

# Co-Creating Development in Mining Towns: the Nexus between Social Labour Plans and Integrated Development Plans for Urban Development Planning in Rustenburg, South Africa

*Samson Olaoluwa Faboye, Trynos Gumbo, Kgomotso Jackson Phillip Sebola-Samanyanga*

(Samson Olaoluwa Faboye, University of Johannesburg, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, South Africa, sfaboye@gmail.com)

(Prof. Trynos Gumbo, University of Johannesburg, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Johannesburg, South Africa, tgumbo@uj.ac.za)

(Dr. Kgomotso Jackson Phillip Sebola-Samanyanga, University of Pretoria, Department of Town and Regional Planning, Pretoria, South Africa, jackson.sebola@up.ac.za)

## 1 ABSTRACT

Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Social Labor Plans (SLPs) are two crucial short and medium-term development strategy documents guiding the development of mining towns in South Africa. Besides socioeconomic growth that mining brings to the 'host communities', mining towns experience mining-related socioeconomic problems, specifically dereliction upon the closure of mines. To ensure sustainable development guarantees for mining communities, SLPs are requirements from mining companies as part of licensing obligations in South Africa. On the other hand, IDPs are five-year strategic action plans that South African municipalities must produce at the onset of a political tenure to guide municipal development over the set period. IDPs and SLPs are mutually connected to advance municipal development planning. However, with multiple agencies involved in monitoring and implementing both development plans, there are developmental questions about integrating both plans to achieve a unity of purpose. In this article, we examine the case of Rustenburg Local Municipality, noted for its vast Platinum reserves and mining globally. The study evaluates the challenges of cocreating development through SLPs and IDPs, beginning with conceptualising, implementing and monitoring these plans. Findings were sourced from primary qualitative sources (key informant interviews) and secondary sources, including desktop reviews. The research's findings reveal that while broader stakeholder consultations exist in creating IDPs, the same is not assured for SLPs. This creates gaps in integrating and implementing both action plans. Notwithstanding this obstacle, there is substantial potential for SLPs and IDPs to collaborate on inclusive municipal development in South Africa. A synergised co-creation of SLPs and IDPs at the stages of conceptualisation and implementation by all stakeholders is vital to assuring transparency, accountability and effective implementation of both strategic action plans.

Keywords: Strategic Plans, IDPs, SLPs, Co-creation, Development Planning

## 2 INTRODUCTION

South Africa's Municipalities are tasked with development planning by the constitutional and policy frameworks (RSA, 1996; RSA, 2000). This developmental mandate revolves around providing basic service delivery and socioeconomic empowerment. Within this mandate, municipalities must produce IDPs, a medium termed development document projected to span the five years of municipalities' elected political leadership. IDPs elaborate the municipality's developmental blueprint "with emphasis on the municipality's most critical development and internal transformation needs" (RSA, 2000: 38). In the same vein, iterated Municipal IDPs are to align with sectoral, provincial and national development plans – these being longterm development plans while IDPs are medium termed. Development plans iterated by all the government tiers in South Africa include a Spatial Development Framework (SDF) blueprint for land use management (RSA, 2013). In essence, the developmental plans prescribe the socioeconomic future while the SDF component addresses the issue of land use management. Making these developmental plans requires a participation process for significant inputs and vetting from the stakeholders these plans serve.

SLPs can be likened to Local Economic Development strategies for mining towns, albeit prepared by mining companies as part of mining licencing requirements set by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) (RSA, 2002; CALS, 2016). It is aimed at a regeneration initiative of mining towns to ensure they do not slide into dereliction resulting from mining activities. The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 28 of 2002 (MPRDA) defines the legal framework for SLPs (RSA, 2002). SLPs come under the mandate of addressing the mine host community needs (inclusive of labour-sending areas and adjoining locations around mining communities affected by mining activities); therefore, the application for mining rights must be accompanied by one. This is addressed in Human Resource Development programmes

(inclusive of skills development plan, career progression plan and its implementation, mentorship and its implementation and internship and bursary plan and its implementation), Local Economic Development (LED) Programme, labour downscaling and retrenchment plan, financial implementation for the SLP. As stipulated in Regulation 42 of the MPDRA, SLPs, upon approval by the DMRE, must undergo a consultation process with the host communities and be aligned with the Municipality's IDPs (ibid).

