to development through employment, its contribution to economic growth, and the positive development contribution of companies through philanthropy and charitable giving. It is furthermore suggested that since independence mining companies in Namibia have taken a leading role in addressing many of the country's social problems and that they are playing their part in tackling the legacies of Namibia's colonial past. For a more in-depth review of both sides of these arguments see Kempton, D. R. and Du Preez (1997). Whether mining companies in Namibia have temporal relational responsibilities for their activities before independence, and if so how those responsibilities should be addressed are difficult questions to answer. Certainly the juxtaposition of corporate charitable giving during this period in the context of wider business practices, mean that such philanthropic activity should be critically viewed. A relational understanding of responsibility opens room for critical reflection of these temporal relational responsibilities, whether they exist, and how they should be addressed.

At present within the mining industry in Namibia these issues remain a proverbial elephant in the room.

Conclusion

In this paper the relationship between CSR and development in the mining industry in Namibia has been critically discussed. While it is recognised that through CSR mining companies in Namibia are contributing to development, and are taking the lead in addressing some social responsibility issues, limitations were identified in their policies and practices. Many questions remain about the role of mining companies as development actors in Namibia. Discussions in this paper are not meant to suggest either that the social, environmental and development responsibilities of mining companies are unlimited, or that the mining industry is responsible for, or should be expected to address all of Namibia's development problems. However, if mining companies are to play an increasing role as direct development actors in Namibia that there is scope for improvement. In this paper it has also been suggested that within the mining industry in Namibia there is need for greater awareness of the spatial and temporal relationships through which mining activity has and continues to occur, and of the responsibilities engendered through these relationships. I call for the development of a more reflexive and self aware CSR within the mining industry in Namibia, recognising causality and the role mining companies and the mining industry have and continue to play in the creation of social, environmental and development problems.

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