



Establishing a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines

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DECLARATION

I, Elizabeth Kotishana Tshabalala, hereby declare that this thesis entitled “Establishing a corporate social responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines” is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management at the North-West University. The thesis is my independent work, and has not been submitted by me for a degree at any other university. Where sources were cited, these were referenced accordingly.

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ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a management concept for mineral-dependent countries in addressing social and environmental concerns. Emerging economies, including South Africa, continue to rely on the economic contribution of mining as a strategic catalyst for sustainable development. CSR studies conducted in emerging countries have revealed that most community development CSR initiatives are failing to deliver sustainable impact. CSR projects collapse shortly after being handed over and are mostly undertaken from a philanthropic perspective. There is limited evidence that the current management approaches to CSR by coal mining companies yield sustainable outcomes. The primary objective of this study was, therefore, to determine the core management factors, in order to establish a CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

This study is embedded in the interpretivist-constructivist philosophy and followed an exploratory and descriptive multiple case study design. Participants in the inquiry were purposively sampled from coal mining companies A and B and the local municipality while community representatives were sampled by means of convenience. Qualitative data were generated through 18 semi-structured interviews, a focus group discussion, secondary data, and site observations. An inductive approach was followed in thematically analysing the data derived from the interview transcripts and handwritten notes taken during interviews and site observations. Data analysis was conducted using the qualitative computer software program Atlas.ti 22, which resulted in nine themes emerging from the data. The findings were related to literature in order to help answer the research question.

This study established that CSR implementation in South Africa is largely influenced by legal prescripts, and that its practices are philanthropical and cognisant of cultural norms. Companies engage in CSR with a short-term perspective, which hinders maximisation of benefits to diverse beneficiaries. Several intra-organisational challenges are experienced in implementing CSR, namely insufficient staff and a lack of integrated systems, resulting in misalignment between policy and practice, as well as poor integration of CSR. CSR implementation by mining companies is framed within a collaborative environment between different spheres of government, which gives rise to a plethora of inter-organisational challenges. Current CSR systems reveal shortcomings relating to CSR planning, accountability and transparency, monitoring and evaluation of projects, reporting, and a general lack of information amongst

the stakeholders is experienced. There is therefore a need to embed collaboration in legislated arrangements and systems of mining companies.

The main research question of this study was answered through the identification of the core management factors required for successful CSR, which informed the development of a CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines. The identified management factors were integrated into the development of the theoretical framework, which is the main contribution of this study. The contextualised framework could be used in practice to guide CSR stakeholders in pursuit of sustainable community development.

Key words: case study design; corporate social responsibility; emerging economies; enduring community value; mining; sustainable community development

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

B-BBEE	Broad-based black economic empowerment
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DMRE	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy
ECD	Early childhood development
EMP	Environmental management plan
ESG	Environmental, social, and governance (Report)
FET	Further education and training
GRI	Global reporting initiative
ICMM	International council on mining and metals
IDP	Integrated development plan
JSE	Johannesburg stock exchange
LED	Local economic development
MNC	Multinational corporation
MPRDA	Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act No. 28 of 2002
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RDP	Reconstruction and development (Programme)
SDG	Sustainable development goal
SLP	Social and labour plan
SRI (Index)	Socially responsible investment (Index)
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
UN	United nations
WBCSD	World business council for sustainable development

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

Mpumalanga province is a key source of South Africa's coal supply. It has almost half of the country's high-potential arable land, and over 60% of the province's surface area is either subject to mining rights or prospecting applications (Simpson *et al.*, 2019:1). The majority of the South African coal mines are located in the Mpumalanga province Coal-Belt (Nel *et al.*, 2023). Coal currently generates some 89% of the country's electricity and contributes to the country's synthetic fuels industry which leads to a scenario in which 20% of the country's liquid fuel is created by a process which converts coal or gas into petrol, diesel and a range of chemicals at plants in Mpumalanga and to the south of Johannesburg (Strambo *et al.*, 2019). The coal industry contributes significantly to the social and economic development of the area. There are an estimated 85,000 coal mining and power generating jobs in Mpumalanga province and coal mines provide approximately 19% of the provincial GVA (Gross Value Add) and nearly 50% of the GVA of Emalahleni, the most coal-dependent municipality (Strambo *et al.*, 2019; Marais *et al.*, 2022). For this reason, the coal mining sector has a significant impact on the social and economic development in South Africa.

South African coal mining companies, which are the focus of the current study, face pressure from various stakeholders to report on measures undertaken in promoting a secure and safe environment that contributes to the societies in which they operate, as mandated by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) Index (Wasara & Ganda, 2019:4). In the 21st century, companies face an increasing set of pressures to act responsibly (McLennan & Banks, 2019:118). The private sector is encouraged to become “a consciously engaged agent of development” as opposed to just contributing through economic growth (Blowfield, 2012:415).

The contribution of mining economies needs to be thought about more strategically - as a catalyst for sustainable development, as most mineral-dependent countries continue to rely on the economic contribution of mining, despite falling commodity prices (ICMM, 2016:2). The United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Agenda 2030, aimed at providing a holistic framework to guide the transformation of both developing and industrialised countries (UN, 2015). Similarly, the African Union (AU) adopted

Agenda 2063 as a continental roadmap to structural transformation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development (Munyai, 2020:1), which represents a concerted effort to address sustainability issues.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emerged as a response to widespread criticism that business was irresponsible, and that it was exacerbating and even causing poverty through pollution, land grabbing, corruption, and violence (Prieto-Carrón *et al.*, 2006). CSR has become a business management concept aimed at interactions with stakeholders and integrating social and environmental concerns in the area of operations (Rodrigues & Mendes, 2018:89). While there is no universally accepted definition of CSR, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) (2000:10) describes it as “the continuing commitment by the business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and the society at large”. Visser *et al.* (2007:474) define CSR as “the formal and informal ways in which business makes a contribution to improving the governance, social, ethical, labour and environmental conditions of the developing countries in which they operate, while remaining sensitive to prevailing religious, historical and cultural contexts”. Amaeshi *et al.* (2016:34) define it as the voluntary reduction of negative corporate externalities and the commitment to enhance positive externalities by addressing social problems and filling institutional voids sustainably.

In recent years, the dominant CSR discourse positions business as ‘an active development agent’ (McEwan *et al.*, 2017; Rasmussen & O’Keefe, 2014) and a solution to fostering an inclusive economy and poverty alleviation in the communities in which they operate (Cezarino *et al.*, 2022; Spencer, 2018:75). Consequently, mining businesses have had to shift their attention from the traditional paradigm, which is centred on pursuing economic benefits, to a developmental paradigm, whereby the business assumes developmental responsibility by considering long-term sustainable impact on host communities (Spencer, 2018:73). The developmental role is possible only if the mining sector conducts business in a sustainable manner and ensures that the benefits from mining are distributed to a broader range of stakeholders (Mulenga, 2017:6).

From a systems perspective, sustainability represents the ability of systems, in this case business and community, to persist, adapt, transform, or transition in the face of constantly changing conditions (Williams *et al.*, 2017:871). The systems approach (Meadows, 2008) is

concerned with the interactions and the relationships between parts in order to understand the organisation's functioning and outcomes (Mele *et al.*, 2010:127). The degree to which companies can reposition themselves to bring about socio-economic development hinges on the systems within which the companies operate (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012). Institutional arrangements and systems are pivotal to enhancing or inhibiting performance and CSR contributions, amongst others. These systems are also evident in the relationships between organisations, the environment in which they operate (Kalio & Isaac, 2018; Mele *et al.*, 2010:127), and the stakeholders. Stakeholders are "those groups and individuals who can affect or be affected by the actions connected to value chain" (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:9). The performance of CSR is indicative of the organisations' ability to adapt to changes in environmental requirements and community expectations.

Mining companies in South Africa are required to ring fence 1% of their net profit after tax for stimulating the socio-economic development of their host communities (South Africa, 2018a). CSR has thus become a legal obligation, and mining sector companies to play an active role in development through the active pursuit of positive development outcomes (Di Bella *et al.*, 2013:2). However, these regulations alone are not adequate (Roberts, 2015:286), and more attention has to be paid to mining companies' institutional arrangements to deliver sustainable CSR initiatives.

This study argues that CSR remains a suitable course towards mine community development, and that the coal mining sector is well positioned and well-resourced, and has the capacity to drive socio-economic development, provided that this sector is willing to go beyond compliance targets. Private-sector-led development is possible through CSR initiatives if mining companies are willing to turn their focus from short- to long-term impact and embrace shared value for stakeholders. Attainment of sustainable socio-economic impact by CSR initiatives is in the best interests of host communities and the private sector in terms of continued existence.

Communities that are in close proximity to mining activities, especially in emerging economies, and are exposed to environmental degradation. While mining has transformed many developing economies, it has also impacted negatively on the environment and society. Some of the negative impacts of mining are loss of vegetation cover, mass destruction of water bodies, loss of biodiversity, land-use changes leading to a loss of food insecurity, increased social vices and conflicts, a high cost of living, and air pollution (Worlanyo & Jiangfeng, 2021).

These negative conditions have taken away the livelihood of many communities who still depend on access to arable land for agricultural activities, which is the context of the current study.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Mining companies operating in emerging economies continue to claim to follow the principles of ‘sustainable’ and ‘responsible’ mining when referring to CSR (Gamau & Dauvergne, 2018:1), but the affected communities hold a different view of these corporate activities (McLennan & Banks, 2019:117). ‘Sustainability’ refers to the likelihood of a continuation in the stream of benefits produced by the project after the period of external support has ended (Scheirer, 2013:73). The limited evidence to back the notion of sustainable CSR by mines gives rise to what Nixon (2011:2) terms “slow violence”, which is “a clash of temporal perspectives between the short termers who arrive to extract, despoil, and depart and the long-termers who must live inside the ecological aftermath and must therefore weigh wealth differently in time’s scales”. In the South African mining sector, these clashes have escalated to incidents of conflict between mining companies and host communities (Brereton *et al.*, 2016:3; Davis & Franks, 2014:2), escalating from interruptions to permanent closure of operations (Zhang *et al.*, 2015:1063). The pushback reactions from mining employees, such as in the infamous Marikana incident in which 34 miners were fatally wounded (Patel & Mushonga, 2014:51) and from communities are indicative of unfulfilled expectations.

The goal of mining is to generate enduring value for communities beyond the life of a mine and to maintain a viable community (Robertson *et al.*, 2017:181). CSR remains a viable option for socio-economic development (Littlewood, 2014:4), especially because mining activities take place in remote communities. Without documenting how CSR processes are managed and which systems are required for attaining sustainability post-funding by mines, the efforts of private sector in contributing towards socio-economic development of communities remain questionable (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:64). The absence of an effective CSR framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines may render CSR initiatives and practices inadequate, while the aim is the development of host communities being sustainable after the mine has closed.

The subsequent sections detail the problem statement and the research questions and objectives addressed in the current study.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

CSR presents an opportunity with great potential to advance socio-economic development goals (Siyobi, 2015:4). For businesses to remain relevant to their societies, and businesses should embrace initiatives that meet stakeholders' needs and create shared value (Wasara & Ganda, 2019:3). Over the years, substantial resources have been allocated to developing and maintaining community-based programmes, yet little is known about how these programmes are managed and sustained, or what factors lead to their failure (Oino *et al.*, 2015:758). The life of community-based programmes beyond the original funding period is quite short (Oino *et al.*, 2015:758), which suggests that the impact brought about by CSR on nearby communities is negligible and/or not sustainable. The role of the mining sector in local development to alleviate poverty in developing countries is well articulated (Murombo, 2013:33) and, as such, communities continue to expect more, and voice their dissatisfaction when their expectations are not met.

The value of CSR for stakeholders remains questionable (Freeman *et al.*, 2004:364), and the benefits of mining are not shared equitably with mine communities (Meyersfeld, 2017:33). While CSR has been extensively studied, not enough is known about how such initiatives are managed and the impact of such initiatives on communities (McLennan & Banks, 2019:117). Instead, CSR literature is rich on the benefits organisations reap from such endeavours, such as an enhanced reputation (Rodrigues & Mendes, 2018:90), safeguarding of the continued existence of mining companies in indigenous communities (Adonteng-Kissi & Adonteng-Kissi, 2017:196), and the fostering of trust between a firm and its stakeholders, which pays off when the firm suffers a negative shock (Lins *et al.*, 2017:1785). Spencer (2018:79) describes these approaches as taking “a business-lens” to CSR. In other words, CSR initiatives appear to serve narrow, short-term business interests as opposed to the interests of the wider community. Previous studies have revealed that business cannot continue to operate along traditional lines without creating value for a wider range of stakeholders; implying that CSR initiatives are increasingly expected to deliver more holistic outcomes (Albuquerque *et al.*, 2019; Boulouta & Pitelis, 2014; Carroll, 1979; Ferreira & Real de Oliveira, 2014; Owen & Kemp, 2013). Furthermore, studies indicate that, while mining certainly generates economic profit, this has not necessarily translated into community development (Meyersfeld, 2017:39), as the actual sustainable socio-economic impact brought by the mining sector to its communities has not been properly documented.

The role and impact of CSR by mining companies in developing countries remains an area within CSR research where polarised positions prevail (Hilson, 2012). This is because few studies have examined the actual achievements of CSR initiatives for community stakeholders. Research on CSR in the mining industry highlights systematic challenges, with the intended benefits not achieved. Devenin and Bianchi (2018:872) attest to the failure of CSR initiatives contributing to meeting the real needs of communities and the inability to ensure the long-term sustainability of such efforts.

Corporates adopt CSR merely for compliance and reporting, and not as part of their core business at the level of practice (Owen & Kemp, 2013:523). Mining companies seem to be encountering difficulties when considering the contributions they have delivered through their CSR practices towards local development (Hilson *et al.*, 2019:341). There is limited evidence that the current management approach to CSR by coal mining companies yields sustainable outcomes (Hilson *et al.*, 2019; Meyersfeld, 2017; Mulenga, 2017; Spencer, 2018). CSR is evident only when it is backed by substantial evidence, which should demonstrate the firm's commitment to socio-economic development (Wickert *et al.*, 2016:3). The considerable profits from mining are not reflected in the development of affected communities (Meyersfeld, 2017:31).

The lack of evidence in mine community development points to a gap in practice. Coal mines in South Africa, specifically in the Mpumalanga province, are struggling to comply with CSR as required by Section 2(i) of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Act of 2002, which compels mining rights holders to contribute to socio-economic development in the areas in which they are operating (Hilson *et al.*, 2019; Meyersfeld, 2017; Spencer, 2018). Coal mines are struggling to sustain their CSR programmes post-funding, and there is a lack of evidence that CSR and the way it is managed is indeed yielding a lasting impact on nearby communities. This may be due to lack of a CSR framework that is contextually sensitive to developing countries and that integrates the core CSR management factors specifically for coal mining companies.

Thus, the research problem addressed by the current study is the lack of a CSR framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines. This study therefore sought to fill the gap in CSR literature by documenting the core management factors required for CSR to deliver sustainable development to nearby communities, captured in a CSR framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines. A study of this magnitude

is therefore relevant in establishing a CSR sustainable community development framework since mining firms extract mineral resources from within the communities they operate, and they should also invest in these local communities ensuring socio-economic and environmental sustainability.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study's primary research question was:

What are the core management factors in a corporate social responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines?

The sub-research questions, in support of the primary question above, were:

- 1 What are the specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities that coal mines have undertaken in the period 2013 to 2018?
- 2 How are CSR projects managed by mines to ensure that these remain sustainable beyond the social and labour plan period, and why?
- 3 How is sustainable CSR implementation integrated into the business processes?
- 4 What are the specific socio-economic development outcomes that community-based CSR projects have delivered?
- 5 What is considered sustainable CSR by a mine?
- 6 What roles are coal mines playing to ensure CSR projects are sustainable beyond the funding period?
- 7 What are the methods used by coal mines when approaching communities, how they ensure buy-in and what they offered communities?
- 8 What are the organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector, and how should these be managed in order to ensure sustainability in community development?
- 9 Have coal mines done everything possible to ensure sustainable CSR?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following primary objective and sub-objectives.

1.5.1 Primary research objective

The primary objective of this study was: To establish a CSR framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines.

1.5.2 Research sub-objectives

In order to achieve the primary objective, the following sub-objectives guided this enquiry:

- 1 To determine the specific community-based CSR strategies and activities that coal mines had undertaken in the period 2013 to 2018;
- 2 To determine how CSR projects are managed by mines to ensure that these remain sustainable beyond the social and labour plan period;
- 3 To determine how sustainable CSR implementation is integrated into business processes;
- 4 To document the specific socio-economic development outcomes that community-based CSR projects had delivered;
- 5 To determine what constitutes sustainable CSR by mines;
- 6 To establish the role played by coal mines to ensure sustainability of CSR projects beyond the funding period;
- 7 To document how coal mines approach communities, i.e., how they ensure buy-in and what they offered communities;
- 8 To determine the organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector and how these are managed to ensure sustainability in community development; and
- 9 To document measures initiated by coal mines to ensure CSR projects remain sustainable.

The next section provides an overview of the study's philosophy and methodology, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY

A research philosophy is the paradigm in which the study is based while research methodology denotes how the research will be carried out. Research methodology includes the type of data, techniques and analysis of data, in order to find a solution to the research problem (Rajasekar & Verma, 2013).

1.6.1 Research philosophy and assumptions

Research philosophy refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:124). The chosen research paradigm depends on the goals of research and the best way to achieve these goals. Guba and Lincoln (1994:108) make a distinction between positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

Positivism is premised on the notion that “reality” and absolute “truth” exist (Rahi, 2017:321). Positivism refers to various ideological and philosophical positions centred on highly structured methodology to enable for generalisation of findings and quantifiable observations which are often of a statistical nature (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). A positivist researcher takes on a role of an observer who should neither affect nor be affected by respondents. Positivist studies are concerned with external validity.

The interpretivist paradigm holds that learning takes place through progressive internalisation of action in the context in which the learner is consciously engaged (Ackermann, 2001:4). In the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher seeks knowledge through a deep understanding of a concept and exploring the understanding of participants of the world in which they live (Rahi, 2017:2). Interpretivist research is aimed at determining the subjective meanings participants attach to their experiences or to objects (Rahi, 2017:2). Central to the interpretivist paradigm, also referred to as interpretivist-constructivist paradigm, is the belief that knowledge comes from human experience, which is inherently continuous and not necessarily logical (Hathaway, 1995). Reality is constructed by those participating in it, and an interpretivist researcher believes that there are multiple meanings and interpretations attached to realities (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). As the current study was aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of factors influencing the success of CSR projects, the researcher chose to follow the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm.

1.6.2 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

Ontology refers to the nature of reality in gaining knowledge - what can be considered knowledge, while epistemology refers to how this knowledge can be gained, which determines the connection between the researcher and that being researched (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The ontological assumption of the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm is that “social reality is seen by multiple people and these multiple people interpret events differently leaving multiple perspectives of an incident” (Ernest, 1994). The interpretivist researcher believes that human beings make sense of their world based on their historical and social perspectives, which are influenced by, amongst others, culture. Meaning is socially constructed, and arises from interactions within a human community. Thus, there are multiple realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The epistemological assumption of the interpretivist paradigm is that knowledge is gained through personal experience. In other words, knowledge is knowledge only as understood and interpreted within the social context in which it occurs (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, interpretivist epistemology constitutes a subjective study of real-world phenomena (Scotland, 2012). In this paradigm, researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants by gathering information personally and interpreting the gathered information (Crotty, 1998). Such interpretation is shaped by the researcher's own experiences and background, and the researcher is thus embedded in the study.

The next sections describe the current study's research approach and design.

1.6.3 Research approach

In research, a distinction is drawn between the qualitative and the quantitative approach (Anney, 2014:272). Whereas quantitative research asks: 'How many, how much, and how often?', qualitative research asks: 'What, how, and why?' (Korstjens & Moser, 2017:275).

Both approaches attempt to describe occurrence, but the quantitative approach is aimed at quantifying occurrences, and the data are analysed statistically. In the qualitative approach, words are analysed to provide a description (Anney, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), and the data are analysed using qualitative analysis methods such as grounded theory or thematic analysis.

Qualitative research methods are appropriate when the primary purpose of the study is to explore, describe or explain phenomenon and values in the form of people's subjective experiences and meaning-making processes (Leavy, 2017:9). Based on the phenomenon under study, the qualitative approach was considered suitable for the current study, as it locates the observer in the realm that consists of interpretive, material practice that makes the participants' world visible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:10). Denzin and Lincoln (2018:10) explain that qualitative research involves studying things in their natural setting in an attempt to make sense of and interpret a phenomenon in terms of the meanings people attach to it.