According to Regulation 43 of the MPDRA, SLPs are subject to periodic 5-year reviews, a continuous process until a closure certificate has been issued to close up mining activities in the area (RSA, 2002). SLPs and IDPs are strategic planning instruments charting the development course of mining towns in South Africa. This article begins with the methodology utilised for data collection and a literature review on development planning. An overview of the study area, presentation of findings, recommendations, and conclusion follows this.

### 3 OBJECTIVES

- To explore the linkage between SLPs and IDPs in municipal development planning in Rustenburg Local Municipality.
- To investigate the problems associated with implementing SLPs in Rustenburg Local Municipality.

### 4 METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative approach incorporating documentary reviews and key informant interviews. Documentary reviews comprised literature reviews approached with keyword searches on “strategic planning”, “governance”, “development planning”, and “participatory planning” sourced from the Web of Science and Google Scholar. Other sources of documentary reviews were South African government policy documents guiding the legal framework for municipal development planning in South Africa. These documents include the 1996 Republic of South Africa Constitution, MPDRA and Municipal Systems Act of 2000. Information was also sourced from the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) archives, which provided details on the alignment and implementation of SLPs in Rustenburg Local Municipality. A total of ten key informant interviews were conducted between October 2022 and April 2023. Key informants were drawn from the Rustenburg Local Municipality staff, South Africa development stakeholders, municipal officials, DMRE officials, and residents of Rustenburg Local Municipality. Key informants were selected through the snowball sampling technique.

### 5 INTERPLAY BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE

Governance and development planning are closely intertwined, and their interplay manifests in producing IDPs and SLPs. Development is a multidimensional process to improve the overall quality of life, encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects (UN, 2023). Rabie (2016) defines development as an economic and technological procedure deployed to make the best use of the resources at hand to spur economic growth and elevate the quality of life of community residents. Governance, on the other hand, is, according to Fukuyama (2016), an established framework for societal cooperation and administration between sovereign and non-sovereign entities. It is a framework for interaction between private and public actors to ensure the stability of society and political entities (Kjaer, 2011; Cashore et al., 2021).

The relationship between governance and development planning comes under the nuances of ‘the good governance campaign’- a definition coined by the UN-Habitat. This is defined as the quality and “access to the necessities of urban life, including adequate shelter, security of tenure, safe water, sanitation, a clean environment, health, education and nutrition, employment and public safety and mobility” (UN-HABITAT, 2002: 14).

Governance and development planning involves the imposition of subtle coercive influence over people (Rode, Terreffe and da Cruz, 2020). Although the government oversees governance, it is demonstrated that several governance players are in the urban sociopolitical sphere. Governments are charged with providing services like housing, power, education, and development control, among other duties, yet these commitments are typically not fully met (Alford and O'Flynn, 2012). Okunlola (2001) highlights the local government as critical to implementing governance and development planning. Asserted herein (ibid) as

complementary to this are poverty reduction, government accountability, participatory budgeting and planning.

From the mid-twentieth century, urban planning underwent a paradigm shift with advancements for participatory community planning rather than professional-led master planning. This is viewed as a bottom-up developmental approach and more entrusted to entrench sustainable development. According to (Clark 2013), controlling fast urban expansion is not a task the master planning idea can handle. On the global scale, frameworks for human settlement planning favoured the shift from "master planning" to "strategic planning" (Watson 2009). Its inclusion of citizen engagement was one of the justifications for adopting strategic planning. In support of strategic planning, it has been said that democracy is now more deeply ingrained in society, particularly with the rise and growing importance of civil societies and community-based groups (Friedman, 1998; Amin, 2002).

