

Municipalities convene to resolve crisis within the communities



The recent closure of the R31 road commonly known as the Hotazel road by mining interest communities led to an establishment of the stakeholders forum comprising of municipalities, mining houses, traditional leaders, affected community members and former mine workers. The reason behind the closing of the road was the continuous outcry from communities that the mines are not doing enough to contribute to the growth of the area and that employment and business opportunities are given largely to people from outside the district.

The district municipality together with the mines held a second consultative meeting with the concerned group on the 05th June 2018. The meeting was chaired by the Executive Mayor, Councillor Sofia Mosikatsi who noted with concern that most of the stakeholders who were invited did not attend nor send apologies which in turn causes delays in decision making. The mayor requested the members to raise issues with respect and also emphasised that any decision that was to be taken should be to the benefit of the communities of the district.

The community members raised concerns on the non-attendance of Dikgosi and some mining houses. They also requested the attendance of the Department of Mineral Resources. They raised a range of issues relating to unemployment, environmental issues, non-compliance to mining acts, corruption and skills transfer, which according to them is not being done to address the skills shortage in the district. The other main issue was the skills development centre, which they requested should be built in the district because the current one in Mothibistad does not equip youth with the necessary skills needed at the mines, said the members. There was a request also from the group that government and the mines should have open channels for communication. They also requested that the solar parks should form part of the forum. The other request was to organise another mining indaba in the district because the members felt that not all communities of the district were invited or not part of the recently held mining charter Imbizo.

When wrapping up the deliberations, the Municipal Manager, Mr Disang Molaole also emphasized a district approach in resolving the issues affecting the district. He also mentioned that community organizations and municipalities often clash when sending

requests to the mines, and that should be avoided at all costs but that does not mean that community members or individuals cannot approach mines for funding. The meeting also resolved that mines should prepare presentations which will inform everyone the total number of local labour force and the skills they possess as well as the number of retrenchments. Recruitment and procurements at the mines should also form part of the next agenda and a presentation from Department of Mineral Resources on legislations affecting mining. All of these should be done in a transparent manner and that there should be accountability on both the side of government and the private sector.

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