Following a qualitative approach allowed the participants to describe the CSR phenomenon from both a business and community perspective, without the restrictions of pre-determined responses, to enable the researcher to determine critical considerations in developing a CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

1.6.4 Research design

The research design entails the comprehensive framework that bridges the conceptual research inquiries with the practical and attainable empirical research. It constitutes an investigation that furnishes explicit guidance for the methodologies utilised in a research study (Creswell, 2014). A research design describes the skills, assumptions, enactment and material practices that researchers use when moving from a paradigm to the collection of empirical material (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:313). The current study followed a multiple case study design, which entails the investigation into cases within a real-life setting (Yin, 2014). The case study design “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information ... and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell, 2013:97).

Research designs vary according to the type of research (Sahu, 2013:27). The current study followed an exploratory and descriptive multiple-case study design, as the objective was to develop a detailed and comprehensive portrayal of the phenomenon in a specific setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:346).

Case study research is usually qualitative in nature, and the researcher could collect data from an array of sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018:96). To generate an understanding of the strategic nature of CSR and its contribution to sustainable development by South African coal mining companies, a multiple case study was conducted. Multiple case study affords the researcher a deeper understanding of the subject under study through rich data gathered from different contexts (Stake, 1995:16) and diverse participants across different situations (Gustafsson, 2017; Yin, 2014).

The next sections detail the methods applied in selecting a sample from the study population, together with the process of data gathering and analysis.

1.6.5 Population

A population can be defined as all people or items that one wishes to understand (Rahi, 2017:3) while a sample is a segment or subset of the population that is selected for investigation (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:186). This study is focused on South African coal mining companies that are listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). As at July 2020, there were 23 South

African coal mining companies listed in the JSE which constitute the study population as shown on Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: SA JSE-listed coal mining companies

No.	Name of Mine	No.	Name of Mine
1.	African Rainbow Minerals Ltd.	13	Kore Potash PLC
2.	Anglo American PLC	14.	Master Drilling Group Ltd.
3.	Bauba Resources Ltd.	15.	MC Mining Ltd.
4.	BHP Group PLC	16.	Merafe Resources Ltd.
5.	Buffalo Coal Corporation	17.	Middle East Diamond Resources Ltd.
6.	Chrometco Ltd.	18.	Resource Generation Ltd.
7.	Exxaro Resources Ltd.	19.	South 32 Ltd.
8.	Firestone Energy Ltd.	20.	Tharisa PLC
9.	Firestone Energy Ltd. Opt.	21.	Unicorn Capital Partners Ltd.
10.	Glencore PLC	22.	Union Atlantic Minerals Ltd.
11.	Hwange Colliery Ltd.	23.	Wescoal Holdings Ltd.
12.	Kibo Energy PLC		

Source: JSE listing 2020

South African coal-mining companies are required to drive sustainable development objectives, as encapsulated in the Mining Charter (Department of Mineral Resources, 2018).

1.6.6 Sampling

Sampling is the process of obtaining information about the population by selecting a part thereof for study (Kothari & Garg, 2019:147). The essence of sampling is to select a few items from the universe that will be sufficient to constitute the views of the universe. Available sampling techniques can broadly be categorised into two categories: (a) probability sampling and (b) nonprobability sampling (Sahu, 2013:48). In probability sampling, also known as ‘random sampling’, every item in the universe has an equal chance of being selected for the sample, while, in non-probability sampling, the opposite is true (Etikan & Bala, 2017:1). Qualitative researchers do not aim to achieve generalisability of a study’s results, as is done in

quantitative research. Rather, the focus is on selecting informed participants who are representative of the population who are able to contribute rich insights into the topic under study (Etikan & Bala, 2017:1; Ishak *et al.*, 2014:29; Oppong, 2013).

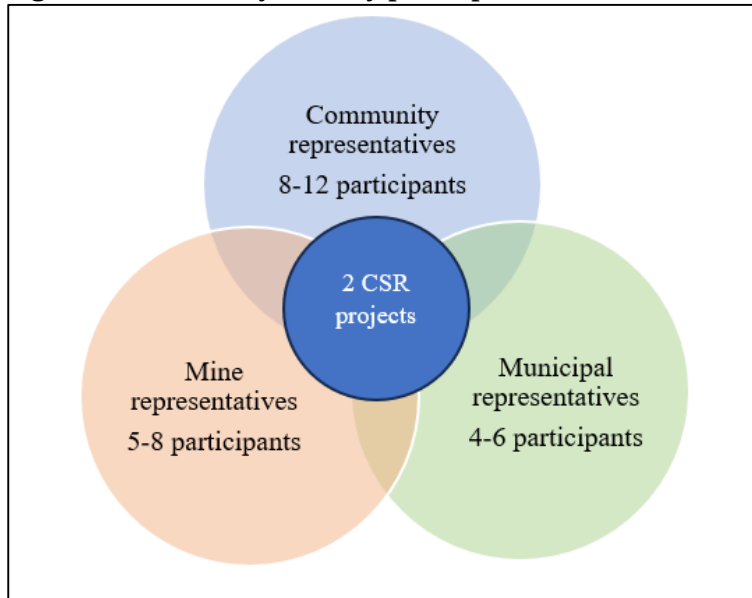
In the current study, non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, was used to select participants from the mine and municipality. In purposive sampling, also referred to as ‘deliberate’ or ‘judgement’ sampling (Kothari & Garg, 2019:55), participants who are familiar with the phenomenon under study are selected based on the researcher’s subjective view or judgement of what potential participants could contribute to the study (Ishak *et al.*, 2014:29; Oppong, 2013). The researcher thus intentionally selects cases on the basis that they resemble the central phenomenon or concepts being explored (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:176). Convenience sampling which is also a non-random selection of participants was used to select participants from the community (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

1.6.7 Sample size

Qualitative research is based in a paradigm of emergent design, with the desired sample size often being fluid and undefined in the initial stages of the research (Marshall *et al.*, 2013:11). The size of the required sample in qualitative research depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, and what will have credibility, and the sample size is often limited by constraints related to time and resources (Patton, 2002:243). In other words, the principle in determining the sample size in a qualitative study is that the sample should be sufficiently large and varied to thoroughly examine the phenomenon under study from various perspectives (Marshall, 1996:524). Hence, in qualitative studies, sample size is often determined by data saturation, which is the point where no new insights are gained from additional participants (Marshall *et al.*, 2013:12), which was applied in the current study.

In the current study, the sample was drawn from three groups of individuals, namely community representatives, mine representatives, and municipal representatives, all of whom were involved in two CSR projects, as shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Summary of study participants



Source: Generated by the author

The study focused on two CSR projects undertaken by coal mining companies operating in South Africa, which mines had been in operation for more than eight years. Six participants were purposively drawn from mine management, four from the municipality, and 11 participants were community beneficiaries of coal mining CSR.

1.6.8 Data collection

Qualitative research allows scholars to access many parts of the empirical field and collect different types of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:185). Primary data are gathered by the researcher, while secondary data are data that were previously collected by others, including organisations, for other purposes (Sahu, 2013:18). Secondary data could be in various forms, such as newspapers, minutes of meetings, official reports, and private documents like personal journals, diaries, e-mails, and letters (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:187). In the current study, primary data were collected through interviews and site observations, while secondary data were gathered from various relevant documents.

1.6.9 Data analysis

The data analysis is a process of making sense of the data, and requires a close and constant interaction between the researcher and the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). The data generated from the document study and interviews were analysed using thematic analysis, which requires

the identification of patterns or themes that emerge from the data, which are then, in an inductive approach to analysis, used to formulate theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79; Friese *et al.*, 2018). In an inductive approach, the researcher generates higher-level meaning from detailed data collected in the field (Crotty, 1998). The analysis was conducted using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti.

1.7 CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION

The study was limited to the field of CSR in JSE-listed coal-mining companies based in South Africa who had developed and implemented an SLP, which is a legal requirement for holding mining licence. Only coal-mining companies that had been in operation for more than eight years were included, to ensure the mine's operations were sufficiently mature to have allowed sufficient time to develop a comprehensive CSR programme. Limiting the scope of the study to coal mines in South Africa ensured that the study setting was similar and subject to the same legislation. In addition, the study's scope excluded mining companies in business rescue or a closure phase of its operations, as these mines would be scaling down their activities.

The next section provides definitions of the key concepts of interest in the current study.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Corporate social responsibility is the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time (Carroll, 1991:283).

Emerging economies are all countries not classified by the International Monetary Fund as advanced economies. In 2015, the world's 152 emerging countries generated 57.6% of the world GDP and constituted 85.4% of the world population (Black *et al.*, 2017).

Enduring community value is value that remains within the community once the mine has closed (Fordham *et al.*, 2017).

Mining "any operation or activity for the purpose of winning any mineral on, in or under earth, water or any residue deposit, whether by underground or open working or otherwise and includes any operation or activity incidental thereto" (Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 2002).

Sustainability is “the process of ensuring an adaptive prevention system and a sustainable innovation that can be integrated into on-going operations to benefit diverse stakeholders” (Johnson *et al.*, 2004:146).

The next section details the chapter layout of the thesis.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

The thesis comprises seven chapters.

Chapter 1 provides an orientation to the study, including background on the study setting and the field of interest, the study problem and objectives, followed by an overview of the methodology followed in conducting the study.

Chapter 2 reviews extant literature on the concepts related to CSR and its practices, with a focus on developing countries.

Chapter 3 discusses the philosophical position of the researcher, followed by the study’s research design and methodology, including the population and the methods of sampling, data collection, and analysis. This chapter also elaborates on the strategies employed to ensure trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the thematic and document analyses according to the themes that emerged from the data.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion and interpretation of the findings in accordance with literature.

Chapter 6 presents a framework for CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines, which was informed by the findings.

Chapter 7 presents the study’s contributions and implications, followed by a discussion of the study’s limitations and recommendations for future research.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the study context and setting, together with the research problem. The study is considered important because CSR studies conducted in emerging countries such as South Africa have revealed that most community development CSR

initiatives are failing to deliver sustainable impact. The primary objective of this study was, therefore, to determine the management factors necessary to establish a CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines. Due to the legal requirements for South African based mining companies, the study was delineated limited to CSR in JSE-listed coal-mining who had developed and implemented an SLP. The study followed a multiple case study design, which entails the investigation into cases within a real-life setting. The chapter listed the research question and sub-research questions, as well as the objectives. These are considered important for guiding the qualitative research study.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, delves into the theory related to CSR, the factors driving CSR from an emerging economy perspective, and CSR in the context of the South African mining sector, including the practices and challenges.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the concept of CSR, its origin and how CSR has evolved in theory and in practice in the context of developing countries. The chapter details how CSR has evolved over the centuries and which factors helped shaped CSR practices. The economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of business from a developing country perspective is discussed. The theories underpinning CSR from an instrumental, political, integrative and ethical theories are discussed. Unique factors such as the geo-political past and present, political and governance system, financial and economic system and cultural, societal and customs in developing countries and their influence on CSR practice are presented. The contributions of CSR in the company, the environment, customers and community are discussed. The role of natural-resource-driven development and its contributions in Africa are discussed followed by a discussion of the challenges in engaging host communities in CSR.

2.2 BACKGROUND

CSR has developed into a strategic and management objective for many organisations, requiring the integration of social, economic, and environmental objectives (Høvring, 2017:369; Wasylcia-Leis *et al.*, 2014). CSR is especially important when the corporate goal of maximising profits has a negative impact on a society (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:24). In emerging economies, which is the context of the current study, CSR is driven by philanthropic approaches (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:52). CSR is a philosophy of business conduct, and the concept is applied by the business community to ensure the sustainability of resources and their preservation for future generations (Kalio & Isaac, 2018:190). Yet, persistent challenges of poverty and inequality in emerging economies suggest that, for CSR to make a meaningful impact, organisations must engage with developmental objectives, which may necessitate companies playing an increasing active role in shaping development practices and discourses (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:52). Interest in CSR has increased in both academia and practice (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:24), and it is considered an interdisciplinary field with a specific focus on firm-level activities (Onyishi *et al.*, 2020:170).

Understanding the management practices of businesses has become a focal point in international business studies (Kolk, 2016:25). This is particularly the case in the mining

industry, where social and environmental issues are pronounced (Vivoda & Kemp, 2019:2). Social ills in developing countries have further intensified the focus on CSR, necessitating that organisations are able to respond effectively to external pressure (Mele *et al.*, 2010:131). Mining companies have turned to the practice of CSR as a strategy to maximise the opportunities that come with operating in developing countries, as well as to manage the associated risks (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012:2). Mining companies operating in developing countries are faced with heightened societal expectations of the role they play in affected communities (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012). Yet, more is expected in their delivery of community-based CSR projects, as they are expected to ensure these activities lead to sustainable development (Oino *et al.*, 2015).

The assumption that CSR engagement equals a corporate contribution to community development is being challenged, as current CSR practices hardly address system-wide challenges such as poverty and social injustice (Milne *et al.*, 2013:17). To improve CSR initiatives, it is necessary to examine the structures, interdependencies, and interrelations of corporations and community (Muthuri, 2008:186). In this regard, systems theory may be valuable, as it takes a trans-disciplinary view of the organisation's functioning in an environment, which environment includes the host community (Kalio & Isaac, 2018:194). Several CSR frameworks focused on the mining sector have been developed, yet management research has not yet produced coherent theoretical frameworks for engaging in CSR in a way that captures systemic linkages and interdependencies along the value chain (Searcy, 2014:122). Kemp (2010) focused on community relations in the mining industry within the context of sustainable development, social responsibility, and stakeholder engagement. Harfst and Wirth (2011) looked at building local and regional capacities for rehabilitation action. A framework centred on social challenges and aimed at creating a sustainable livelihood was presented by (Narula *et al.*, 2017), while (Bester, 2019) proposed a framework to address unregulated artisanal gold mining in South Africa. A major gap in this domain is the absence of a guiding framework based on core management factors for coal mining companies operating in South Africa. However, the current study does not compare frameworks, as an inductive approach to theory development was adopted.

The aim of the present study was to determine how CSR could make a meaningful contribution to society, specifically the core management factors required in establishing a CSR framework for sustainable community development for South African coal mines. Mining-led CSR cannot

be sustained outside the organisational systems, structures, and management approaches that enable CSR initiatives to thrive beyond the funding period and continue to deliver a sustainable impact in the host community. The subsequent section reviews literature on the key terms and theories related to sustainable community-based CSR in emerging economies.

2.3 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

There are many different views on what CSR entails (Kolk, 2016:24). CSR presents not only a landscape of theories, but also a proliferation of approaches, some of which are controversial, complex, and unclear (Garriga & Melé, 2004). The concept of CSR is tremendously disputed, due to different interpretations, and is subject to the economic and political climate of a country (Rapanyane, 2020:59). Disagreements about CSR led development, especially in Africa, manifest at the conceptual, practical, and discourse levels (Idemudia, 2014).

Idemudia (2014) notes that, conceptually, the assumptions underlying the propositions that businesses, through CSR programmes, can contribute to sustainable development in Africa is rooted in two concepts, stakeholder theory and licence to operate. Ekeh (1990) argues that these two concepts suffer from “tyranny of borrowed paradigms” from the West, ignoring African realities. At practice level, CSR initiatives often have minimal to no effect in terms of improving the lives of the intended beneficiaries, due to issues related to poorly executed projects, misplaced priorities, failure to address core community priorities, and a lack of project sustainability. The capacity of CSR to reshape development agendas according to corporate values and interests raises a dispute at discourse level (Rajak, 2011). Rajak (2006) argues that the CSR practices of mining companies in South Africa created dependency instead of autonomy and empowerment. Similarly, Akpan (2006) argues that, instead of being a tool of poverty reduction, CSR initiatives of transnational oil companies in the Niger Delta tend to foster inter- and intra-community violence. The violence started off as a conflict between local communities and government over the lack of flow of benefits from oil revenues. In the absence of a government response, oil companies became targets (Rwabizambuga, 2007). CSR practices were implemented to help minimise the impact of conflict, but the social and environmental impact of oil exploration was neglected (Idemudia & Ite, 2006).

CSR has also attracted attention from academics from diverse disciplines (Wójcik, 2016:35), resulting in a variety of approaches and numerous contestations. A key challenge in building CSR theory is that there is no agreement on where the boundaries of CSR lie (Frynas &

Stephens, 2015:485). CSR is characterised by Carroll (1994:14) as “an eclectic field with loose boundaries, multiple memberships, and differing training/perspectives; broadly rather than focused, multidisciplinary; wide breadth; brings in a wider range of literature; and interdisciplinary”. Carroll (1991:43) suggests that CSR should not be based on business interests, but should be a response to evolving societal needs; hence, multiple dimensions have to be considered, and the concept should not be considered static.

CSR has come to be understood as encompassing both policies and practices that businesses employ to ensure that society and stakeholders in the business operations, other than the business owners, are considered and protected (Carroll, 2016:2). Early definitions of CSR can be traced to the work of Carroll (1999) and (Rahman, 2011), who demonstrates how the concept has progressed. This evolution of the concept has been moulded over the years by external factors and material conditions that affected society at the time. Although the definitions of CSR are presented as distinct in Table 2.2, its meaning has been built on over time to reflect the social expectations across decades.

Table 2.2: Dimensions of CSR over the past eight decades

Period and dimension	Definition
The 1950s Obligation to society	“The obligations of businessmen are to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” (Bowen, 1953:6).
The 1960s Relationship with society	“Social responsibility recognizes the intimacy of the relationships between the corporation and society and realizes that such links must be kept in mind by top managers as the corporation and the related groups pursue their respective goals” (Walton, 1967:18).
The 1970s Stakeholder involvement and the responsibilities of business to helps solve neighbourhood problems	“Corporate social responsibility represents a concern with the needs and goals of society that goes beyond the merely economic. Insofar as the business system as it exists today can only survive in an effectively functioning free society, the corporate social responsibility movement represents a broad concern with business’s role in supporting and improving that social order” (Eells & Walton, 1974). “Corporates have four responsibilities: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary, and corporates have to make strategic decisions” (Carroll, 1979).

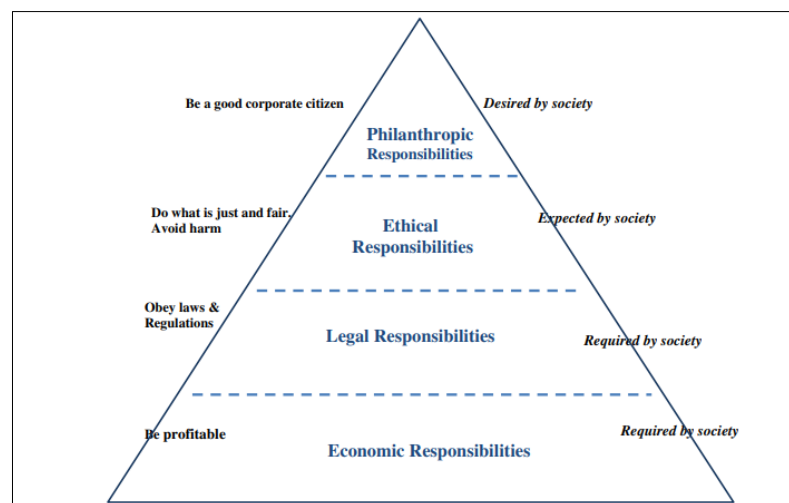
Period and dimension	Definition
The 1980s Economic, legal, ethical, and voluntary responsibilities of business	“CSR involves the conduct of a business so that it is economically profitable, law abiding, ethical and socially supportive. To be socially responsible means that profitability and obedience to the law are foremost conditions to discussing the firm’s ethics and the extent to which it supports the society in which it exists with contributions of money, time and talent. Therefore, CSR is composed of four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic” (Carroll, 1983:608).
The 1990s The rise of environmental consciousness in business; the people, planet, profit matters are infused	“CSR is to maximise positive impact on society and minimise negative impact on society” (Pride & Ferrell, 1997).
20 th century The era of rights: human rights, labour rights, and the protection of environment; the call for transparent reporting	“CSR can be understood as the obligations companies have towards their stakeholders in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. Obeying the law constitutes the baseline of responsible corporate behaviour, with CSR referring to voluntary obligations that go beyond regulatory compliance” (Dashwood, 2007:134).
21 st century Commitment to developing immediate surroundings and communities	“The commitment of the firm to the community or society through provisions of welfare of the society by using corporate resources as well as promoting economic development, which improves the quality of life of the workforce, families, local community and society at large” (Japhet <i>et al.</i> , 2015:1).
22 nd century CSR sustainability	“CSR ‘sustainability’ activities are being given increasing importance as they are seen to be beneficial to the society and environment” (Adapa, 2018; Li et al., 2019).

Source: Adapted from Rahman (2011:173-174)

The above definitions present one side of the coin of CSR, the business face, which obscures the beneficiaries’ perspective. Exposure through globalisation has led communities becoming informed, and they are increasingly demanding that companies engage in CSR initiatives. The conceptualisation of CSR is shifting towards the expectations that society have of organisations. In other words, CSR has become a functional term that is shaped by societal needs.