Advocacy planning, closely associated with this novel planning movement, encourages widespread community involvement to develop plans that meet the needs of underrepresented groups and give them more power (Grooms and Boamah 2018). This kind of planning encouraged chaos to bring about justice and forced public authorities to consider neglected interests (Berke 2002). Developmental Strategies are thus prepared with stated goals intending to improve local communities' quality of life and contribute to the realisation of sustainable development (Williams 2002). Essentially, development planning is devolved to the local government level, which, according to (Madzivhandila and Asha, 2012), creates favourable conditions for mobilising material, financial, and human resources. This intends to improve the delivery of services to local communities and permits the utilisation of locally accessible resources. In post-apartheid South Africa, long-term strategic city planning was embedded in the 5-year tenured Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), reviewed annually and came with 'neo-liberal' policies (Todes 2014). The allusion to neoliberal policies in planning points to private sector participation in initiating and implementing development action plans (Jessop, 2002; Brenner and Theodore, 2005). SLPs, as applicable herein, as local economic action plans prepared and implemented by mining companies can be attributed to evidential neoliberalism in South Africa's mining town development.

Monitoring and evaluation is a veritable tool for ensuring the implementation of development plans and urban growth management. According to the UN-HABITAT (2009), most urban planning frameworks fail to integrate monitoring and evaluation in their implementation processes. This trend makes it difficult to evaluate the impact of development plans. In developed countries, "monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of urban plans have become part of practice in the more progressive planning departments of cities and regions" and vice versa in "transitional and developing countries" (ibid, 2009: xvi). Development planning as a core function of local government enables crucial choices regarding the distribution of limited resources to maximise the provision of health, education, and other services. It better understands local priorities and enables accountability on resource allocation decisions. However, monitoring the implementation of local action plans will ensure good governance at the level of local government governance.

## 6 PRESENTING RUSTENBURG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM) is located in the Northwest Province of South Africa, covering 3,423 square kilometers (RLM, 2022). The Gauteng City Region, which includes the metropolitan regions of Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Ekurhuleni, is within a 120km radius of the municipality regarding accessibility. The municipality is one of five municipalities comprising Bojanala District Municipality, the others being Kgetleng River Local Municipality, Moses Kotane Local Municipality, Madibeng Local Municipality and Moretele Local Municipality. RLM is a part of the Bushveld Complex. Merensky, Upper Group, Middle Group, Lower Group, and Upper Zone, rich in vanadium, are the economically significant reefs of the western limb of the Bushveld Igneous Complex (DMRE, 2022). More than half of the world's platinum-group metals (the six platinum-group metals are ruthenium, rhodium, palladium, osmium, and platinum), gold, silver, and other related minerals like vanadium, chromium, and base metals (copper, lead, tin, aluminium, nickel, and zinc) are found in this igneous body (ibid).

## **7 CO-CREATING DEVELOPMENT WITH THE IDP AND SLP AT RLM**

The White Paper on Local Government defines IDPs as one of the tools to achieve developmental outcomes: budgeting, performance management, stakeholder collaboration and participatory planning (RSA, 1998). Typically, a municipality's IDP assesses the socio-economic and environmental realities, determines the community needs from the participatory planning and lists a developmental vision for the municipality. It is anticipated that with IDPs, municipalities would be able to align their financial priorities and conciliate with provincial, national and international strategic plans. The IDP is a tool for local development planning that assists local municipalities in creating a thorough and long-term plan to promote services and development under their purview. For IDPs to be legitimate, the conceptualisation process must entail meaningful engagement reflecting the needs and objectives of local communities. Additionally, there must be interdepartmental cooperation and horizontal governance coordination to deliver adequate service. Thirdly, the successful implementation of IDPs relies on institutionalism inclusive of professionalism and competence, especially in finance management.