The WBCSD defines CSR as the will of a corporation to accomplish sustainable development and to improve quality of life through co-operation with employees, families, communities, and wider society (Chung *et al.*, 2018:5). In the definitions of CSR, the ‘responsibilities of business’ is a common denominator. CSR definitions hinge on the underlying duty of business to society. To that end, Carroll’s (1979) seminal definition of CSR illuminates these responsibilities succinctly by outlining what the different levels of social responsibility entail. Figure 2:2 depicts Carroll’s (1979) Pyramid of CSR.

Figure 2.2: Carroll’s Pyramid of CSR



Source: Carroll (1979)

Carroll (1979:500) Pyramid of CSR comprises four dimensions: “The social responsibility of business encompasses the economical, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time.” These sets of responsibilities create a basis that delineates and characterises the nature of businesses’ responsibilities to the societies in which the operate (Carroll, 2016:2). These responsibilities are discussed below.

2.3.1 Economic responsibilities

Primarily, the economic responsibility of business as expected by society is that, business should sustain themselves (Carroll, 2016:2). For organisations operating in developing countries where inflation is high, productivity growth is low, and consumer confidence is weak, it may be relatively difficult to turn a healthy profit in the short term, and these organisations are thus less likely to behave in a socially responsible manner (Campbell, 2007). These organisations’ primary concern is to keep their businesses afloat, as development cannot be

achieved in the absence of economic growth (Ramachandran, 2017), and owners and shareholders have to be incentivised to invest in the resources required to continue operations (Carroll, 2016:3). This explains why economic responsibilities remain a primary consideration in organisations' responsibilities to society.

In South Africa, companies are encouraged to actively participate in redressing the imbalances of past marginalisation, and economic contribution thus takes on the added dimension of black economic empowerment and employment equity (Visser, 2006:39). This is over and above the primary role of business in relation to profitability. Thus, businesses are expected to drive South Africa's economic transformation. Visser (2006:39) points out the dual face of economic responsibility in African countries. One is the economic contribution, which is similar to the role played in developed countries, and the other is economic dependence. It is this second attribute that is concerning, as dependency implies that legal compliance and ethical conduct may be disregarded where government is dependent on companies (Visser, 2006:40).

The economic responsibility is closely associated with instrumental theories, which perceive corporations solely as a means of wealth creation, and its social activities as a tool to achieve economic results (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:28). Instrumental theories are premised on the notion that the economic objective of CSR is to serve three interests: maximising shareholder value, gaining a competitive advantage, and marketing the business (Garriga & Melé, 2004:53). Essentially, the instrumental CSR approaches advance a view that CSR strategies should first and foremost serve to enhance the financial position of the firm (Garriga & Melé, 2004:52), and that CSR activities should be designed to increase profits. This narrative is intimately linked to the free market economy principle of being competitive without deception or fraud (Friedman, 2007:6).

Consistent with this contention, Inekwe *et al.* (2020:230) agree that economic growth remains the primary consideration in developing economies, because it encourages investment, which has multiplier effects and a positive impact on profits and business confidence, thereby enhancing sustainability. This notion is consistent with Harrison and Berman's (2016) finding that, during economic downturns, CSR activities are neglected. There is wide consensus amongst authors that, irrespective of the socio-economic landscape within which CSR is practised, the fulfilment of economic responsibilities of business is the highest responsibility (Carroll, 2016; Visser, 2008).

2.3.2 Legal responsibilities

Society expects of organisations to conduct their affairs in a manner consistent with the country's laws and regulations, i.e., to be law-abiding corporate citizens and fulfil their legal obligations to societal stakeholders, which include providing goods and services that meet at least the minimum legal requirements (Carroll, 2016:3).

The situation is different in emerging economies. In many African countries, the legal requirements for mainstreaming social responsibility by organisations are weak, or legislation is poorly enforced (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016:97). Companies are able to evade legal responsibility over concerns that creating laws or enforcing existing legislation will scare off investors (Samy *et al.*, 2015:16). The need for job creation and stimulating revenue for government is often elevated above all other interests (Hamann & Kapelus, 2004:248). For this reason, legal responsibilities do not occupy the second-highest position in African countries, as is the case in Western countries (Visser, 2006:35).

Furthermore, in the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, CSR is not enforced through a formal national policy, which implies that there is no legal responsibility on companies in this regard. In South Africa, there is no specific CSR legislation mandating implementation and reporting (Samy *et al.*, 2015:18), other than the King Codes of the Institute of Directors South Africa, of which the latest is King IV (published in 2016), which suggests good practices for JSE-listed companies. The lack of a national CSR policy means companies are at liberty to take individual initiatives, which often do not follow best CSR practices. This creates a number of challenges for government, companies, and host communities, including difficulties of monitoring and evaluating CSR initiatives (Samy *et al.*, 2015:19). The laissez faire approach to CSR regulation in African countries may be indicative of desperation to ensure that multinational companies remain operating in these countries, to boost employment.

2.3.3 Ethical responsibilities

Ethical responsibilities go beyond legal compliance (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:21). Assuming ethical responsibilities entail businesses embracing activities, norms, standards, and practices that goes beyond legislative compliance (Carroll, 2016). While legal responsibilities are based on ethical foundations, ethical expectations extend further by including the mandate society has given an organisation (Carroll, 2016:3). Ethical responsibilities entail what is regarded as

fair business practices by society; thus, practices that are in line with protecting the moral rights of stakeholders (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2015:33). Ethics theories focus on the ethical requirements that cement the relationship between business and society based on principles that express the right thing to do, with the aim to ensure societal well-being (Garriga & Melé, 2004; Nikolova & Arsić, 2017). Ethical approaches are driven by moral motives, and envisage social responsibilities beyond abiding by the law (Lock & Seele, 2017:2).

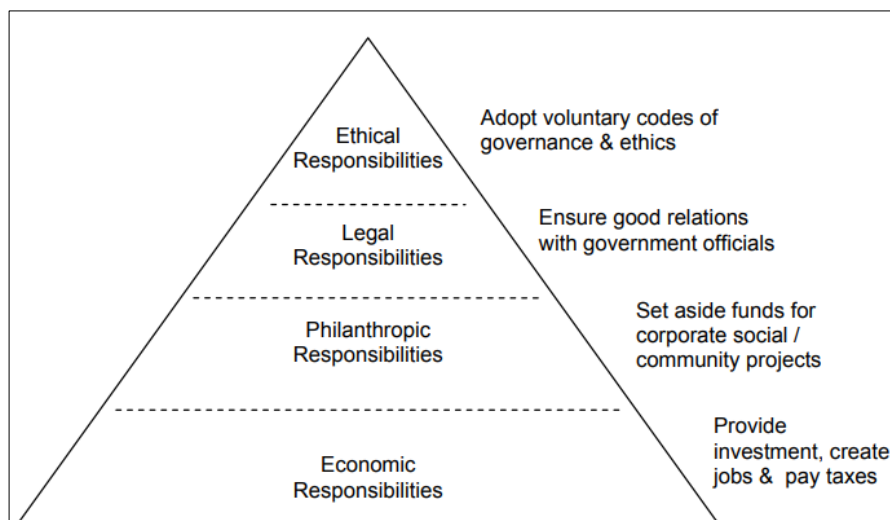
The harsh realities of affected communities in mining suggest that ethical practices are not fully embraced in CSR initiatives (Meyersfeld, 2017:53). Scandals of businesses escaping their ethical responsibilities have been reported in countries such as Gabon, Nigeria, and South Africa, which have some CSR regulations for the oil- and mining sectors to stimulate livelihoods and social development (Ndong 2023). The environmental damage caused by business operating in the oil based Niger Delta, which affected the health and employment of communities, points to the violation of ethical responsibilities and human rights (Ndong 2023).

2.3.4 Philanthropic responsibilities

Philanthropy is not a responsibility in a literal sense, but it is a part of the expectations of the public (Carroll, 2016:4). To fulfil their perceived philanthropic responsibilities, companies engage in a variety of gestures, such as donating gifts, resources, products, serviced, community development, and contributions to the communities or stakeholder groups (Carroll, 2016:4). A distinctive difference between ethical and philanthropic responsibilities is that it is not necessarily expected of businesses to give in a moral or ethical sense. Society expects such gifts, but does not label companies as ethical or unethical based on their giving patterns (Carroll, 2016:4).

While Carroll's model suggest that philanthropic responsibility is the fourth obligation of businesses in undertaking CSR, Visser (2008) contends that, in developing countries, where the levels of poverty are sometimes dreadful, philanthropy transcends legal and ethical responsibilities, as depicted in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Africa's Corporate Social Responsibility Pyramid



Source: Visser (2008)

In this pyramid, economic responsibilities still receive the most emphasis; however, philanthropy is considered second-highest in significance, followed by legal and then ethical responsibilities (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016; Visser, 2008:489). Due to governance gaps, differences in cultural and religious influences, and variations in socio-economic needs (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:701), business involvement via CSR is aimed at development and addressing governance deficits (Idemudia, 2014). Fulfilment of philanthropic responsibility is the only way for multinational companies to gain legitimacy in the areas in which they operate, and CSR is the vehicle by which programmes aimed at alleviation of poverty and investing in community development programmes, provision of facilities in education, health, and sport development are delivered (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:697).

Although the pyramid for Africa ranks philanthropy second-highest, the understanding of the contributions of the construct is still developing. CSR overall is sometimes equated to philanthropy, as opposed to the more embedded position common in developed countries (Visser, 2006:40). Furthermore, although Carroll's (1979) CSR Pyramid offers useful insights in understanding the responsibilities of business, the model is not context-sensitive, and that presents limitations in its application to an emerging economy. In the South African mining context, where CSR has been legislated through the requirement of the development of a social and labour plan to drive socio-economic development, CSR has been elevated from philanthropy to a legal requirement.

The next section discusses theories related to CSR.

2.4 THEORIES RELATED TO CSR

CSR is not a new concept; however, over the years, its scope has spread across multidisciplinary debates that encompass diverse approaches and the merging of normative, prescriptive, and descriptive aspects (Seele & Lock, 2015:4). Wolska (2017) observes that the concept of CSR seems to undergo slow but steady development. CSR theory is also linked to diverse approaches (Garriga & Melé, 2004:52). CSR theories can broadly be grouped into: (1) instrumental theories, in which the corporation is seen as only an instrument for wealth creation, and its social activities are only a means to achieve economic results; (2) political theories, which are concerned with the power of corporations in society and the responsible use of this power in the political arena; (3) integrative theories, in which the corporation is focused on the satisfaction of social demands; and (4) theories regarding the ethical responsibilities of corporations to society (Garriga & Melé, 2004:52; Jauernig & Valentinov, 2019).

The current study examines these theories as they related to the dimensions of CSR, namely economic, political, legal or governance, social, and ethical responsibilities, in alignment with Carroll's (1979) pyramid for the developed-country context and Visser's (2008) pyramid for the developing-country context. The four types of theories noted above are examined with regard to the nature of CSR and the motives for undertaking such initiatives in the subsequent discussions.

2.4.1 Instrumental theories

Instrumental theories view corporations solely as instruments of wealth creation, and its social activities as a tool to achieve economic results (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:18). Instrumental CSR is understood as an approach whereby firms adopt CSR as a means to achieve certain ends aimed at improving the financial position of the firm (Garriga & Melé, 2004:52; Jauernig & Valentinov, 2019). In other words, CSR is motivated by profit ambition above all other interests (Friedman, 2007; Jauernig & Valentinov, 2019; Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:27). Shareholder theory is located within this group of theories, and focuses on the maximisation of shareholder value, measured by share price, which leads to a short-term profit orientation (Garriga & Melé, 2004:52). Scherer (2018) perceives instrumental CSR as a positivistic approach to CSR, where CSR may be undertaken by firms to gain explicit benefits. Jauernig and Valentinov (2019) argue that, pursuing CSR to gain business interest obscures the moral reasons for engaging in

CSR and renders such actions as business as usual. In other words, companies would merely be conducting business and seeking to advance business interest. The instrumental perspective suggests that business is part of society and because business has the necessary resources, it should be an instrument of social policy (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016:98).

Opponents of the instrumental approach perceive CSR as an instrument advancing multinational corporations' (MNCs') access to mineral wealth in African countries without delivering substantial long-term socio-economic impact (Adeola & Adeola, 2019). Abject poverty and lack of development have created fertile ground for a warm reception of large companies seeking to do business in non-Western countries. CSR has been a gateway of MNCs to access mineral wealth in developing countries. African countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Angola, although rich in natural resources, have been unable to use that wealth to boost their economies (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016:98). The absence of legal instruments supported by systems to enforce accountability has enabled companies to pursue financial returns with limited, if any, social investment.

Evidence suggests that CSR in Western countries is driven from an instrumental perspective by issues such as consumer competitiveness, reputation pull, brand management strategies, and environmental concerns. CSR actions in the African context are often riddled with corporate hypocrisy, such as blue washing, which broadly refers to appearing concerned with human rights (Berliner & Prakash, 2015), or green washing, which is appearing environmentally friendly (Kubiak, 2016). Essentially, organisations' CSR in emerging contexts exhibits limited moral worth (Jauernig & Valentinov, 2019).

2.4.2 Political theories

Political CSR refers to activities, whether intentionally or unintentionally, that serve a political agenda (Frynas & Stephens, 2015:484). Political theories emphasise the strategic goal of achieving a competitive advantage, which would produce long-term profits (Frynas & Stephens, 2015; Garriga & Melé, 2004). These theories focus on the interactions and connections between business and society (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:28), and focus on responsible use of business power in the political arena (Garriga & Melé, 2004:63). Political CSR is looked upon as a vehicle (Scherer & Palazzo, 2007) to engage in wider global governance processes and in the provision of public goods where local governments have been incapable of doing so (Frynas & Stephens, 2015).

Scholars argue that corporations in a globalised world bear not only economic, social, and environmental responsibilities, but also political responsibilities (Seele & Lock, 2015:2). The relationship between corporations and the political system is significant, first, because the political system defines the institutional context within which corporates operate, and how they are incentivised or restricted (Jackson & Deeg, 2008). Similarly, corporates influence the institutional context by various means, becoming political actors themselves (Hillman *et al.*, 2004). Hence, political CSR attempts to drive corporates from “‘reaction to stakeholder pressure’ to ‘corporations’ role’ in the overarching processes of public will-formation” (Scherer & Palazzo, 2007).

Political CSR is distinct from the means-end perspective of CSR. The theory holds that the firm should not be located outside of but as an integral part of changing societal institutions (Scherer & Palazzo, 2007). When implementing political CS, corporations recognise their impact on society and their social responsibilities in a way that has a clear impact on regulation, even though this may not be the intended aim of the activity (Frynas & Stephens, 2015:486). Corporations gain moral legitimacy by participating in deliberative discourse with political actors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), shareholders, and other stakeholders (Seele & Lock, 2015:3).

In developing countries, there is fertile ground for mining companies to mould their CSR efforts to political agendas because there is a desperate need for such investments, and because aligning with the political forces provides immunity for these companies. In South Africa, for instance, Plagerson and Stuart (2018) lay bare the role played by the mining sector in the development and realisation of social policies, both before and after apartheid. MNCs, despite the policies of their countries of origin, undermined the environment by polluting resources such as water, and infringed on the human rights of migrant labourers, in pursuit of competitive advantage. There is an urgent call for concerted efforts to position CSR as both a social and political empowerment strategy to address the historical deprivation of slavery and colonialism (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016).

2.4.3 Integrative theories

This group of theories focuses on how business integrates with social demands, arguing that business depends on society for its existence, continuity, and growth (Garriga & Melé, 2004:57). Essentially, integrative theories argue that businesses are part of society, and should

not operate independently of their context, because society expects to interact with businesses, which, in turn, gives businesses legitimacy and prestige in the community (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:28). Therefore, integrative theories propose that corporate management take cognisance of the social demands and dovetail their business operations with social values. Integrative theories note the intertwined relationship between business and society with regard to the economy and the environment. Businesses depend on society, which is also the case in mining. Mining companies seek mineral wealth to generate revenue, while society expects of mining companies to also respond to the social and environmental demands of society. CSR initiatives should, therefore, integrate social and environmental issues.

Stakeholder theory is prominent in the CSR discourse, as it addresses the complex interplay of societal actors (Seele & Lock, 2015:235). It has also become an ethical theory focused on the fostering of relations with those affected by the business (Freeman, 1999:234). Stakeholder theory considers fiduciary duties towards all stakeholders, including communities (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017:30). Freeman *et al.* (2010:26) define stakeholders as “any group or individuals that can affect or be affected by the realization of an organization’s purpose”. Stakeholder theory is inherently managerial, in that it directs how managers operate, rather than primarily addressing management theory, and addresses two fundamental questions, namely: (1) What is the purpose of the firm? and (2) What responsibility does management have to stakeholders? (Freeman *et al.*, 2004:364). The above questions remain central to mining companies whose activities have negative environmental impact. Unlike mining shareholders, mining stakeholders are not a homogeneous group which presents challenges (Muthuri, 2012). Community stakeholders represent different interest groups, who may not agree on the priority issues that mining houses should address. Proponents of stakeholder theory contend that businesses have a role to play in the face of social issues, and ought to have processes to manage these (Sethi, 1975:62). Corporates are therefore expected to respond to socio-economic issues in the communities in which they operate. Wartick and Rude (1986:124) refer to this as “social responsiveness”.

There is an emerging understanding that CSR issues extend beyond the boundaries of any one corporation, and include stakeholders and the integration of their respective demands (Seuring & Gold, 2013:2). Corporate management must adapt to reflect this expanded interpretation (Searcy, 2014:120). Economic, societal, and environmental sustainability challenges can only be addressed in joint efforts, and they need to be comprehended from a systems perspective

(Seuring & Gold, 2013:1). Integration of the demands of CSR into business processes allows the creation of an integrated management system. Companies have come up with new ways of accomplishing CSR objectives, such as dialogue processes, frameworks for stakeholder identification, information management systems, and impact evaluation tools (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012:9).

CSR is underpinned by the idea that corporations can no longer act as isolated economic entities operating in detachment from broader society (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016). Consequently, CSR must be understood within the wider dynamics of business and industry associations, social networks, and state regulation (Brammer *et al.*, 2012:20). This view is consistent with the nexus concept, which has been expanded to the systems thinking perspective that entails elevating the holistic perspective (Schlör *et al.*, 2020:8). The nexus concept not only explicitly focuses on the interrelations between resources, but also implicitly considers subsystems, such as governance, ecological, and economic systems, as key to sustainable development (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Schlör *et al.*, 2020:8). There is consensus amongst researchers that systems thinking is required in dealing with the coming century's complexity (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Meadows, 2008).

Systems thinking is the art and science of making reliable inferences about behaviours by developing an increasingly deep understanding of the underlying structure (Richmond, 1994). Arnold and Wade (2015:671) explain the interconnections between the elements of systems thinking. Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes, and a framework for seeing interrelationships, rather than things, for seeing patterns of change, rather than static snapshots (Senge, 1990). Systems thinking is thus a way of thinking about systems (Arnold & Wade, 2015:670). In the case of CSR implementation, mining companies need to apply systems thinking in implementing CSR, as it operates within two systems. The first is its own inter-organisational arrangements, such as employees, policies and strategies, which are closely connected to the second, which is a set of outside systems, such as municipalities, communities, and the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE).

Meadows (2008) asserts that systems thinking consists of three considerations, namely elements (in this case, CSR), interconnections (within and outside the corporate), and a function or purpose (what it aims to deliver). Therefore, CSR implementation should consider the views of broader stakeholders, namely communities and local government, within the parameters of applicable legislation, in order to achieve the desired goals. For CSR to make a

meaningful impact, it should not only be perceived as a strategic vehicle by mining companies, but ought to be practised strategically (Bansal *et al.*, 2015).

Strategic CSR requires substantial time, resources, commitment, and structural adjustments in order to deliver sustainable impact (Bansal *et al.*, 2015:70). Strategic CSR tends to be deeply embedded in organisations, and requires changes in organisational processes. On the other hand, some companies undertake tactical CSR, which entails more transactional and incremental activities that are more likely to be withdrawn or implemented with short time horizons and relatively few organisational resources (Bansal *et al.*, 2015:70). Although both tactical and strategic CSR actions create shareholder value, tactical CSR can be easily imitated, and are more likely to be reversed (Bansal *et al.*, 2015), while strategic CSR is embedded in the firm's core structure.

CSR implementation can be enhanced by taking into consideration the dynamic interactions across interconnected systems that extend beyond the corporate, such as government and communities. The complexity of highly interdependent systems necessitates a systems approach, which views the social systems nested within natural systems and recognises the dependency of business on nature (Williams *et al.*, 2017:867). As CSR in South Africa has become mandatory MPRDA (RSA, 2002) and that a lot is expected by stakeholders such as government and host communities, it is worth exploring and investing in a holistic sustainable CSR management framework for coal mines in South Africa to attain socio-economic impact. Unless CSR implementation results in real-life positive impact in communities, the CSR agenda cannot be regarded as having achieved its objective.

A further complication is that there is a general scepticism about the contributions of CSR to local socio-economic development (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:219). CSR literature provides a myriad examples of CSR initiatives that are not sustainable beyond the funding period (Oino *et al.*, 2015:758), a trend that is common in emerging economies (Akpan, 2006; McLennan & Banks, 2019; Muthuri *et al.*, 2012).

2.4.4 Ethics theories

Ethics theories focus on the relationship between business and society based on principles that express the right thing to do and the necessity to achieve societal well-being (Garriga & Melé, 2004:63; Nikolova & Arsić, 2017). Ethical approaches are thus driven by moral motives, and

envisage social responsibilities beyond abiding by the law (Seele & Lock, 2015:2). Ethics theories suggest that the business environment and society should be driven by ethical values. CSR theories and practices are generally adopted from Western approaches, and may not be applicable in Africa (Amos, 2018) because of structural, institutional, and cultural differences (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011:126). However, ethical approaches to CSR are criticized for their lack of effectiveness and sustainability in a capitalist economy (Jauernig & Valentinov, 2019). In other words, CSR is seen to undermine the economic sustainability of corporations by placing less emphasis on the economy.

Companies have to ensure they uphold employees' rights, are environment-friendly, investor-friendly, mindful of ethics, and respectful to the communities in which they operate. Bringing ethics into CSR implies that these actions and activities will vary across place, time, and circumstances (Pratt, 1991), largely because of meaning societies attach to CSR in their context. Consequently, the CSR agenda is often a product of historical and cultural factors, maturing according to the prevailing economic and political priorities of the country (Idemudia & Ite, 2006). Organisations therefore need to consider political and socio-economic factors in understanding, developing, and implementing CSR initiatives (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011:126).

The absence of a guiding theoretical framework from a developing country perspective points to inherent challenges that CSR implementation will encounter in this context. Furthermore, limited research has been conducted on CSR from micro-level perspective to determine how internal organisational dynamics affect the management of CSR implementation (Mohammed *et al.*, 2019:6), which dynamics further restrict the impact of such initiatives on community development.

The current study examined two projects of a coal mine in South Africa, an early childhood development (ECD) capacity-building project and an ECD construction project, in Steve Tshwete Municipality, to provide a systems thinking perspective of CSR implementation.

The next section provides greater detail on CSR in the context of a developing economy.

2.5 A DEVELOPING ECONOMY PERSPECTIVE OF CSR

Whereas extensive research has been carried on CSR across varying disciplines, there is still a dearth of research on CSR in emerging economies, particularly in Africa, which is one of the

most socio-economically marginalised regions in the global economy (Mohammed *et al.*, 2019:4). CSR in developing countries is distinct from CSR in developed countries (Ghosh, 2014:91), as developing countries face a plethora of social and environmental issues that have an overall negative effect on these countries' development (Chatterjee & Mitra, 2017:1). Consequently, the challenges faced by the developing countries with respect to CSR are different compared to those faced by developed countries (Ghosh, 2014:91-92).

CSR is not new in developing countries (Idemudia, 2014:422), and can be traced to the corporate–community interventions pursued by mining companies during the colonial and post-colonial period in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Hönke, 2012). CSR in an emerging economy is crucial because of socio-economic issues prevailing in these economies, such as a shortage of foreign direct investments, poor infrastructure, corruption, widespread poverty, and high unemployment (Abugre, 2014; Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:698). Interest in CSR in developing countries is fuelled by high levels of poverty and inequalities, particularly in countries in which sustainable development challenges appear most intractable (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016). In these economies, CSR has had a social theme in its approach (Visser, 2006:37).

CSR has become a rescue mechanism for many failing economies in Africa (Inekwe *et al.*, 2020:229). The landscape of CSR in developing countries differs from the western perspective primarily in the emphasis on philanthropy to bridge governance gaps (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:697). Particularly in developing countries, CSR serves to augment government deficiencies.

According to Visser *et al.* (2007:474), CSR in African countries is less formalised than in developed countries. In other words, CSR is implemented outside of a formal system that can support the initiatives over a long period. Formal CSR codes, standards, and guidelines that are applicable to developing countries tend to be issue-specific (Visser *et al.*, 2007). Corporations are concerned with making economic contributions as opposed to social impact. This is possibly due to high inflation and rising unemployment. In other words, CSR follows an instrumental approach. Corporates often engage in the provision of social services that would normally be seen as government's responsibility in developed countries, for example, investment in infrastructure, schools, hospitals, and housing (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016; Muthuri, 2012; Visser *et al.*, 2007). The issues prioritised under CSR in Africa are different from those in most developed countries, for example, tackling HIV/Aids, improving working conditions, the provision of basic services, supply chain integrity, and poverty alleviation

(Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016). In developing countries, social issues are generally given more political, economic, and media emphasis than environmental, ethical, or stakeholder issues (Schmidheiny, 2006). Developing countries have different drivers of CSR, and tend to emphasise issues such as consumer competitiveness, reputation pull, brand management strategies, and environmental concerns (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011:133). CSR in emerging markets remains less embedded in corporate strategies, and are less pervasive and less politically rooted than in most high-income countries (Baskin, 2006:46).

Against this background, a concerted effort is required to enable CSR in the context of emerging economies in order to contribute to the development agenda within which it is practised.

Visser *et al.*'s (2007:474) study of CSR in African countries illuminates the following characteristics:

- CSR is less formalised and codified when compared to developed countries. In other words, CSR is implemented outside of a formal system that can support the initiatives over a long period of time. Formal CSR codes, standards and guidelines that are most applicable to developing countries tend to be issue-specific.
- Making an economic contribution is often seen as the most important and effective way for business to make a social impact, due to high inflation and rising unemployment. In other words, CSR follows an instrumental approach.
- Businesses often engage in the provision of social services that would be seen as government's responsibility in developed countries, for example, investment in infrastructure, schools, hospitals, and housing.
- The issues prioritised under the CSR banner in Africa are different from those in most developed countries, for example, tackling HIV/AIDS, improving working conditions, provision of basic services, supply chain integrity, and poverty alleviation.
- Social issues are generally given more political, economic, and media emphasis in developing countries than are environmental, ethical, or stakeholder issues (Schmidheiny, 2006). Developing countries have different drivers of CSR, which tends to emphasise issues such as consumer competitiveness, reputation pull, brand management strategies, and environmental concerns (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011:133).

- CSR in emerging markets remains less embedded in corporate strategies, and are less pervasive and less politically rooted than in most high-income countries (Baskin, 2006:46).

Against this background, concerted effort is required to enable CSR in the context of emerging economies to contribute to the development agenda within which it is practised.

2.6 DRIVERS OF CSR IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Emerging economies continue to face a plethora of social, economic, and environmental issues that affect the overall development of such economies, but which also offer opportunities for these economies to chart a course of integrated and inclusive growth towards national development (Chatterjee & Mitra, 2017:1). Participation of companies in projects ought to contribute towards the national agenda, with broader consideration of appropriate strategies and actions, together with their impact (Chatterjee & Mitra, 2017:4). Thus, the need to integrate CSR activities into the public policy arena is greater for MNCs operating in emerging economies (Beddewela, 2016:3), as MNCs could make a meaningful contribution to uplifting the affected communities. MNCs are able to engage in CSR in a less costly way than low-capability firms (Su *et al.*, 2016).

CSR is a contextual issue, with varying factors propelling and or inhibiting its practice. The boundaries of the business–society interface are malleable and changing, affecting CSR differently between developed and developing countries (Jamali & Karam, 2018:19). CSR discussions in developing countries are informed at the institutional level by macro-level forces existing within and outside the firm. The most common macro-factors are: geopolitical landscape of the past and present, the political system and governance, the financial system, economics and business operations, culture, societal values and customs, and local ecosystems (Jamali & Karam, 2018:4; Miras-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2019). The antecedents of CSR are therefore not neutral, but situated within complex geographical and political spaces. The factors are discussed below.

2.6.1 Geopolitical landscape of the past and present

The term geopolitics refer to the effects of geography on international politics and relations (Jamali & Karam, 2018:4). Literature on CSR antecedents reveals that CSR is not deemed neutral but rather situated within complex geographical and political spaces (Jamali & Karam,

2018:4). CSR emerges from local relations, and is closely informed by local sociocultural values, traditions, and global geopolitical relations that shape local relations (Jamali & Karam, 2018:4). The geopolitical past of slavery trade and colonial capitalism are some of the experiences surrounding the CSR debate, more so in emerging economies (Bulhan, 2015; Gobewole, 2018; Jamali & Karam, 2018:4). The African continent, which, although is the richest in the world in terms of natural resources, remains the poorest economically (Munyai, 2020:1-2). Muthuri (2012) asserts that, in Africa, CSR is framed by ethics related to slavery, colonialism, and apartheid, and seek to address social injustice and inequality in society. Although colonisation of the African continent ended in the 19th century (Munyai, 2020:10), Bulhan (2015:244) argues that colonialism is still at play in Africa, in its modified form of meta-colonialism, which is masqueraded as the more savoury euphemism of globalisation.

Mining-sector activities in Africa are driven by multi-national corporations that are not immune from the meta-colonialism system and structural influences. For instance, the political economy of mining, particularly in South Africa, has historically and consistently been a violent, masculine, and exploitative project that concentrates the benefits for a few, at the expense of the majority (Rutledge, 2019:36). As an example from the recent past, 2012 saw the Marikana incident in South Africa, in which 34 mine workers lost their lives in a protest against appalling living conditions (Patel & Mushonga, 2014:51).

Dividends from mining has had a significant influence on the political arrangements of South Africa, and has historically been the main driver of the apartheid economic model of wealth accumulation (Rutledge, 2019:36). Hence, CSR is seen by multi-national companies as a new form of corporate colonialism (Idemudia, 2014:422), as governments enjoy significant benefits from the mining industry as it is currently configured.

The current CSR approaches by mining companies appear to be skilfully rebranded existing and pre-existing colonial-style community development strategies and policies (Hilson *et al.*, 2019:350). This is noticeable in three areas (Hilson *et al.*, 2019:342): the dislocation and resettlement of communities to accommodate economic interests, local employment of unskilled black labourers who endured very difficult work and poor living conditions, and local economic development. If development is to be achieved on the continent, it is imperative to note how to harness and make productive use of the reservoir of available natural resources that still abound (Munyai, 2020:6). If left unchallenged, resources meant to bring about community development could serve to entrench political agendas.

2.6.2 Political system and governance

The political system and governance denote the national-level legislation regulating CSR activities (Jamali & Karam, 2018:4). Companies' internationalisation makes them subject to such legislation, which also drives CSR (Miras-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2019:14). Kuada and Hinson (2012) postulate that CSR practices of foreign firms in Ghana suggest that the rationale guiding CSR behaviour is mainly legal obligations and anticipated economic gains, rather than moral and ethical considerations.

However, by and large, developing countries' governance is characterised by weakened institutions, which Khanna and Palepu (2010:656) refer to as institutional voids or "the lack of proper governance structures that facilitate market relations and operations". These voids make it easy for companies to escape accountability, leading to "responsibility-free" spaces in developing countries (Jamali & Karam, 2018:15).

Haslam (2020) argues that weak state capacity does not always indicate an inability to regulate in the public interest, as institutional voids give rise to informal institutions that present countervailing pressures for CSR. While some institutions may work to support responsible behaviour and CSR, severe limitations of national policies and legislation in the context of ineffective or contracted governments have led to little improvement in CSR performance. The lack of regulation of CSR in emerging economies renders the CSR initiatives as a case of imitating the West, rather than responding to the needs of indigenous communities (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:697).

2.6.3 Financial system, economics, and business operations

The financial system, economics, and business operations play a crucial role in establishing an enabling business environment for shaping CSR expression (Jamali & Karam, 2018:15). The reconceptualization of business–society relationships - from business *and* society to business *in* society - offers new thinking about the roles of multinational corporations in fostering or undermining development in poor countries (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012:2). The role of the private sector in developing countries is not only important, it is complex, due to the size and capabilities of these companies (Chatterjee & Mitra, 2017:3). Their role is further complicated by challenges they are confronted with in developing countries.

Mining holds enormous potential to finance rapid infrastructure development and to drive the social development projects needed for sustainable broad-based black economic growth (Besada & Martin, 2015:263). However, the dependence on natural resources in many developing countries raises concerns regarding the effects that these industries could have on economic development (Pietrobelli *et al.*, 2018:1), as single-commodity economies tend to be threatened during global economic downturns (Wasylycia-Leis *et al.*, 2014:483).

Large mining operations tend to be controlled and governed hierarchically, based on the foreign experiences of the countries where they are based, and they rely mostly on foreign suppliers for knowledge and solutions (Pietrobelli *et al.*, 2018:1). Companies in emerging markets have different backgrounds and motivations to those in developed countries, which lead to different economic consequences with regard to internationalisation and CSR (Aggarwal *et al.*, 2011:17). This is due to the well-established legal and regulatory frameworks largely present in the developed countries from which these mining companies originate. CSR by large mining corporations in developing countries runs the risk of not being context-relevant and lacking diversification and local innovation (Pietrobelli *et al.*, 2018:1). In this context, CSR is relegated to voluntary activities by companies acting autonomously and outside of state regulations (Haslam, 2020). Similarly, multinational companies operating in emerging markets often experience protests, which lead to criticism of multinational companies for being socially irresponsible (Attig *et al.*, 2016:173).

2.6.4 Cultural system, societal values, and customs

CSR literature on emerging economies also reflects on the effects of cultural system, societal values, and customs on CSR practice (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019:5). CSR as it is practised on the African continent is inclined towards respecting hierarchical relationships and maintaining harmony (Jamali & Karam, 2018:15). CSR activities are also influenced by traditional values and standards upheld like *ubuntu*, an African humanism view that man was created to benefit others, in South Africa, and *Omoluwabi* in the Yoruba tradition of South West Nigeria (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:697). African societies are collectivistic in nature, and uphold religious beliefs and cultural practices that exhort philanthropic activities like charitable assistance, donations, organising and participating in cultural activities, promoting widely accepted cultural practices, belongingness, and adhering to communal values (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:698). The CSR spirit and

practices resonate with traditional communitarian values and religious concepts in developing countries (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011:129-130).

The CSR discourse has also been shaped by indigenous concepts, such as *harambee*, *tsekada*, *zekat*, and *nnoboa* (Dias, 2012:262). *Harambee* is guided by the principle of collective rather than individual good, and embodies the values of mutual assistance, joint effort, social responsibility, and community self-reliance (Winston & Ryan, 2008). Hamidu *et al.* (2016: 698) observe that “African societies are collectivistic in nature and uphold religious beliefs and cultural practices that exhort philanthropic activities like charitable assistance, donations, organizing and participating in cultural activities, promoting widely accepted cultural practices and show of belongingness to communal values”. Embracing cultural values into CSR practice imply that businesses cannot continue to prosper in isolation from the communities or societies in which they operate (Jamali & Karam, 2018). Nevertheless, the harsh reality of mine communities and employees living in poverty is indicative of how cultural values have not translated to collective development by multi-national companies operating in these countries (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011). This may be due to the institutional context, which includes cultural context of a given country, have an impact on the corporate practices related to CSR sustainability (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Sardana *et al.*, 2020:2). Simply put, CSR practices are influenced by cultural sentiments of the country.

CSR in Arab countries tends to be influenced by Islamic religious beliefs, with the norm of *zakat* requiring Muslims to give 2.5% of their wealth to the poor (Jamali & Karam, 2018:15). CSR in China and India is closely associated with charity and philanthropy (Kolk *et al.*, 2010:4), while it is less evident in addressing concerns such as environmental sustainability, ethical business practices, and good governance (Sardana *et al.*, 2020:2). The Chinese approach offers a unique expression, where CSR is equated to pursuing a harmonious and responsible business relationship which is heavily influenced by the customs of Confucian interpersonal harmony (Wang & Juslin, 2009:433). Confucianism emphasises the cultivation of virtue and humanity as the primary reason for conducting CSR, and its interpersonal harmony principles resemble the social relations and social responsibilities of modern business (Davidson *et al.*, 2018:117).

CSR in Africa embodies communitarianism and collectivism — doing good for others, which includes harmonising relations. Yet, the manner in which CSR is practised by the mining sector suggests that the concept has been constructed using experiences from the developed countries

where the companies' headquarters are located (Hilson, 2011; Idemudia, 2014). Consequently, CSR in Africa largely serves to create a positive brand or corporate image, or to address government shortcomings in healthcare and education service delivery (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:698). Consequently, much of CSR research and discourse is focused on ethics and anti-corruption measures (Rampersad & Skinner, 2014).

Owing to these cultural differences, articulating a comprehensive CSR model in Africa presents challenges, first, because the term CSR is relatively new and, second, because CSR tends to be characterised by ad hoc projects focused at the community level that are driven by the companies' cultural context.

The next section looks at the possible contributions CSR could make.

2.7 CONTRIBUTIONS OF CSR

CSR could yield benefits in four areas, namely the company; the environment; the quality of products, to the benefit of customers; and the affected communities. These are discussed below.

2.7.1 The company

Bansal and Roth (2000:732) argue that corporates are able to gain a competitive edge by securing social licence to operate and avoid penalties by engaging in CSR. CSR could thus be utilised as a strategy to make a business stand out from its rivals (Porter & Kramer, 2006), leading to higher profitability (Lee, 2008). Strategies to stand out include, for example, facilitating community development and poverty reduction (Gamu & Dauvergne, 2018:1). In this way, CSR could enhance customer satisfaction (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018).

Carlini and Grace (2021:3) posit that CSR is often conceived as an organisation's responsibility to internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, a company's CSR initiatives must be consistent with both its internal and external branding strategies (Leijerholt *et al.*, 2019). The rationale for internal branding is to enhance employees' identification and engagement with the brand in order to 'live the brand' (Piha & Avlonitis, 2018). An employee-centred approach to CSR strategy, whereby employees at all levels are engaged, is crucial to solidification of organisational CSR values (Carlini *et al.*, 2019:183). In the absence of this connection, employees are likely to undermine the corporate brand by not aligning their attitudes and behaviours to the expectations of management and the public.

From the above, it is clear that good CSR practice starts inside the company (Arruda, 2010:75; Carlini *et al.*, 2019). Collective effort in developing CSR initiatives fosters healthy employee relations, which, in turn, foster a positive working environment, leading to higher productivity and, ultimately, enhanced organisational performance (Hatane, 2015; Leijerholt *et al.*, 2019).

The role of employees in pushing companies to engage in CSR initiatives has been recognised (Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999; Sharma & Henriques, 2005). However, employees' role in relation with CSR is multifaceted than first believed. Employees may not only push organisations to engage in CSR, they may influence CSR policies and their implementation, and may even experience the outcomes of CSR or lack thereof, which may encourage them to evaluate the company's CSR approaches (Onkila & Sarna, 2022:435). Nevertheless, CSR research has been dominated by a focus on the organisational benefits (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018). Employees are mainly perceived as implementers in a top-down strategy, and the focus has been on the question of how employees could contribute to CSR initiatives in their employing organisations (Onkila & Sarna, 2022:443).

CSR has also been found to benefit companies through enhanced employer–employee relationships (Piha & Avlonitis, 2018), including greater organisational commitment, identification with the organisation (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018), affective organisational commitment (Kim *et al.*, 2017; Mory *et al.*, 2016; Shen & Jiuhua Zhu, 2011), and organisational citizenship behaviours (Kim *et al.*, 2017). A study conducted by Yang and Chen (2022:6) found management should focus on addressing dangerous working conditions as the most important CSR issue. Kong *et al.* (2021) argue that employees spend a significant amount of time at their workplaces, and could thus be key players in reducing the environmental footprint of the organisation if they, at the individual level, show responsible behaviours to preserve the environment.

Thus, by honouring their social responsibility to employees, a positive collaboration between employees and CSR initiatives is created, which is crucial for building a strong CSR brand (Lindgreen *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, research has shown that companies that adopt, implement, and communicate effective sustainability policies are better able to attract and retain employees (Story *et al.*, 2016:485). When CSR is honoured within the firm, it is likely that employees will identify with external initiatives undertaken by the firm.

Creating an environment that fosters dialogue between multiple internal stakeholders is crucial in positioning CSR in the workplace. Employees could become the watchdogs of the company to ensure greater compliance and transparency. Employees play an important role in the management of CSR, first as stakeholders, but also as enablers. For CSR to translate into long-term shareholder value, companies must ensure that the associated activities are fully integrated into business processes. Where systems hinder performance, employees as stakeholders should take the lead in reporting and addressing such shortcomings. It is also important to understand the management factors required in CSR activities to support the attainment of organisational objectives while addressing community objectives (Gond *et al.*, 2011).