The SLP is a documentary requirement by the DMRE for granting mining rights to prospective firms. Section 23 of the MPRDA (Act 28 of 2002) mandates the preparation of an SLP as one of the mining licencing and mining permit renewal requirements. Under the 2020 amendments of the Act, it became mandatory for mining firms to publish approved SLPs. Regulation, 41 of the MPRDA, gives the objectives of the SLP as set to ensure mining firms with mining rights contribute to the socioeconomic development of mining communities and labour-sending areas (RSA, 2002). The participation process is also included in the making of the MPRDA, which according to Regulation 42 of the Act, mining firms, upon notification of acceptance of mining licence application, must within 180 days consult with affected persons about the contents of the SLPs and align to the targets of the municipal IDP. The participation process must be conducted by the terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of Sections 24 (5) of the National Environmental Management Act of 1998 (ibid). This involves an advertisement for the participation call via written notice, among others. SLPs, once approved by the DMRE, are lodged with the DMRE's Regional Manager and subject to five-year periodic reviews, which are perpetual till a mining closure certificate has been issued. Regulation 45 of the Act mandates a minimum of three annual meetings between the mining firm and stakeholders (mining communities and other affected persons) and which outcome should be included in annual reports submitted as compliance to the DMRE's Regional Manager. Regulation 46 of the Act specifies the content of SLPs and the publication mandate. Approved SLPs are to be published within 30 days of DMRE's approval in English and the dominant official local language of the mining community. This should feature on the mining companies' website, libraries, municipal and traditional council offices and mass media advertisements/publications.

## **8 CO-CREATING DEVELOPMENT WITH THE IDP AND SLP AT RLM**

The IDP and SLP are strategic planning documents towards enhancing local economic development at RLM. The creation process of the IDP mandates participation from ward committee sessions to wider community participation sessions. Mining firms as stakeholders ought to be one of the participants of the IDP consultation sessions. This would enable knowledge of community needs and familiarisation with the IDP preparation process, thereby assisting the preparation of SLPs. Conversely, mining firms are not mandated to initiate the SLP participation process until the notification of acceptance of application documents by the DMRE. The mandatory participation process in making IDPs establishes the co-creative development protocol. However, the municipality leads the local economic development process with the support and participation of the community, civil society and other stakeholders.

## **9 FINDINGS**

RLM, as a mining community, is listed among the Distressed Mining Communities Programme launched in 2012 (MISA, 2022). In line with this programme, MISA undertook a programme to evaluate the alignment of SLPs with IDPs. The project was carried out between May 2019 and May 2022. The evaluation procedure involved the review of Mine SLPs, IDP legal framework, meetings and discussions with municipal representatives, project site visits, compilation, and the review of status quo reports for RLM. Thirteen companies were operating in the RLM, and a total of twenty-four SLPs were noted to be operational between the period from 2004 and 2024. Only five SLPs are still in tenure; sixteen of the SLPs already expired, while

three SLPs are within two years of expiration.

A total of sixty projects were listed for implementation in the examined SLPs. Findings from the evaluation of the projects are illustrated in charts in categories of SLP-IDP alignment, Municipal awareness, and implementation status.

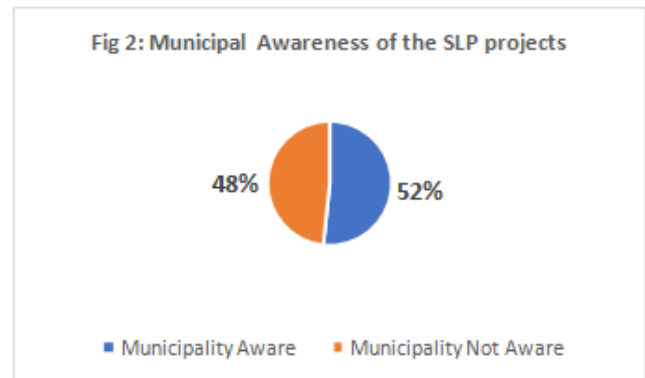
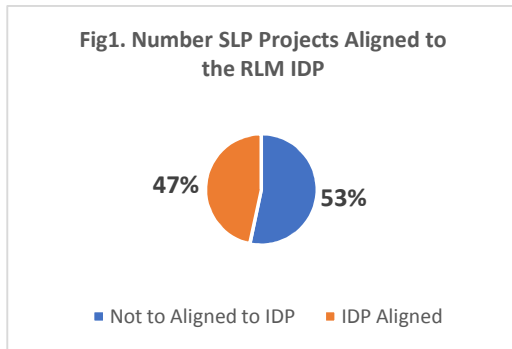


Fig. 1: Number of SLP projects aligned to the RLM IDP. Fig. 2: Municipal awareness of the SLP projects. Source: MISA, 2022.