2.7.2 The environment

The mining sector is often criticized for the effects of their operations on local communities, and the sector is seen as a threat to society in general (Pons *et al.*, 2021:1). The environmental impact of mines' activities is one of the main concern worldwide, and has become an issue of great importance through the United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Pons *et al.*, 2021:1). Mining activities have a significant deleterious impact on the quality of the air, water, and soil around their operations (Raufflet *et al.*, 2014; Rodrigues & Mendes, 2018:89), and CSR holds that businesses have an obligation to society to address these ecological problems (Idemudia, 2011:1), which view is increasingly receiving research attention (Fernando *et al.*, 2019:1; Yang & Chen, 2022).

According to Pons *et al.* (2021), mining and petroleum industries have been the key sources of environmental disasters and human rights violations over the last 40 years. Traditionally, the primary concern of business was to make profit, but, in recent years, CSR has included a business philosophy of not earning profits at the expense of the environment, which includes the affected society (Roberts, 2020). In response, developed countries have raised their environmental standards and significantly changed their behaviours towards the environment (Pata, 2021). However, in developing countries, environmental standards lag far behind those of developed countries (Kong *et al.*, 2021:2). In most of the developing economies, companies are emitting a significant amount of pollution (Solarin *et al.*, 2018), and these countries face extreme climate change conditions due to their poor environmental management strategies (Kong *et al.*, 2021:11).

Companies can either proactively engage in CSR in the form of environmental management, or be reactive by responding to current legislation (Puppim de Oliveira & Jabbour, 2017). In relation to environmental management, a proactive approach includes the incorporation of environmental concerns into organisational objectives and strategies (Haden *et al.*, 2009). Del Brío and Junquera (2003) and Parker *et al.* (2009) note that, in developing countries, some companies fail to engage in any type of environmental management. This is due to factors such as economic uncertainty in the operating environment, the absence of appropriate national environmental laws and policies, and a lack of specialised service providers and associations to assist organisations to improve their environmental management practices (Del Brío & Junquera, 2003).

Successful environmental management requires that organisations integrate sustainability, CSR practices and processes into key functions such as human resource management and organisational management (Kong *et al.*, 2021:11), and communicate the importance of the philosophy to employees.

Nor *et al.* (2016:124) posit that there is a positive relationship between voluntary environmental disclosure and corporate financial performance. Companies emphasise the disclosure of their contribution in the environmental activities to attract the investors and fulfil the demands of stakeholder groups. Zhu and Geng (2013), in a study of supply chain practices for energy saving and emission reduction amongst Chinese manufacturers, submit that effective environmental policies, government actions, and public sector incentives could be the main mechanisms through which companies of all sizes are enabled to improve their environmental performance. The combination of mining and environmental protection is still absent in most African countries, and CSR debate is increasingly focusing on the impact of mining on health and the environment (Pons *et al.*, 2021:11).

2.7.3 Customers

Bhattacharya and Sen (2004:9) posit that CSR is most likely to have an effect on the focus area of customers. Customers take into consideration whether the company's products are value for money, together with the company's stance on natural disasters, climate change, and financial inequality resulting from economic crises (Martínez *et al.*, 2014), and fairness as reflected by the company's CSR initiatives aimed at various groups of stakeholders (Oliver, 2014). Against this background, customers are expected to be more satisfied with companies that are socially

responsible towards their various stakeholders, including employees (Martínez *et al.*, 2014). The company engaging in CSR initiatives has a positive influence on customer satisfaction (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018:358). CSR initiatives that set the company apart from its competitors are not only more likely to catch consumers' attention, but also to generate attributions and positive attitudes (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004:17). Effective CSR practices could enhance the company's reputation and enhance consumer loyalty (Islam *et al.*, 2021) and help maintain long-term relationships with other stakeholders (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), which enhance the continued existence of mining companies (Adonteng-Kissi & Adonteng-Kissi, 2017:196).

This positive link between CSR and consumer patronage should inspire companies to devote greater energy and resources to CSR initiatives (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004:10). The strengthening of the business case for CSR activities in recent years has shifted the debate around CSR from 'whether' to 'how' (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004:10). Through investments in social capital, trust between a company and its stakeholders and investors is built and pays off when the overall level of trust in corporations and markets suffers a negative shock (Lins *et al.*, 2017). According to these authors, companies with high CSR ratings outperform firms with low CSR ratings during the crisis by at least four per cent. Sustainability initiatives have become an essential element of marketing communications over recent decades (Moisescu, 2018:56), with customer satisfaction, corporate reputation, and customer trust as key antecedents of customer loyalty and purchase intention (Islam *et al.*, 2021).

The linkage between CSR and customer loyalty differs significantly between developed and developing countries. Developed economies enjoy high levels of literacy, political systems that encourage open debate, and greater social awareness, which are important factors in mobilising against unacceptable activities by firms (Saleem & Gopinath, 2015:14). In developing countries, such awareness, if it exists at all, is limited by higher levels of illiteracy, and is overshadowed by the need for low-priced products, which are prioritised over concerns about the environmental behaviour of corporations (Saleem & Gopinath, 2015:14).

Stakeholders in different cultural settings also hold significantly different attitudes towards CSR (Aguilera & Jackson, 2003), due to different social norms and cultural values, whereby different relative importance is attached to different initiatives (Visser, 2008). CSR activities in developing countries tend to be unstructured and less formal, and the motivation for engaging in CSR activities is usually related to philanthropy or charity (Kim *et al.*, 2017).

2.7.4 The community

Corporate activities have different impacts on different groups in society, hence the business responsibility to take into consideration the different segments within a society (McLennan & Banks, 2019:117). CSR is increasingly expected to deliver more holistic outcomes to a broad range of stakeholders, including the host communities (Nikolova & Arsić, 2017). Determining which community is affected could, however, be difficult, as a community is a social construction that reflects varying degrees of internal differentiation and fragmentation in tension with bonding and cohesion (McLennan & Banks, 2019:119). Thus, in the context of a large corporate operation, Kapelus (2002) argues that, in order to be able to claim that local communities are benefiting from the presence of mining companies, these companies first need to identify and define these communities.

Phillips and Reichart (2000) posit that a community is one of the most difficult stakeholders to identify. Dunham *et al.* (2006) identified four types of communities. The first is the community of place, which is identified based on proximity, be it geographic or in social interaction. This is the most common definition employed by mining companies (Centre for Applied Legal Studies, 2018). The second is the community of interest, which bound by a common interest or ideology to achieve intended outcomes (Dunham *et al.*, 2006). The third is the virtual advocacy group or virtual community, which is characterised as agenda-driven or issue-based. Advancements in technology have enabled the establishment of virtual communities beyond physical borders. The fourth is the community of practice, which consists of individuals united in both action and in the meaning that action has both for themselves and for the larger collective. Such groups may include professionals who collaborate for learning purposes (Dunham *et al.*, 2006). Social interaction is viewed as the glue that binds the constituents of a community; places do not constitute a community, they merely serve as the setting in which interactions occur (Theodori, 2005:662). In other words, a community develops as individuals interact with one another.

Segerstedt and Abrahamsson (2019:611) define a mining community as one that co-exists with on-going mines and mining companies. The Centre for Applied Legal Studies (2018) defines a community as a coherent, social group of persons with interests or rights in a particular area of land that the members have or exercise communally in terms of an agreement, custom, or law. This framing of community presents limitations in that it assumes coherent views and interests, which is not the case, as mining attracts migrant job-seekers whose primary objective is

employment rather than long-term commitment. The narrow definition adopted by business places a restriction on its responsibilities to communities; it limits risks, claims, and what it should deliver (McEwan *et al.*, 2017; Utting, 2005). The definition of communities is closely linked to the notion of stakeholders. Thus, not every single citizen is perceived as a community, and thus holding a right to benefit from development. Only those affected by or affecting business activities are considered (Sharp, 2006). Blowfield and Frynas (2005) contest the legality and morality of the definition of stakeholder, suggesting that it allows firms to recognise as stakeholders whom they want to, and that firms will relate with them in the manner they deem appropriate.

At the heart of defining the community lies the question of distribution of resources. Being recognised as a host community is synonymous with an acknowledgement of developmental responsibility by the mine. There is therefore a need to re-think the definition of ‘community’ because of (a) its potential to induce conflicts arising from competing communities over resources and benefits distribution, (b) its impact on the company’s design and execution of community-based projects, and (c) the impact on company–community interactions (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012:12). The difficulties inherent in defining and identifying communities highlights the complexity of translating CSR into practice (McLennan & Banks, 2019:117).

Stakeholder engagement through CSR offers a long-term strategic investment (Sajko *et al.*, 2021:958). Investment in CSR contributes to organisational resilience by creating interdependencies and strengthening relationships between the firm and its stakeholders, and gives rise to greater flexibility, because firms with broad stakeholder engagement gain access to diverse and distinctive points of view, thereby increasing its possible adjustments to external changes (DesJardine *et al.*, 2019:1455). Organizational resilience manifests through organizational outcomes in a generalized environmental disturbance—namely, severity of loss, which captures the stability dimension of resilience, and time to recovery, which captures the flexibility dimension (DesJardine *et al.*, 2019:1455). Stability is the ability of the firm to preserve its key organisational attributes, such as its core functions and structure, in the face of disturbances (Weick *et al.*, 2008:35).

CSR fosters a firm’s ability to absorb external disturbances by creating “interdependencies between the organisational system and the social and natural systems in which the organization is embedded” (DesJardine *et al.*, 2019:1438). These interdependencies give rise to CSR programmes being more steadily anchored in their environment. Firms with high CSR

investment in the period before a systemic shock are more likely to exhibit greater stability immediately after the shock, because they are strongly embedded in their environment and have deeper relationships with their stakeholders (Sajko *et al.*, 2021:965).

The ability of actors in a system to maintain a basic structure and resilience determines the adaptive capacity of the system (Sajko *et al.*, 2021; Whiteman *et al.*, 2004). Mining communities must also manage challenges associated with employment and economic downswings (Wasylycia-Leis *et al.*, 2014:482). Mining towns with little economic diversification cannot be considered economically or socially secure in the long term. When the resource disappears, so does the primary means of wealth and well-being (Wasylycia-Leis *et al.*, 2014:482). Due to the many social and environmental challenges associated with mineral extraction, sustainability in the mining sector is of paramount importance (Gilberthorpe & Banks, 2012:1517). Mining governance and adaptive capacity can be strengthened if the local-level institutions are able to effectively manage social disturbances and uncertainty (Wasylycia-Leis *et al.*, 2014:493). Adjusting can be daunting for organisations with limited human, financial, and local and external political support, especially if they are not proactive (Asuah & Ankoye, 2016:87).

CSR must be understood within the wider dynamics of business and industry associations, social networks, and state regulations within which it is implemented (Brammer *et al.*, 2012). In other words, the influences of mining sector associations and the local context within which CSR is practised must be considered. Therefore, beyond building organisational resilience, there is a need to consider the implications of building social and ecological resilience (Williams *et al.*, 2017:877). Companies are expected to employ CSR activities with a long-term horizon in mind, as opposed to more transient and incremental activities that are more likely to be withdrawn (Bansal *et al.*, 2015:70; Hilson, 2011).

For CSR by the mining sector to contribute to resilient communities, it ought to be conceived based on a strategic objective, with practices that are deeply embedded in organisational processes. Sustainable CSR is an outcome of a series of management behaviours and decisions (Folke *et al.*, 2021). Mining companies ought to gain an understanding of the intricacies surrounding of their host community as a strategic stakeholder (Msosa, 2019:29). As such, the community's concerns and expectations of what CSR programmes should entail must be incorporated when programmes are planned (Msosa, 2019:29). It is imperative that mining companies set up clear strategies and plans to ensure that community needs are incorporated

into CSR programmes (Msosa, 2019:29). Engaging in strategic CSR initiatives will give rise to pro-active communities capable of ultimately helping themselves (Asuah & Ankoye, 2016:88). The aim is to build their resilience, which includes adaptation, learning, and self-organisation in addition to the ability to persist through disturbances (Folke *et al.*, 2021). This is necessary to ensure that such programmes deliver a lasting beneficial impact that harnesses the talent and creative potential in the process of community empowerment. Working with community members as stakeholders results in the creation of a sense of affiliation between the community and the firm (Cezarino *et al.*, 2022).

The next section discusses Africa's development based on its natural resources.

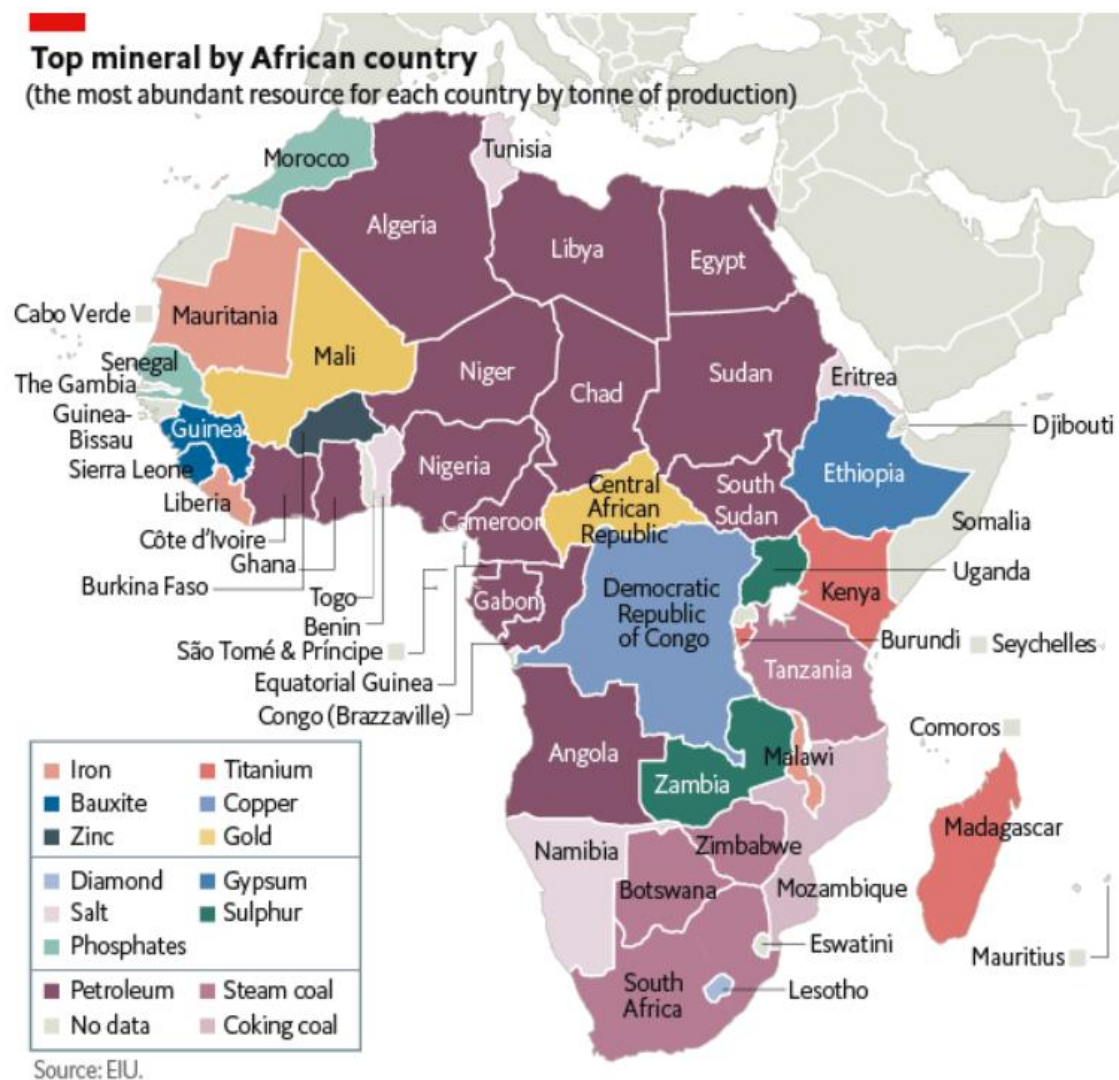
2.8 AFRICA'S NATURAL-RESOURCE-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Natural resources play a significant role in the economies of developing countries, and natural-resource-based economic activities continue to expand in both developing and developed countries (Pietrobelli *et al.*, 2018). Sub-Saharan Africa is home to the most resource-rich countries in the world, many of which are endowed with large oil, gas, and mineral deposits. It is estimated that, by 2050, the number of oil and gas exporting countries in this region will be almost double, from 12 to 22 (Mabrey, 2016). According to the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) (2023), nearly 70 countries are dependant primarily on mining. Sadly, most of those countries are low-income developing countries. The African Development Bank estimates that natural resources will contribute more than US\$30 billion per year in government revenue up to 2035 in sub-Saharan Africa (Mabrey, 2016).

Mining's contribution to government revenues in low- and middle-income countries can be significant, but is often volatile (Ericsson & Löf, 2019:226). When minerals and metals are monetised, the revenue is shared between four main stakeholders, namely suppliers, employees, government, and shareholders or investors (Ericsson & Löf, 2019:243). At the individual level, gaining employment in mining in the formal sector offers greater livelihood security than the informal sector, where jobs are generally temporary (Gilberthorpe & Banks, 2012:1522). However, the wealth generated by the formal sector, especially in Africa, appears to have benefitted only the mines and their host governments (Adeola & Adeola, 2019:44). How the benefits trickle down to host communities remains unclear, as little evidence is available to support such flows. Mining companies pocket significant profits while politicians and the elites entrench their political and, by extension, economic power, which power is then

used for self-serving purposes, while the communities where these resources are extracted bear the brunt of the effects of these operations (Adeola & Adeola, 2019:44). South Africa's wealth of natural resources is illustrated in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4: Africa's mineral resources



Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (n.d.)

Between the years 2009 and 2018, the South African government received R160 billion in direct tax revenues while community investments over the same period amounted to only 0.9% of this figure (Adeola & Adeola, 2019; Rutledge, 2019:36). The skewed beneficiation from the mining resources explains the inconsistency of being rich in natural resources yet poor and underdeveloped (Munyai, 2020:1). CSR represents a vehicle through which mineral wealth can

trickle down to communities. However, this ideal is yet to be realised in developing countries. As long as CSR is driven from a developed-country perspective (Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011), these initiatives will only be implemented to pacify host communities. Mining could make a significant contribution to community development, and CSR initiatives should contribute to ensuring that communities are able to withstand and recover from external shocks such as mine closures, environmental variability, and social, economic, and political upheaval (Asuah & Ankoye, 2016:81). To this end, these communities' resilience and capacity to adapt have to be enhanced.

Natural-resource-driven development in Africa has not led to economic growth that significantly improved the welfare of the citizens of these countries (Mabrey, 2016). Furthermore, when measured in economic terms, mining contributions are enormous; however, the adverse and sometimes irreparable environmental impact is a major concern (Dube & Maroun, 2017:23; Kinnunen & Kaksonen, 2019; Marimuthu *et al.*, 2021). Mining operations have caused devastation and degradation, and often mines often abandon the site after having depleted the resources, which has led to the mining industry being labelled a curse (Marfo *et al.*, 2016:182) or a 'footprint industry' (Weber-Fahr, 2002).

The role of mining companies in developing countries is crucial, first, because of the remote areas in which these companies tend to operate, but also because of the level of poverty in these communities. Community-based CSR emerged as the best tools for achieving project sustainability (Oino *et al.*, 2015:761). Community-based approaches recognise the resilience, capacities, skills, and resources of the people concerned, and build on these to deliver solutions that support the community's own goals (Oino *et al.*, 2015:761). This approach entails giving these communities access to information, training in operations and maintenance, and control over funds in setting up sustainable projects (Oino *et al.*, 2015:761). Sustainability could be realised when communities have power and control over decision-making and governance processes, and avoids the widespread phenomenon of 'hollow participation' (McCarthy & Muthuri, 2018). It is inevitable that the life of a mine will end, and it is thus important to build adaptive capacity while the mine is in operation (Steiner & Markantoni, 2014:81), which entails building community resilience and enhancing the community's ability to respond to change (Asuah & Ankoye, 2016:80).

Banks *et al.* (2016:247) contend that CSR initiatives that are developmentally focused are shaped not only by the structures, and effects of corporations working within neoliberal

environments such as legislation, but also by the relational effects with communities that are the targets of CSR activities. In other words, through community-based CSR, companies ought to be building long-term relationships and delivering a positive and sustainable impact. Sustainability in CSR is one of the most critical challenges for corporates, who have spent billions on communities in attempts to enhance their living situation (Oino *et al.*, 2015). There is little evidence of the true impact of funded programmes on the lives of the poor in the long term. One of the most critical considerations is the extent to which CSR projects are sustainable upon exit of the donors (Oino *et al.*, 2015:757). Sustainability determines the success of such projects, and can be realised if change agents adopt community-based approaches that embrace the participation and involvement of the communities in their planning, designing, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (Oino *et al.*, 2015:761).

CSR has been conceptualised as a tool for companies to gain a competitive advantage whilst meeting the social demand for corporate ethics and accountability (Merino & Valor, 2011). Unfortunately, the approach to community development tends to be philanthropical in nature, with companies treating communities as “objects of development as opposed to agents of their own development” (Muthuri *et al.*, 2012:364). Muthuri (2008) criticizes models of community involvement in developing countries for their corporate-centric stance that conceives corporations as key agents of development who take advantage of ‘institutional voids’.

There is a growing expectation that mining companies, through their CSR initiatives, will ensure lasting benefits for local communities, including economic development (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:218). CSR practices by mining companies in developing countries is geared towards resolving social challenges, such as human capital development, sport development (Abugre & Anlesinya, 2019:5) and poverty reduction (Muthuri, 2012; Siyobi, 2015). Developmental CSR includes activities that are designed to promote diversification of local economies in support of non-mining-related sectors, such as agriculture and food, and local business initiatives (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:218).

The mining sector is regarded as a beacon of hope in the broader economic development agenda (Siyobi, 2015), especially in Africa, which is richly endowed with natural resources. The view that mining companies can and should play a more intentional role in development has thus become embedded in mainstream political and economic thought (Banks *et al.*, 2016:248). The mining sector could make a meaningful impact by collaborating with other actors to take

collective action to tackle problems that affected communities are experiencing, who lack the resources, capacity, infrastructure, and leadership to develop (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2016).

The extent to which the CSR initiatives have contributed to community development remains contested. CSR initiatives by MNCs in emerging economies, especially in Africa, have resulted in mixed social impact outcomes (Malan, 2005:50). MNCs have been implicated in scandals related to corruption, exploitation of labour, and destruction of the environment (Cezarino *et al.*, 2022; Malan, 2005:50), and their presence has had unintended negative consequences for communities, which have led to conflict and division in these communities (Akpan, 2006). Consequently, the operations of mining companies are often rejected by the public and sometimes met with hostility. CSR is often characterised by economic and infrastructure development in a transactional approach, whereby company resources are channelled to assist a specific community (Gold *et al.*, 2018:6). The transactional approach fails to address the root cause of poverty and underdevelopment and, moreover, fails to recognise communities as complex systems. In this approach, CSR typically takes the form of ad hoc projects (Visser & Tolhurst, 2010:269) initiated for purposes of risk management and reputational benefits, rather than for moral reasons (Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011:474).

Gilberthorpe and Banks (2012) argue that the disjuncture between what CSR stands for and how it is perceived by communities arises from the fact that CSR initiatives are often built on values that differ from the local understanding of development and communities' desire for connection and relationships. Communities expect a relationship with and connection to the business that goes beyond once-off funding. CSR programmes, however, are centred on business-orientated objectives that are not fully integrated with broader country-level development plans (Siyobi, 2015:1). Businesses pursue short-term gains at the expense of affected communities. Businesses ought to realise that, in practising CSR, there is no one size that fits all (Hohnen & Potts, 2007), and it is important that CSR management ensure the organisation remains relevant to its host communities.

CSR practices in developing countries often fail to fulfil developmental ambitions (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:212). The many challenges are a result of three factors: a lack of co-ordination and co-operation with relevant stakeholders; weak alignment with national, provincial and local policy in terms of development priorities; and poor monitoring and evaluation of projects (Siyobi, 2015:3). Companies implement CSR projects because they are required to do so, and not with an intention to be impactful and developmental. Current CSR practices are unsuitable for

effectively addressing South Africa's social problems and supporting the objectives of socio-economic development (Meyersfeld, 2017:39), which is why their long-term impact has been negligible and not sustainable beyond the funding period (Oino *et al.*, 2015:758). These effects are exacerbated by affected communities viewing CSR initiatives as patronising and paternalistic with regard to their ability to identify their own needs and priorities (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:221). Consequently, CSR has not had a substantial impact on poverty reduction, environmental management, and the overall welfare of these societies (Mutti *et al.*, 2012:221).

To have real impact on the community, locally conceived CSR projects that are centred on these communities are necessary (McLennan & Banks, 2019:117), which requires developing relationships of trust focused on creating long-term value for communities, rather than immediate profit or need (Awuah *et al.*, 2021:3). Gold *et al.* (2018:6) call for an integrated relational approach to CSR implementation, embedded in corporate–community interactions, following a systems approach where actors are interlinked and engage in collective action to improve the socio-economic, ecological, human, political, and cultural capital of these communities.

The next section delves into the details of CSR initiatives of mines in South Africa.

2.9 CSR IN MINING COMPANIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

CSR literature identifies three main drivers of CSR initiatives and practices (Gond *et al.*, 2011). The first is government regulations and policies, which implies that companies are forced undertake such initiatives (Raufflet *et al.*, 2014). The second is voluntary, i.e., non-government-led, CSR initiatives that are championed by industry associations and activists (Husted & de Jesus Salazar, 2006). The third is initiatives that originate from companies aimed at creating competitive advantage for the business (Husted & de Jesus Salazar, 2006). CSR in South Africa's mining sector has largely been influenced by legislative developments as government's attempt to regulate and incentivise companies to enhance previously disadvantaged groups' access to economic opportunities (Reddy & Hamann, 2018:27-28).

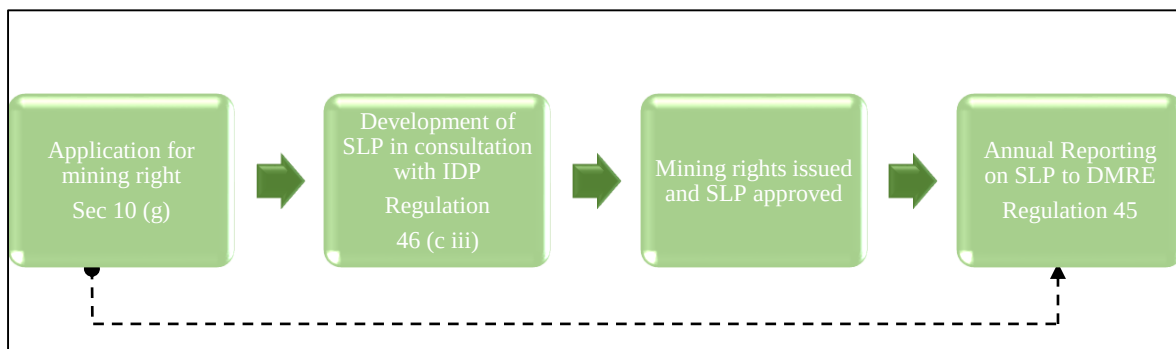
The mining sector has been the bedrock of the South African economy since minerals were first discovered in the country in 1886. To redress the unequal distribution of social and economic opportunities and reintegrate into the global economy, South Africa promulgated the Constitution (1996), which upholds the principle of social justice for all with a special emphasis

on the needs of the most disadvantaged. South Africa's Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) No. 28 of 2002 has as aim "to make provision for equitable access to and sustainable development of the nation's mineral resources". The MPRDA (RSA, 2002) stipulates that South Africa's mineral and petroleum resources belong to the nation, and that the state is the custodian of these resources. The MPRDA (RSA, 2002) also recognises the need to promote local and rural development and the social upliftment of communities affected by mining. The MPRDA (RSA, 2002) further notes that the state holds the power to award mining rights to companies, and that mining companies are required to develop social and labour plans (SLPs) as a pre-requisite to obtaining mining and production rights. The MPRDA (RSA, 2002) grants the state the power to influence and direct companies' practices, to ensure that the exploitation of mineral resources is to the benefit of all members of society.

The MPRDA (RSA, 2000) provides that SLPs have to include comprehensive human resource development programmes, mine community development plan, housing and living conditions plan, and employment equity plans, and have to indicate the processes to be employed to save jobs and manage downscaling and/or closure. In other words, mining licence holders should contribute towards the socio-economic development of the areas in which they are operating and the areas from which the majority of the workforce is sourced. Mining companies are legislated via the Mining Charter III (RSA, 2018) to contribute a percentage of the mine's net profit after tax to stimulating socio-economic development of mine host communities. Through the MRDPA (RSA, 2000), CSR was shifted from a voluntary practice to a legal responsibility, of which SLPs form a part in South Africa.

Mining companies have to report annually to the DMRE on the performance of their SLPs (RSA, 2002). In developing an SLP, the mine has to ensure alignment with the local authority's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which spells out the priorities of the local authority, to ensure alignment between the two stakeholders in CSR implementation (RSA, 2002). Van der Watt and Marais (2021) state that the overarching aim of the MPRDA (RSA, 2002) is to bring benefits of mining operations to affected communities through collaboration between local government and mining companies. The flow of the process of SLP development between mining companies and municipalities is presented in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: Process flow of SLP development



Source: Source: Created by author

Once projects have been agreed to, the mine lodges the SLP with the DMRE, and, upon acceptance, it becomes legally binding, and the mine has to report to DMRE on investments made in the community. Other than adhering to this legislation, mining companies also engage in philanthropic efforts through discretionary participation in a variety of initiatives in the form of gifts, monetary donations, volunteerism, and community development initiatives (Carroll, 2016:4). These, collectively, are commonly referred to as ‘corporate social investment’, which is set apart from SLP projects due to their discretionary nature.

Despite the mining sector’s positive contributions to South Africa’s economic growth, it continues to be viewed with scepticism, largely for its connection to apartheid policies (Andrews *et al.*, 2022). The mining sector was instrumental in the violation of human and surface land rights, which limited the use of such land for agricultural purposes and caused the destruction of environmentally sensitive communal and tribal areas. Natural resources were exploited without paying attention to social and environmental impacts or sustainable practices (Andrews *et al.*, 2022). As a result, there is a deep sense of mistrust between mining companies and affected communities, which is further exacerbated by negative views of past colonialism.

South Africa’s mining context is known for volatility and conflict (Matebesi & Marais, 2018:372), and the country has seen an escalation in community mine protests due to unfulfilled promises (Fraser, 2019:16). While government has to strive to attract investment to promote economic development and reap the benefits of mining, government policies must account for liabilities and the negative impacts of mining on local communities and the environment (Andrews *et al.*, 2022).

Mining companies have increasingly become directly involved in the implementation of social development programmes through CSR (Plagerson & Stuart, 2018), building clinics, roads, and schools and investing in water- and sewer projects. However, the provision of these services also presents problems, as individuals located in close proximity to the mine gain access to social infrastructure that others do not enjoy. As a result, the implementation of CSR in communities, if not managed well, could result in violence and division in these communities. In the case of Niger Delta, the lack of community-wide development escalated to the point where people became militant, regularly sabotaging oil pipes and hijacking workers to extort money from the company (Hilson, 2011).

The presence of a mine in a community attracts hopeful job-seekers who migrate to mining towns and overwhelm the local authority that is responsible for services. This indicates the need to re-think the implications of CSR initiatives in addressing the most basic services and infrastructure, and to address these areas (Segerstedt & Abrahamsson, 2019:611).

2.10 CHALLENGES IN ENGAGING HOST COMMUNITIES IN CSR

Undertaking community-based CSR projects is fraught with complications, challenges, and potential pitfalls. A study on Newmont Mining Corporation in Ghana found that community projects were marked by disagreements on which projects to initiate (Awuah *et al.*, 2021:9). This is not surprising, given the plethora of competing needs for funding and high levels of poverty and inequality (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016), particularly in developing countries (Hamidu *et al.*, 2016:698). Agreeing on projects has become a contested terrain. As CSR gains momentum in developing countries, some of the contestations continue throughout project implementation, with some rendering projects unmanageable. Social legislation that is not comprehensive and poorly enforced is another contributing factor to CSR projects not being successful (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016).

Companies lacking context-specific experience resort to implementing short-lived project successes. Communities also perceive community-based projects as work, to the degree that participation in such projects erodes or becomes conditioned on payment, placing a heavy burden on the company, with the community becoming increasingly dependent on the company (Awuah *et al.*, 2021:9). This is, in part, due to mining often taking place in peripheral communities where basic infrastructure like reliable electricity, running water, and suitable

roadways are lacking (Cezarino *et al.*, 2022). As a result, communities tend to depend on companies to meet the basic needs that government should have addressed.

Companies taking a monocausal view in devising CSR initiatives and favouring shareholders' interests do not contribute to the long-term development of mining communities (Mion & Adau, 2020:1). Companies therefore need to investigate the context thoroughly and involve the affected communities in decision-making regarding CSR. Idemudia and Ite (2006) in their study on the oil industry in the Niger Delta reveal that there are structural and institutional factors that makes community participation in the decision-making process difficult. The maturation of CSR and related legislation has given rise to awareness and resultant pressure (Gond *et al.*, 2011), with some communities demanding economic development to the extent of forcing mine closures, indicating challenges in managing such projects (Franks *et al.*, 2014).

Companies must employ management measures that enable the delivery of long-term impact for CSR to be viewed as uplifting communities, and current management approaches have not yielded the desired impact (Akpan, 2006; McLennan & Banks, 2019; Muthuri *et al.*, 2012). Despite a growing body of extant literature in this domain, CSR theory and practice in the economic and social environments of sub-Saharan Africa are still emerging, and require further exploration (Abugre, 2014; Julian & Ofori-dankwa, 2013).

Mining companies in South Africa play an important role in the context of exporting raw materials however, this sector has shown limited evidence of sustainable community impact through CSR initiatives. This, therefore, indicates a need for a framework for successful and sustainable community development by South African coal mines.

2.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter examined the literature on the various theories and facets of CSR practices, with a focus on developing countries. CSR as practised by mining companies remains a contested topic, particularly in developing countries. The demand for CSR to contribute to community development requires an informed and relevant strategy. The socio-economic conditions of developing countries have rendered the nature of CSR initiatives largely philanthropic, with a short-term focus on education, health, and sports, while the SCR discourse highlights the importance of sustainable community development. CSR initiatives lack a localised guiding framework that is sensitive to legislative and governance requirements and takes into

consideration the social and cultural norms of affected communities. Too often, CSR programmes are centred on business-orientated objectives. Using systems theory as a theoretical lens, the aim of this study was to develop a framework to guide coal mines in South Africa in the development and implementation of sustainable CSR projects.

The next chapter presents the study's research philosophy, design, and methodology.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY, APPROACH, AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the methodology followed in conducting the current study to achieve its objective. The chapter discusses the research philosophy, the approach to analysis and theory development, the research strategy, the methodological choice, the time horizon, the population and sampling, and the gathering and analysis of the data. This is followed by a discussion of the strategies to enhance the trustworthiness and an overview of the ethical considerations pertinent to the study. The next section discusses the research philosophy that underpinned the study.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

A research philosophy is a system of beliefs and philosophical assumptions that reflect the researcher's worldview. The research philosophy, referred to as a 'research paradigm' by Creswell (2014), informs the researcher's choice of research approach and methodology (Young & Collin, 2004). A research paradigm consists of ontology and epistemology. Those that underpinned the current study are discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.2.1 Ontology

A research ontology refers to the nature of reality (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:124; Saunders *et al.*, 2016) that is, "what is" or the study of being (Crotty, 1989:10). As shown in Figure 3.6, the current study was underpinned by an interpretive-constructivist ontology. Interpretivism holds that reality is subjective; thus, it differs from person to person, based on their perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:110). The interpretivist ontology holds that the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of individuals who are participating in it (Andrews, 2012:40; Cohen *et al.*, 2007:19). These standpoints are influenced by individuals' historical and cultural contexts (Creswell, 2013:8).

The interpretivist ontology stands in sharp contrast to positivism, which holds that reality exists independently of the thing being studied, and that true knowledge can only be obtained through observation and experimentation. Such researchers normally employ a quantitative approach to gather empirical knowledge (Rahi, 2017:2). This ontology was considered not appropriate for the current study, as it is not able to capture the nuances and contexts present in the social

world. The interpretivist ontology was considered appropriate for the current study, as the aim was to gather the subjective interpretations of different stakeholders in the CRS initiatives of a mining company. In following an interpretive ontology, the current researcher was open to the different perceptions and meanings participants attached to the phenomenon under study.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Research epistemology refers to the investigation or study of the origin, structure, methods and validity of knowledge (Runes, 1983). The current study followed a interpretivist epistemology, which holds that knowledge is socially constructed (Young & Collin, 2004:376). In following a constructivist epistemology, the researcher accepts as true the knowledge acquired and created by the subjects under study (Scotland, 2012:9). In other words, the researcher rejects the notion of that objective truth is waiting to be discovered, but, rather, that truth and meaning come into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of our world. Knowledge is not passive, but active, as the mind form abstractions from experiences (Schwandt, 1994:125). The constructivist researcher further believes that true knowledge can only be obtained through deep interpretation of the subject (Rahi, 2017:2).

This epistemological position assumes that different individuals construct different meanings of the same object or phenomenon. How individuals engage with and understand their world is based on their cultural, historical, and social perspectives, and, thus, meaning arises through interactions within a human community or context (Crotty, 1989; Moon & Blackman, 2014:1172).

3.3 APPROACH TO THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Saunders *et al.* (2016) identify three main approaches to theory development, namely inductive, deductive, and abductive. Deductive research logic refers to reasoning moving from the general to the specific, and is usually applied in theory testing using a hypothesis (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:9). Abductive reasoning is a form of inference based on observations of clues (Young & Collin, 2004). In the inductive approach, detailed data are analysed to derive concepts, themes, or a model (Frieze *et al.*, 2018; Thomas, 2006:238). Conclusions are thus derived from the data; the researcher does not try to fit the data to a pre-existing hypothesis or coding frame (Frieze *et al.*, 2018; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:145).

The current researcher followed an inductive approach, which is aligned with the interpretivist–constructivist paradigm (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). The inductive approach enabled the current researcher to drawing conclusions that are supported by raw data, as the researcher had the liberty to engage with the data freely and form theory after the data had been analysed (see Flick, 2013). The inductive approach to theory development resonates with the qualitative research approach, in that the absence of theory informing the research reduces the potential for researcher bias in gathering and analysing the data (Bryman *et al.*, 2014).

3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

Research can follow a quantitative approach, in which numerical data are gathered and analysed statistically, or a qualitative approach, in which data are gathered in the form of texts, observations and visuals, and analysed using qualitative analysis methods such as thematic analysis. The aim in quantitative research is to generalise the results to the study population, which qualitative findings may only offer transferability to similar contexts (Holliday, 2016:13; Ishak *et al.*, 2014). In mixed-methods research, the two approaches are combined in one study (Anney, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The main differences between the quantitative and qualitative approaches are summarised in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Differences between qualitative and quantitative approach

Quantitative	Qualitative
Numbers and measurements	Words and description
Researcher’s viewpoint	Participant’s viewpoint
Researcher detached from subjects	Researcher involved with participants
Testing theory and concepts	Theory and concepts emergent from data
Static image of social reality	Interconnected process between actors
Structured data collection	Flexible investigation
Generalisation to the population	Understanding of the context
Hard, reliable data	Rich, deep thick data
Macro: large scale patterns	Micro: small scale explanations
Behaviour of people	Meaning of action
Artificial settings	Natural settings

Source: Bryman *et al.* (2014:51)

In using the qualitative approach, the researcher presents anecdotal descriptions (Anney, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) to answer ‘what, how, and why?’ questions (Korstjens & Moser, 2017:275), rather than questions related to quantity. According to Creswell and Poth (2018:46), qualitative research is appropriate when: the researcher has a desire to empower individuals; a

literary style of reporting is appropriate; the context of the study participants is important in addressing the research problem; the researcher aims to develop theory to address gaps in understanding; and a detailed understanding of a complex issue is needed.

Creswell and Creswell (2018:183) note that, in qualitative research, the researcher's role is to interpret the data, which requires intensive interaction with the study participants in order to gain a detailed understanding of and insights into their viewpoints and perceptions. The aim is to explore, describe, and explain people's subjective experiences and meaning-making processes (Leavy, 2017:9). The qualitative approach enables the researcher to capture rich, in-depth data, and was considered suitable because the current research wanted to capture stakeholders' views of CSR within the environment in which it is practised, together with information on their historical, social, and cultural backgrounds (see Moser & Korstjens, 2017:271). The CSR phenomenon cannot be investigated in depth outside the realms of its practice or the people affected by it, and adopting a quantitative approach would have been restrictive, as such studies rely on numerical data gathered using pre-determined categories of information and response options (Creswell & Poth, 2018:45).