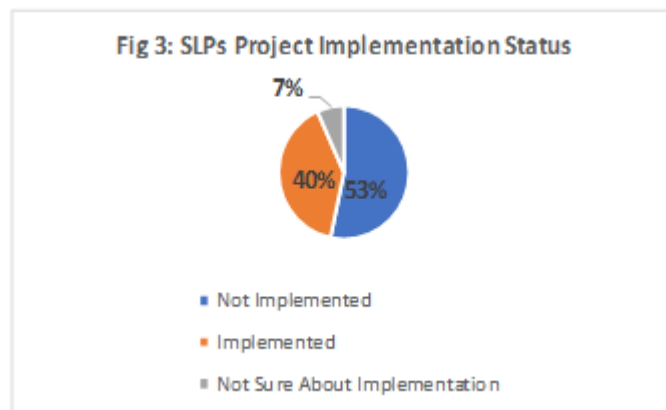


Fig. 3: SLP project implementation status. Source: MISA, 2022.

It was noted that all SLP projects not aligned with the RLM IDP(s) were not implemented. In contrast, most SLP-IDP-aligned projects were implemented except in 7% (4) cases where the implementation status is unconfirmed. Also, for the non-implemented projects, in most cases, RLM was not aware of the existence of such projects. However, ten such projects are listed in SLPs with a terminal implementation date of 2024. In summary, we find a strong correlation between SLP-IDP alignment and the successful execution of SLPs.

### 9.1 Discussion

The public participation process was identified as not adequately addressed by mining firms. An established engagement and communication channel between mining firms and core stakeholders (particularly the municipality and community) is critical to aligning and implementing SLPs. Though challenging, some mining companies participated through community meetings and communication (email exchanges) from the mines to the municipality. In cases where public participation was observed not to be held, this was noted in the lack of letters or proof of engagement (attendance register) between the mines and the municipality across the three generations of iterated SLPs.

SLPs are a means to assert relevance for service delivery by traditional leaders. Traditional councils hosting mining forms put together their infrastructure and socioeconomic needs for mines to input in the SLP. This asserted as a partnership between the community and the mining industry. The DMRE is noted to be ineffective in following up with the implementation of SLPs. According to a municipal official, requests by the municipality to resolve the adverse effects of mining activities are largely ignored. She elucidates the predicament by saying, “when you communicate with the mine as the municipality, the mine would say



DMRE says..”<sup>1</sup> The DMRE, operational within the national government's framework, cannot follow up with effectively monitoring SLP implementation at the municipal level.

The RLM has, however, sought ways to mitigate the misunderstanding with mines through the institution of the Mayoral Stakeholder Engagement Committee (MASECO). This committee consists of the executive mayor (as chairperson), Members of the Mayoral Committees (MMCs) and the directors. This committee monitors the implementation of SLPs to implemented within RLM. Though not entirely effective, this committee can coordinate the alignment and manage issues arising from the interaction of mining firms with the community. One issue of note is fiscal opacity by some mining companies. While some mining companies will not state the amount committed to listed projects, in other instances, fiscal discrepancies are observed between the declared budgeted funds and the actual amount committed. “For instance, the budget will state 5km of road to be constructed at the cost of 10 million Rands, and then you will discover only 5 million of the budgeted sum is spent. Where does another 5 million Rands go? You don't know.. they don't disclose...that is a problem.”<sup>2</sup> There are allusions that mining companies as private entities may be desisting from publishing their financial allotments for SLPs to protect unwarranted public access to their financial records.<sup>3 4</sup> However, with the 2020 amendments to the MPRDA now mandating SLPs to be published and legal provisions for public information access to organisations whose activities have a public impact, Mining firms as private liability holdings must declare their SLP financial commitments. SLPs are mandated by mining companies as a corporate social responsibility. Within this, mining firms must commit one per cent of declared profits to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Inadequacies of the participation process during the making of SLPs breed public dissatisfaction with the corporate efforts of mining companies. A community resident cites the perceived preferential treatment of mining companies to site projects mainly in traditionally administered areas. In contrast, dwellers of these perceived preferential project areas believe the labour-sending areas are better treated.<sup>5</sup> In another vein, there are cases in which mining companies do not carry out an effective project impact assessment. In the opinion of a resident respondent he acclaims mining companies offer training to his community on mining operations, which skills can only be used in the mines. However, most mining companies do not follow up the human resource training with employment offers, and as such, he sees such training as useless as the skill can only be deployed in the mines.