In summary, the current study followed a qualitative research approach, which entailed a naturalistic inquiry into subjects in their natural setting to gain an understanding of and interpret their subjective perceptions of and the meanings they attach to CSR (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Krefling, 1991), aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the individuals' views, with consideration of their social, cultural, historical, and individual contexts (see Korstjens & Moser, 2017:275).

The subsequent section discusses the study's research design.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the 'plan' or strategy that is followed in conducting a study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:313). Research designs, according to Sahu (2013:27), vary depending on the type of research, and could be exploratory, descriptive, or aimed at testing hypotheses. The current study followed an exploratory and descriptive multiple case study design. Exploratory research is aimed at determining the exact nature of the problem under study, while descriptive research is aimed at describing the population and/or phenomenon under study (Zainal, 2007). A case study, according to Yin (2014:13), is a study of "a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not

clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context”. What distinguishes a case study from other designs is the focus on understanding a bounded situation or system (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:110). Thus, case studies, whether of a single case or multiple cases, are characterised by the scope of the case, not a particular method (Thomas, 2015:21).

According to Yin (2014), case studies are useful to explain presumed causal links in real-world interventions that are too complex for survey- or experimental methods; describe an intervention and its real-world context; illustrate certain topics within an evaluation; and elucidate an intervention with no clear, single set of outcomes. Yin (2002) further notes that cases are selected because of the uniqueness of each case. The current study was a multiple-case study, as the researcher was interested in examining more than one case of CSR implementation by coal mines in order to generate richer data. A multiple-case study design affords the researcher an opportunity to delve deeper and gain a better understanding of the subject in different contexts (Stake, 1995:16).

According to Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001) case studies have strengths and limitations, which are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Strengths and limitations of case studies

Strengths of case studies	Limitations of case studies
Case studies aid understanding of complex inter-relationships.	There is too much data for easy analysis.
Case studies are grounded in lived reality.	They are very expensive if attempted on a large scale.
Case studies facilitate the exploration of the unexpected and unusual.	The complexity examined is difficult to represent simply.
Multiple case studies can enable researchers to focus on the significance of the idiosyncratic.	They do not lend themselves to numerical representation.
Case studies can show the processes involved in causal relationships.	The findings are not generalisable.

Case studies can facilitate rich conceptual/theoretical development.	They are strongest when researcher expertise and intuition are maximised, but this raises doubts about objectivity.
	They are easy to dismiss by those who do not like the messages that they contain.
	They cannot answer a large number of research questions.

Source: Adapted from Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001)

The subsequent sections discuss the populations and the sampling technique applied in selecting cases and participants.

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A population consists of all people or items of interest to a researcher (Rahi, 2017:3). As it is seldom difficult to study an entire population, researchers use techniques to select a representative segment or subset of the population, which then serves as the sample (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:186).

In the current study, to select the cases and the mine- and municipal participants, the researcher used purposive sampling, also known as ‘deliberate’ or ‘judgement’ sampling (Kothari & Garg, 2019:55), a form of non-probability sampling, which means that not every unit of the population had an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study. The sample is selected based on the researcher’s subjective judgement regarding rich sources of relevant data (Etikan & Bala, 2017:1). Community representatives, who were mainly beneficiaries in the projects and had been involved with the projects, were sampled using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling, also known as ‘accidental sampling’, is a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher identifies participants who are within close proximity to the researcher and/or study area and who are easily accessible (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Convenience sampling was beneficial because participants could be accessed quickly and at low cost (Baltes & Ralph, 2022:4). The limitation of convenience sampling stems from their vulnerability to hidden biases because the researcher does not know how well the sample will represent the

population (Leiner, 2014:4). The researcher augmented the primary data gathered from participants with secondary data gleaned from project documents.

The population and sampling process for each data source are discussed in detail below.

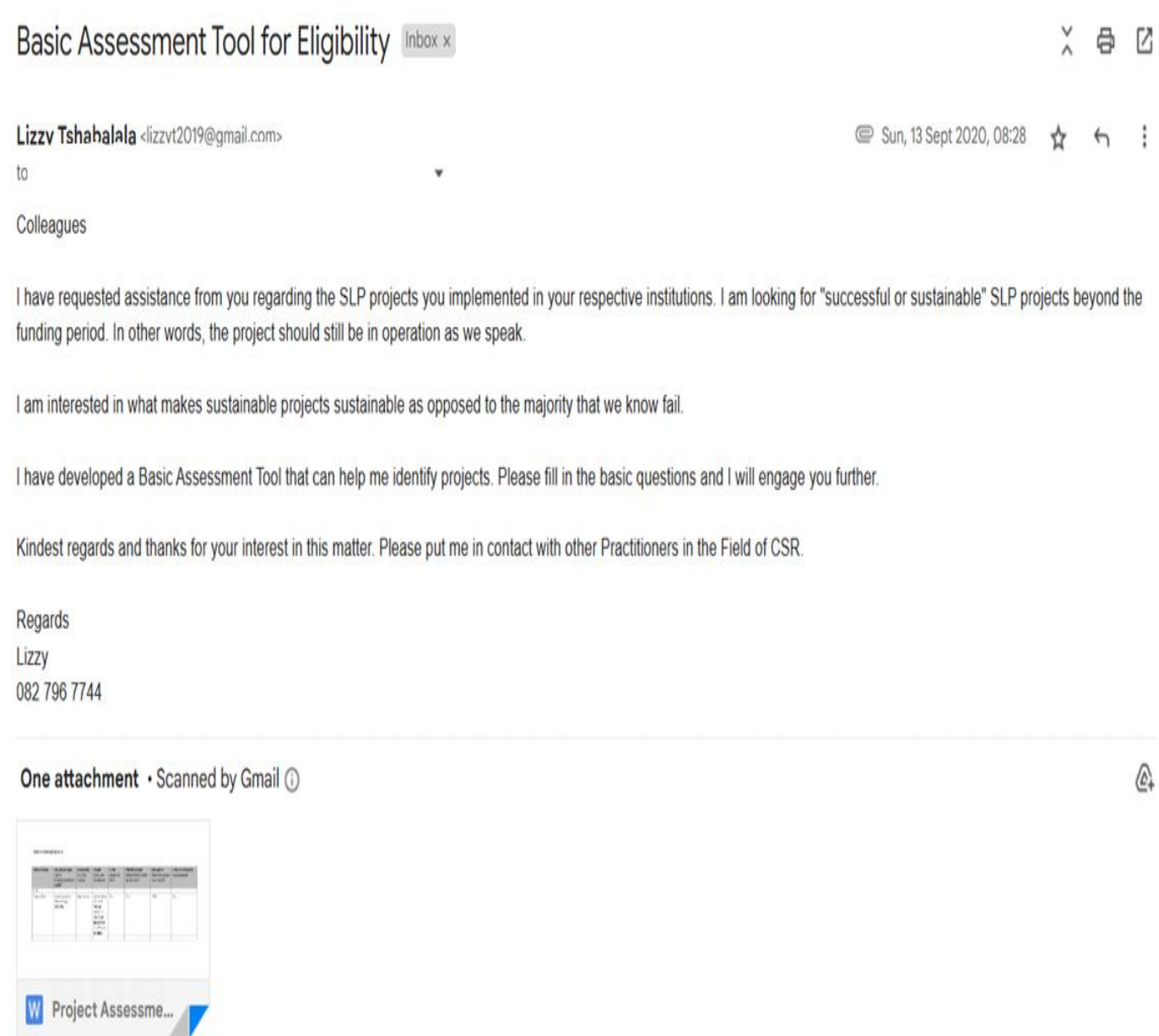
3.6.1 Cases: Population and sampling process

As this study is embedded in South Africa's coal-mining industry, the population of cases consisted of CSR projects of all coal-mining companies in the Steven Tshwete Municipality listed on the JSE, as these companies are required to drive the sustainable development objectives encapsulated in the Mining Charter (RSA, 2018).

The selection of cases was based on the following inclusion- and exclusion criteria: coal-mining companies in Steve Tshwete Municipality that were listed on the JSE and had been in operation for more than eight years and that had developed and implemented an SLP that was still active after the mine had exited the project. The period of eight years in operation was deemed sufficient to consider a mine fully operational. Mining companies in business rescue or in the process of scaling down or closure were excluded, as it was deemed unlikely that these would prioritise CSR programmes.

The search began in the year 2020 through engagements with a Community Development Officer attached to local mines who was known to the researcher. Through word of mouth, the researcher gained access to other practitioners, who helped broaden the search. To help clarify what the researcher was looking for, a project assessment tool was developed and shared with practitioners in the mining companies (Snapshot 3.1).

Snapshot 3.1: Basic project assessment tool



Source: Author's own

Despite numerous telephonic and e-mail follow-ups, the request elicited no responses. That prompted the researcher to undertake an online search on coal-mining companies' CSR projects. The researcher came across an article by the South African Local Government Association (2015) that documented some community development best practice case studies. The projects were centred on the efforts of mining companies in ECD capacity-building projects. The researcher approached Steve Tshwete Municipality, and, during a subsequent discussion, it became evident that two ECD projects fit the requirements of the current study.

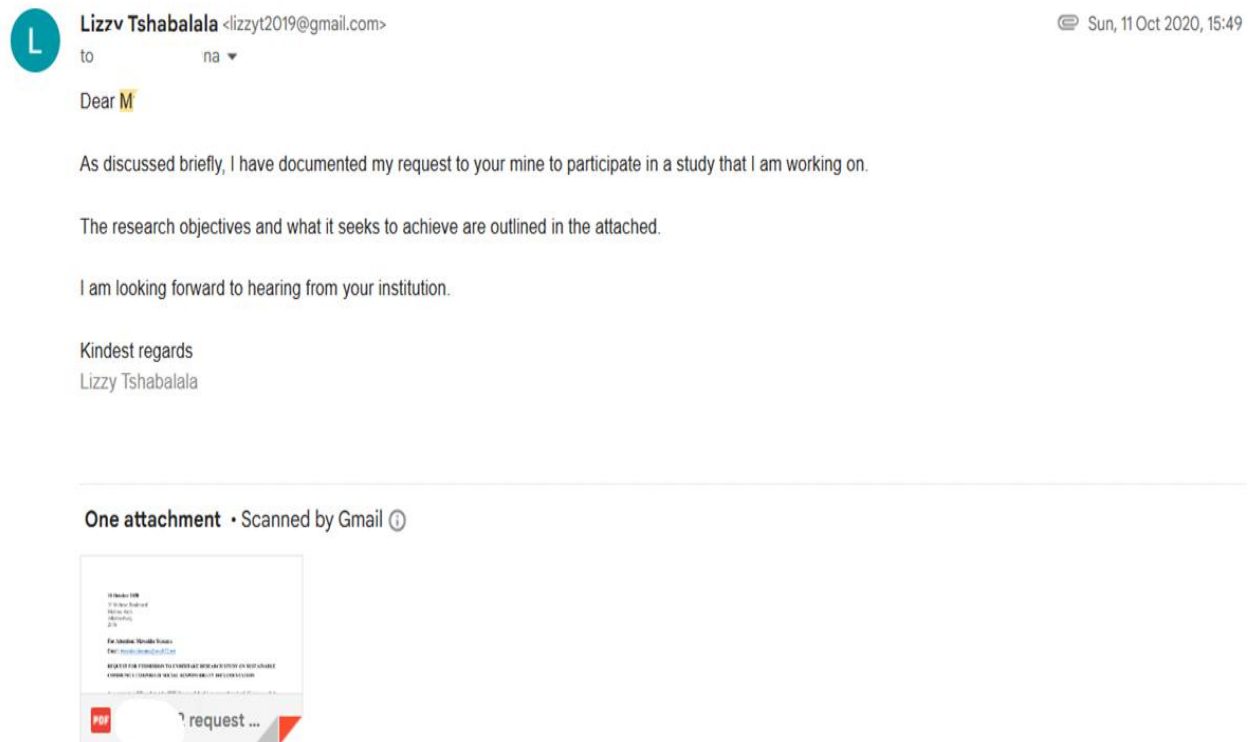
The first project entailed capacity-building of ECD practitioners who were informal ECD practitioners who had been offered training in partnership with the University of South Africa to obtain a formal qualification. These individuals qualified as professional ECD teachers in 2016. The second project, which had been implemented by a different mine, was the construction of an ECD centre. The project had been completed and handed over in 2019. The selection of these two complementary cases presents distinctive lenses on the management of CSR projects.

3.6.2 Participants: Population and sampling process

The population of participants comprised of implementers (municipal staff and mine officials) and community beneficiaries of the two selected cases of ECD projects. The inclusion criteria were prior involvement in and extensive knowledge of the project.

During the discussion of possible cases for the study, the researcher was directed to key role players in CSR implementation in the municipality. The municipality also shared project documents related to the two cases. In the first case, access to Company A was gained through the mine's Community Development Officer, who introduced the researcher to other senior officials of the mine responsible for the CSR project. In the second case, Company B had been taken over by another entity, resulting in numerous changes, which made it difficult for the researcher to locate the responsible person. The researcher finally contacted Company B's head office and requested to undertake the study. Both companies granted the researcher permission to conduct the study. The request for permission to conduct the study that was sent to the companies, together with the ethical clearance form, is shown in Snapshot 3.2.

Snapshot 3.2: Request for permission to conduct the study

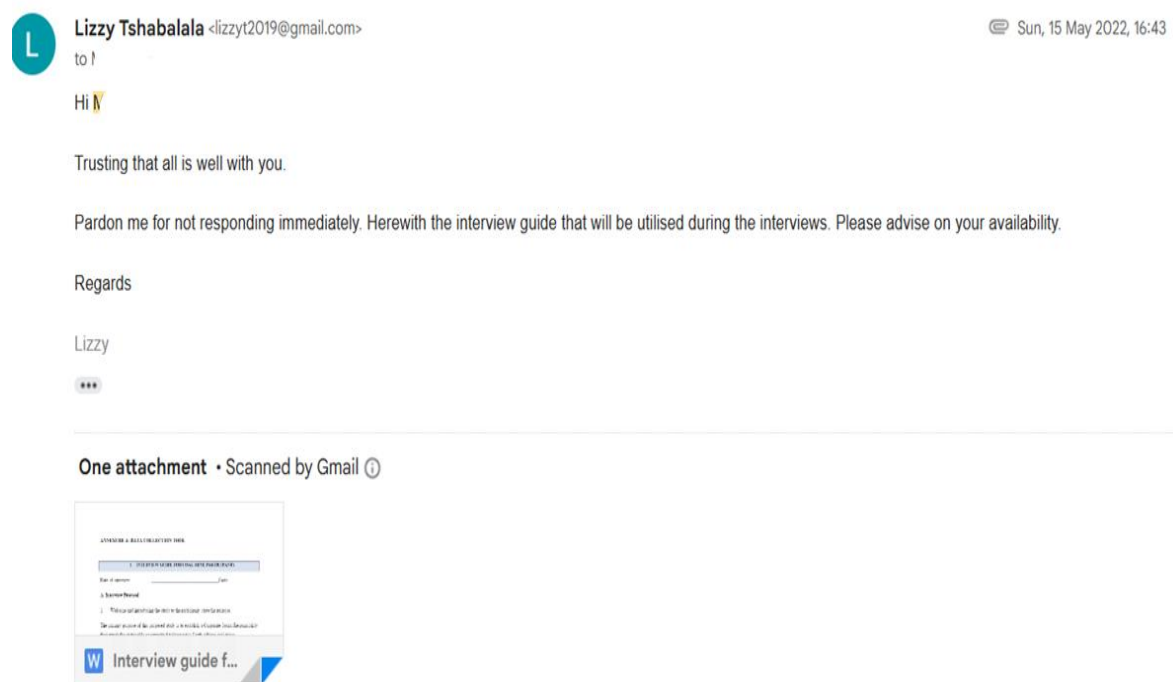


A request to participate in the study was sent via e-mail to prospective participants in both companies. Establishing contact with Company A participants proved to be a daunting task, which delayed the research project for two months. The researcher then returned to the municipality to request further assistance in introducing the study to Company A, and only then did the company agree to an appointment. Access to participants was initially controlled, and only one participant was willing and available to participate in the study, citing that others had no prior knowledge of the project. However, during the interview, the researcher probed further on how CSR was managed in the company, and the responses to this question led to the identification of additional participants.

Concerning Company B, the request for permission to undertake the study was sent to the Chief People Officer in at the organisation's head office in Johannesburg, who shared the contact details of the local office after granting permission to conduct the study. During engagements with the local office, it became apparent that the company had relied on external service providers to run the CSR projects. The gatekeeper was the only staff member with knowledge of the project who had been retained in the new company. The researcher tracked a former employee of the mine and requested their participation in the study, the person readily agreed.

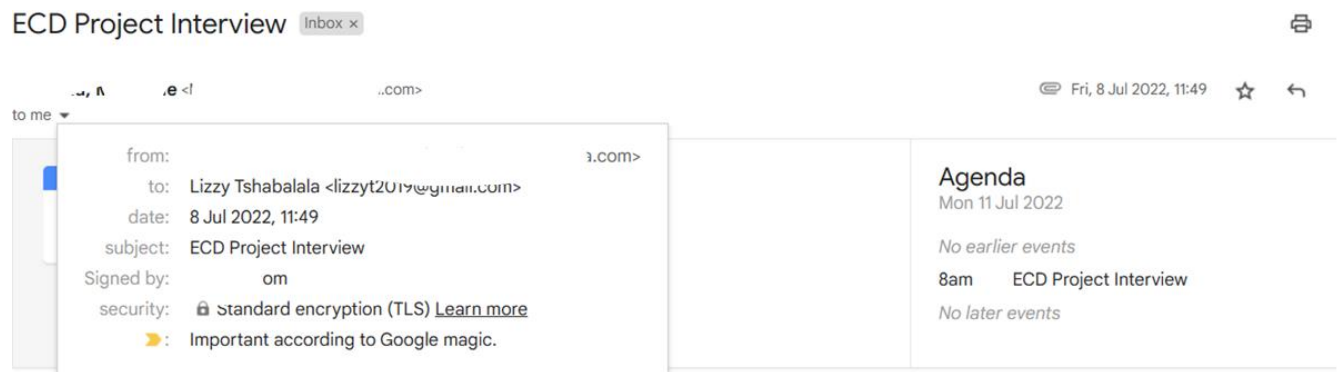
The stakeholder manager was instrumental in securing approval for the study, and helped in identifying other potential interviewees. Potential participants were contacted mostly via e-mails and telephone calls and informed of the study objectives. The participants requested that the interview guide to be used be made available to them, which the researcher sent via e-mail, as shown in Snapshot 3.3, together with an informed consent form.

Snapshot 3.3: Invitation and submission of interview guide



A total of 18 participants agreed to be interviewed, and three agreed to participate in a focus group discussion, yielding a sample of 21 participants. The researcher then proceeded to schedule interviews, as shown in Snapshot 3.4.

Snapshot 3.4: Online interview appointment



Microsoft Teams meeting

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Join with a video conferencing device

[webex.com](https://www.webex.com)

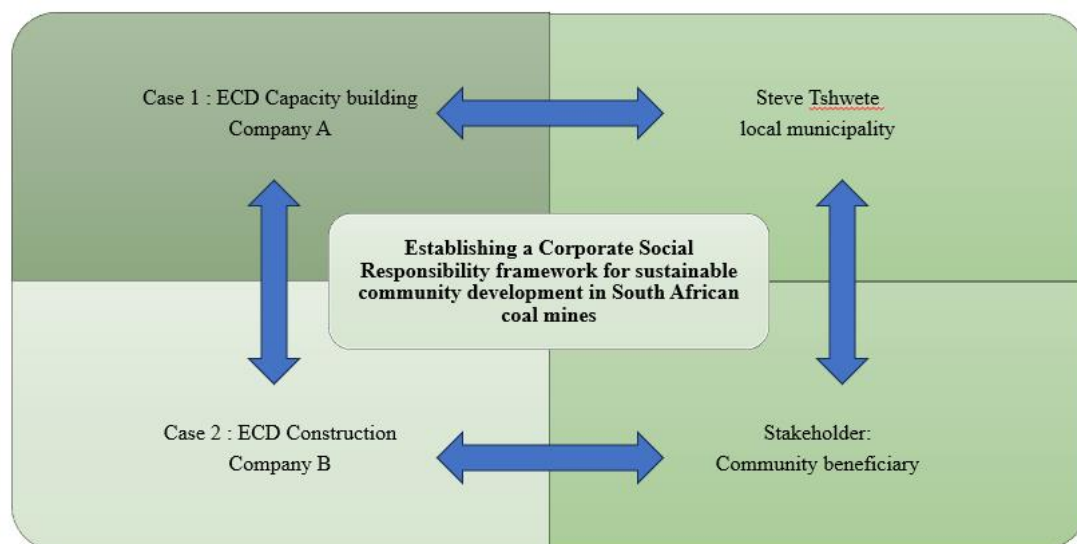
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[Alternate VTC instructions](#)

Figure 3.6 depicts the population from which participants were selected.