The poor participation process, fiscal opacity, and inefficient monitoring and evaluation process are co-creation challenges of integrating SLPs with IDPs and implementing SLPs in RLM. The nonstandardisation of the community consultation process and correspondence between the mining companies and municipalities is another conundrum. Examined SLPs were noted not to have implementation plans. “The format of this consultation and concurrence between the mines and municipalities and the contents of the SLP is currently not regulated. Most municipalities are requested to provide a letter with a list of projects to be included in the SLPs. The letter is not standardised and can be provided by either the Municipal manager, LED Manager, IDP Manager, or even a ward councillor.”<sup>6</sup> This accounts for the awareness gap in the municipality of listed SLP projects. Similarly, approved SLP copies are not shared with municipalities. When published on the web pages of mining companies, it is well after the implementation tenure of the SLP. Associated with the fiscal opacity of SLPs is the nonstipulation of the procurement methodologies or strategies of the approved projects. The extant monitoring and evaluation process of SLP implementation requires mining companies to submit annual reports to the DMRE. However, municipalities are not involved in the monitoring and evaluation chain, which accounts for the implementation failings of many SLPs. The inadequacy of the IDP and SLP participation, monitoring and evaluation process of SLPs accounts for the ineffectual developmental co-creation the synergy of both plans was intended to achieve. This has bred mistrust among mining town residents, municipalities and mining companies. Associatedly, there are unrealistic expectations from the municipalities and communities towards mining companies to the extent of resentment towards the efforts of mining companies.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with RLM official, February 2023.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Black Business Council in the Built Environment official, April 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with MISA official, April 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with RLM resident, March 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with MISA official, April 2023.

## 10 RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

SLPs, though the responsibility of mining companies, must be linked to the municipal IDP with attendant synergy in the implementation between both parties. The failure in some cases and non-appreciation of the successful impact of SLPs can be attributed to the co-creation inadequacies between the custodians of these two developmental plans. To mitigate the IDP-SLP co-creation shortcomings, the following recommendations are considered tangible to correct the inadequacies discovered from the findings of this study.

Mining companies must be compelled to attend IDP participation sessions and be included in the IDP steering committee in the wards of the jurisdiction of operations. SLPs, a Corporate Social Responsibility of mining companies, requires partnerships and collaborations among the stakeholders – the municipality, DMRE, mining companies, government departments and the community (inclusive of Community-Based Organisations, and formal and informal community leadership). The key to the success of a good partnership and working relationship between the municipality and the mining company is creating optimum institutional structures to ensure that projects decided on within and without the municipality are acted upon.

There is an observed gap in the chain of monitoring and implementation of SLPs. The reportage chain is directed solely to the DMRE, a national government department. This can be corrected by devoting monitoring and compliance checks to the municipalities (preferably the district municipality at the helm of local compliance checks). Such a tiered monitoring and evaluation arrangement devolving responsibility from the national to local government avails accountability and responsibility for coordination, handover, and delivery. The process of cocreating development through the synergy of the IDP and SLPs should be entrenched in partnerships intending to achieve a shared developmental goal. As medium strategic planning documents, coordinating the formulation and implementation of IDPs and SLPs is vital for efficiently allocating resources. So also, a devolved monitoring and evaluation framework incorporating inclusive participation of relevant stakeholders will ensure good governance delivery. This would be reinforced by institutional structures guaranteeing stakeholder collaboration with the essential character of cocreational planning.

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