Figure 3.6: Population from which study participants were drawn

Source: Generated by the author



3.6.3 Documents: Sampling process

The present researcher selected documents based on contents and detail, as recommended by Patton (2002). Documents are a distinctive source of data, because they exist before the

research is undertaken (Miller & Alvarado, 2005). The selection of documents is based on comprehensiveness, rather than representation (Jordanova, 2000).

The process of document sampling began with the researcher drawing up a list of types of documents of interest, which had been gleaned from the review of the literature. Requests for information were then sent to both Company A and Company B. The participants received documents in the form of newsletter articles, speeches made at the project launch, graduation programmes, photographs, memoranda of understanding, council resolutions, official project correspondence, lists of beneficiaries, and concept documents. The records were entered into an excel register, as illustrated in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: List of documents received

No.	Documents from mines	No.	Documents from municipality
1	Payment voucher	1.	Application for land
2.	Newsletter article	2.	List of beneficiaries
3.	Training institution speech	3.	Concept document
4.	Graduation programme	4.	Approval of ECD lease
5.	Mine priorities	5.	Letter to Company B confirming funding
6.	Company A HR manager speech	6.	Letter to rejoice
		7.	Memorandum of understanding

The documents were helpful in detailing the projects in terms of goals, beneficiaries, what were considered achievements, stakeholders, project initiation, and the processes followed. The records pertained mainly to the projects, and were not strategy documents. Although some of the documents were unsigned, they were accepted as valid, as they were received from the organisations' gatekeepers and were corroborated by other records.

The researcher requested additional documentation, without success, mainly due to the time elapsed since the projects were implemented; that is, in 2016 for Company A and in 2018 for Company B. The documents that could be retrieved were mainly in the public domain. During interviews, some participants alluded to strategy documents, studies that had been conducted, SLPs, and IDPs, which the researcher then requested and received.

The next section discusses how the data were gathered from the various sources.

3.7 DATA GATHERING

This section details how data were collected data from participants and documents.

3.7.1 Data gathering: Participants

Data were gathered from participants through semi-structured face-to-face interviews, online and through focus group discussion. The interview questions, contained in an interview guide, one adapted for participants from the coal mines and the municipality (see Appendix 3) and one for participants from the community (see Appendix 4). The interview questions were formulated specifically to gather data that would answer the research questions, as recommended by Hox and Boeije (2005:593). Using an interview guide helps to ensure that all respondents are asked all the questions, and that all questions are posed to all participants. Interview guides also assist in keeping the conversation on the topic of discussion (Doody & Noonan, 2013). The interview questions were open-ended, as recommended by Silverman and Patterson (2015), which gave participants the freedom to respond and elaborate in their own words (Doody & Noonan, 2013), providing rich descriptions of their social reality (see Goldkuhl, 2019:579). In conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher is able to ask probing questions in order to gain further insights and clarity (Alshenqeeti, 2014:40; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The present researcher conducted pilot interviews to pre-test the interview questions (see Baker, 1994:182-183), to improve the quality of data collected from participants (see Hazzi & Maldaon, 2015:53). First, the interview guide was shared with the study supervisor for comments, who made valuable suggestions. The researcher then conducted an interview with a senior manager at the municipality and another with a colleague in middle management in the mine, to verify the relevance and comprehensiveness of the questions. The participants recommended that the researcher allow participants to use the terms ‘SLP’ and ‘CSR’ interchangeably, as that is the norm in the mining sector.

The interviews were conducted between March and August 2022. The interviews were conducted during the period when COVID-19 restrictions were enforced, and most of the

interviews were thus conducted online, per participants' request, using Microsoft Teams. The interviews were conducted in English, Zulu, and Sepedi, according to participants' choice.

The study focused on CSR projects that were operational beyond funding, and participants displayed a sense of pride in the success of the projects, which contributed towards their openness during the interviews. This perspective helped establish rapport between the researcher and study participants. The research angle set the participants at ease, as they did not feel the need to defend themselves or protect their institutions. Nevertheless, the researcher remained mindful of what True (1989) calls 'the researcher effect', where participants are aware that they are being observed and that their responses are being recorded. The present researcher made every effort to reduce the researcher effect by ensuring that participants were comfortable. The researcher dressed in less formal attire, which helped to put her on the same level as the participants (Huysamen, 1994). Furthermore, as the present researcher collected a large amount of data from a limited number of participants, they may have attempted to determine whether they had given the 'correct' responses. The researcher reassured the participants that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions posed (True, 1989).

The researcher continued interviewing participants until data saturation had been achieved, which is the point where no new information is elicited through additional data collection (Marshall *et al.*, 2013:12).

3.7.2 Data gathering: Focus group

The researcher facilitated a focus group discussion with three community beneficiaries from Hendrina, a town in Steve Tshwete Municipality. The reason for conducting a focus group was that, unlike the other community participants, these members were based in a formal school that offered Grade R as the highest grade in ECD, and were from the same community unlike other participants. A focus group discussion assists the researcher in gaining alternative peoples' views and opinions, and are less stressful for the participants than one-on-one interviews, which enhances information-sharing (Colucci, 2007:1432). The technique yields a large volume of data in a short space of time (Gray *et al.*, 2020; Smithson, 2000). The role of the researcher is to facilitate or moderate group discussions (Nyumba *et al.*, 2018). The participants were comfortable with each other, and they engaged freely, reminding each other of specific project- and community events as they shared their perspectives.

3.7.3 Data gathering: Site observations

The present researcher gathered additional observations through sight visits. Observations offer a first-hand encounter (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015:137), in this case, of the benefits of the CSR projects in the community, and also contextualise participants' responses. Patton (2015) defines a site as "the location of an organization, program, project, community activity, meeting, or event". The researcher undertook a pre-interview site visit for observation purposes, aimed at gathering evaluation information on the ECD project in order to judge its functionality. Unlike case studies that are characterised by intense months or years of study that generate thick descriptions of data (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Merriam, 1998), site visits produce evaluative information in one to three days (Lawrenz *et al.*, 2003). To ensure a complete account of the site, the present researcher took field notes (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018:186).

The site visit was preceded by a visit where the researcher was introduced to the ECD manager by the municipal representative. During the initial contact, the researcher introduced the project and requested a site visit. The dates of the visit were based on the manager's preference and availability. The researcher obtained consent from the manager to participate, and for the researcher to undertake observations. Securing consent in a site that involves other people is challenging (Mulhall, 2003:309), and, due to concerns related to privacy, the data were limited to images of objects at the facility and unidentifiable people.

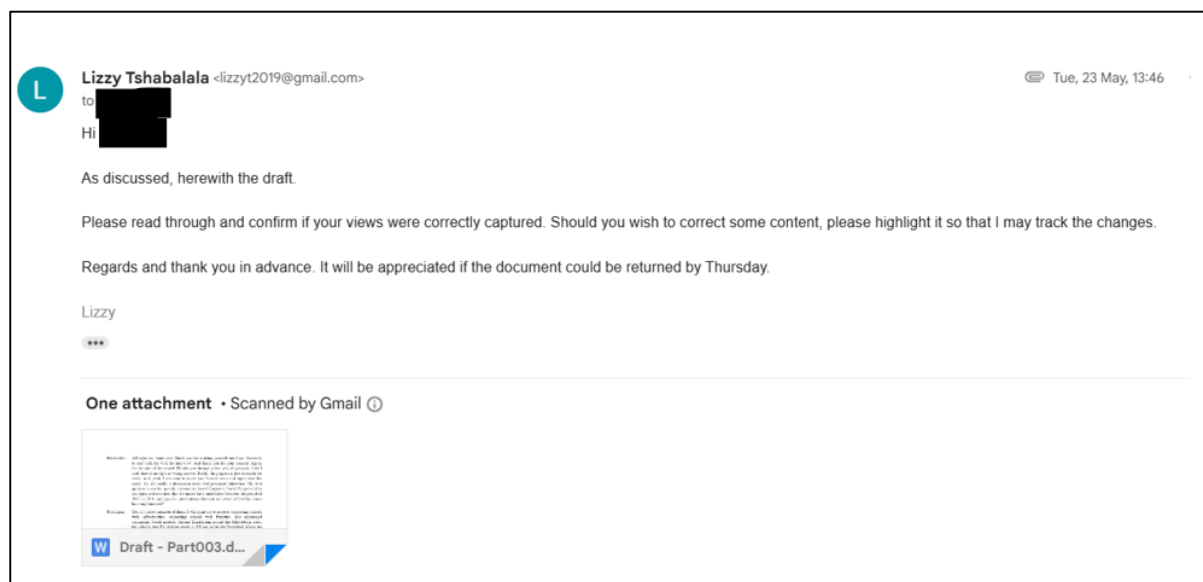
The site visit was conducted on 19 April 2022. The researcher was taken through the ECD facility and its amenities and shown around the site. This provided a contextual understanding of the project setting, which aided understanding the socio-economic development outcomes of the CSR initiatives. The researcher's role was to record, in an unstructured manner, activities on the site as these occurred, including unusual aspects.

3.8 DATA RECORDING AND TRANSCRIPTION

All interviews were tape-recorded using a digital recorder only after the participants were informed and granted the researcher permission. The use of tape recorder assists in ensuring accuracy in capturing the data (Alshenqeeti, 2014:44; Bryman, 2016; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher also took hand notes during the interviews. The recordings were transcribed into Word documents using Otter.ai. Interviews that were conducted in vernacular had to be translated to English. The researcher then listened to the recording several times while reading

the transcript, to ensure accuracy. The interviewees were then invited to verify the correctness of the transcripts; the invitation is shown in Snapshot 3.5.

Snapshot 3.5: Member-checking of transcripts' accuracy



A few interviewees provided feedback, others confirmed the accuracy, and yet others did not respond.

The next section discusses the method used to analyse the data gathered from the various sources discussed above.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

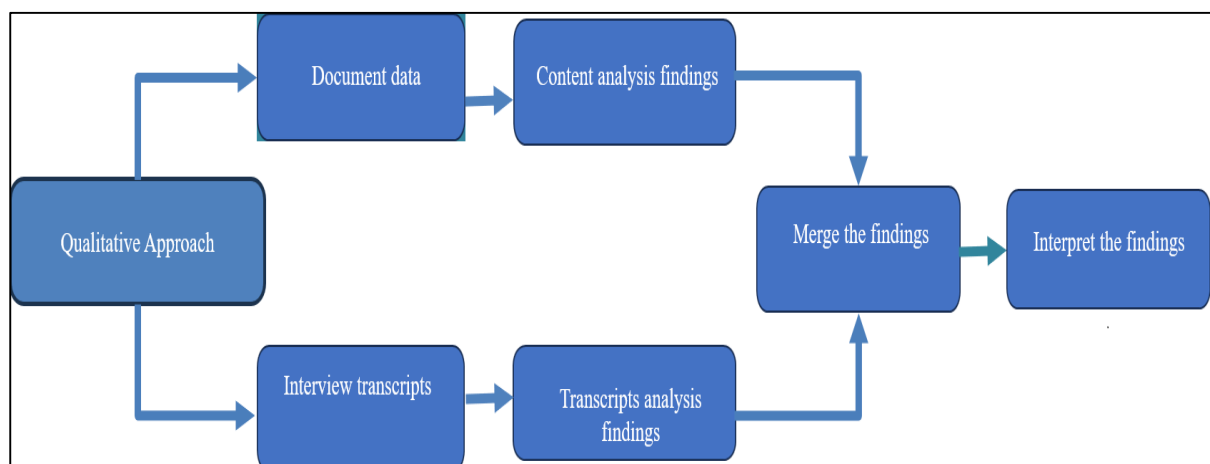
The current study's data were analysed using thematic analysis, which involves organising, describing, understanding, accounting for, and explaining data, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definition of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen *et al.*, 2018:643). Thematic analysis is a method for “identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data to describe data in detail” (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). The analysis process moves from preparing and organising data, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding, condensing the codes, and, lastly, representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion (Creswell & Poth, 2018:183). Qualitative data can take the form of texts, photos, videos, and audio (Frieze *et al.*, 2018), and the analysis typically follows an inductive approach towards building knowledge to generating meaning (Putman &

Rock, 2017:132). In thematic analysis, the data are not fit into a pre-existing coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the current study, the analysis was conducted using Atlas.ti Version 22, which is capable of handling information in a centralised manner for research (Frieze *et al.*, 2018). Atlas.ti enables the tracking of search terms and keywords and allows for documents and articles from any databases to be added for analysis at any given time (Smit & Scherman, 2021). The software also provides a filing system that enables easy retrieval of data, which assists in managing large volumes of data (Creswell & Poth, 2018:208). Furthermore, Atlas.ti has the capability of creating an analysis framework and coding specific sections (Smit & Scherman, 2021), and is beneficial in creating an audit trail, thereby supporting rigour (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The data gathered through the interviews and focus group were conducted separately from the analysis of the data gleaned from the documents. The findings were then merged and interpreted, as depicted in Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7: Analysis procedure



Source: Generated by the author

Document analysis is useful to provide context, supplement other types of research data, track changes over time, and corroborate other sources (Bowen, 2009). It is aimed at making replicable and valid inferences from text, written documents, and visual representations (Krippendorff, 1989). Document analysis requires the examination and interpretation of data to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009:32). The document analysis focused on the mines' policies, priorities and focus areas with regard to

CSR investment. The analysis also sought to identify challenges confronting the mining sector with regard to other stakeholders, such as municipalities and the community. The following documents were included in the analysis:

- Broad-based Socio-economic Empowerment Charter for the Mining and Minerals Industry 2018;
- Social and Labour Plans Guidelines 2010;
- Steve Tshwete Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2012–2017;
- Company A Social and Labour Plan 2015–2019;
- Company A’s Environmental, Social and Governance Report 2022;
- Company B’s Social and Labour Plan 2017–2022;
- Company B’s Sustainability Development Report 2022;
- Company B’s: Annual Report 2022 and
- Steve Tshwete Municipality Mining Sector Analysis Report.

Analysis of the interview data commenced during data collection, in an inductive and iterative process (see Creswell, 2009; Pope *et al.*, 2000). An iterative process necessitates that the researcher repeatedly revisit the data in search for meaning (Kekeya, 2016). The thematic analysis was adapted from the procedure suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), which details six phases, summarised in Table 3.6 and discussed thereafter.

Table 3.6: Six phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes	On-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis, and includes selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)

In Phase 1, the researcher read and re-read the transcripts and highlighted data of interest. The researcher also listened to the audio recordings while reading the text and made notes.

In Phase 2, initial codes of interest to the research study were created. Open coding requires constant comparison of codes across the data. In order to remain objective, coding included the words of the participants, which helped to capture the “perspectives and voices of the people” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994:274). The aim is to divide the large amount of raw data into segments and labelling them (Charmaz, 2006:43). Some extracts were coded multiple times. The coding was done sentence by sentence, as shown in Snapshot 3.6.

Snapshot 3.6: Initial coding

Participant:	You choose your interventions to maximize that possibility? So, for instance, in the case of the ECD intervention, it's quite straightforward and simple. Post the intervention, the beneficiaries obtain the qualification and the access and that then is sustainable going forward because it's not something that lapses. If you take for instance, the school infrastructure, there would be detailed discussions and Memorandums of Understanding between the business and the relevant department as to what the roles and responsibilities of the parties would be post the implementation. In particular, also, the other project, we talked about the industrial park, and that is part of an ongoing intervention by the local municipality to intervene in the local township economies, and it is within their IDPs and municipal planning for the sustainable future. I think it helps then to choose projects, in collaboration with the partners that you know are going to actually be able to sustain themselves into the future.	4:7 You choose... 4:8 If you take... 4:9 the other project, we...
Researcher:	So, collaboration then becomes very critical for sustainability to be attained.	4:7 CSR management: strategically...
Participant:	Absolutely, we cannot do interventions or projects unilaterally and just look to hand over this, they are always part of an agreement with the relevant department.	4:8 CSR management: formal agre...
Researcher:	Okay. And if I may ask the agreements, is it like a standard practice that in all your interventions you would take the industrial park, there would be some agreement governing that you go to your infrastructure, they would also be in agreement? Is that like, how you embed it?	4:9 Stakeholder collaboration: part...
Participant:	It (signing agreements) is company policy, that is the way we tackle these projects.	4:10 Also...
		4:11 E...

The open coding generated 156 free codes, some of which had low frequencies of 1, 2, or 3, as shown in Snapshot 3.7.

Snapshot 3.7: Codes with frequencies

Search Entities			
Name	Grounded	Density	Groups
○ A problem was identified and confirmed by research	1	0	
○ A succession plan / exit strategy embedded in collaboration	1	0	
○ Administration of community meetings, minutes, registers	1	0	
○ An experienced ECD to lease the ECD	1	0	
○ Anglo social way - methodology for consulting the community	1	0	
○ Appointment of steering committee	2	0	
○ Appreciation of the benefits of training	1	0	
○ Approach - balancing the needs and legal comply	1	0	
○ Approach to communities - the mine does not engage the community directly	2	0	
○ Balancing infrastructure with economic development	1	0	
○ Benefit - ECD provides nutritional value to children	1	0	
○ BENEFITS OF ECD TRAINING	3	0	
○ Blasting threatens sustainability of infrastructure	2	0	
○ Business model - ownership rest with the municipality	1	0	
○ Capacity building and training of ECD teachers	2	0	
○ Capacity building means sustainability	2	0	
○ Capacity of government to sustain projects is questionable	1	0	
○ Capacity to take over the asset should be in place	1	0	

During Phase 3, the researcher read through the codes and made connections between similar codes (see Putman & Rock, 2017:132) by generating categories, a process termed ‘axial coding’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:97). Creating categories allowed patterns and themes to emerge from frequent phrases (Thomas, 2006). Different colours were used to isolate and relate codes, as shown in Snapshot 3.8.

Snapshot 3.8: Use of colours in codes

Search Entities			
Name	Grounded	Density	Groups
▲ ● A Outcomes	8	0	
● enduring value	1	0	
● infrastructure development	3	0	
● skills development	3	0	
● socio-economic development	1	0	
▲ ● B Recommendation	2	0	
○ CSR/SLP regulations	1	0	
○ direct community engagement	1	0	
▲ ● C Stakeholder collaboration	8	0	
○ climate change	2	0	
○ post closure livelihood	1	0	
○ project collaboration	2	0	
○ retrenchment management	1	0	
○ social contribution	2	0	
▲ ● D Sustainable CSR	4	0	
● capacity building	1	0	
● economic outcomes	1	0	

Axial coding was enhanced by making comparison to explore differences and similarities across the data (see Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To aid the coding process, a code definition book was generated to delineate the location of the codes within a particular sub-category.

Comparing between the data also revealed instances of duplication or overlapping categories with different names. These were addressed by combining codes that were related. Codes that did not fit a particular description were either split, moved, or renamed. This process continued until several categories had been identified and labelled. Codes were scanned with the view to identifying evidence to support a sub-theme developed during axial coding. Different colours were utilised to group the categories that had been created.

In Phase 4, codes were refined, and this process resulted in codes being grouped together in line with the research questions, which led to the identification of themes. The Atlas.ti *Network* function was useful in presenting the relationships between the codes. Once the themes had been identified, the researcher described each theme and related the themes to each other. This process was iterative, and required constant comparison and reviewing to ensure alignment. Some codes were moved between the themes, while others were collapsed. Codes were organised into sub-themes, which were then converged under the main theme.

In Phase 5, the themes were refined and renamed. Once the core themes had been defined, the relationships between the themes began to surface. The researcher conducted on-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the data told. Phase 6 was the compilation of the findings, which are presented in Chapter 4.

The next section discusses the strategies employed to ensure quality research.

3.10 STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE TRUSTWORTHINESS

The interpretivist–constructivist paradigm is highly dependent on the researcher’s interpretation of the data, which raises concerns about confirmation bias and subjectivity (Shufutinsky, 2019). Various strategies could be employed to ensure the trustworthiness of such research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that qualitative research should satisfy four criteria, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to how congruent the findings are with the reality reflected in the data (Stahl & King, 2020). In other words, this entails ensuring that the findings are a true reflection of the social reality as reported by the participants. To enhance credibility, the findings of the present

study are supported by verbatim extracts from the participants' interviews (see Noble & Smith, 2015). The use of an audio recorder ensured that the interviews are captured accurately.

3.10.2 Transferability

Unlike quantitative studies, which are aimed at generalisable results, qualitative researchers are concerned with transferability. Transferability is “the degree to which findings can be generalised to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In other words, transferability is concerned with whether the findings resonate with other, similar contexts or settings (Stahl & King, 2020). Since qualitative research is context-specific (Creswell, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2018), the researcher endeavoured to provide a ‘thick’ description of the research context, to allow readers to assess whether it could be transferable to their situation.

The researcher provided a detailed description of the social setting within which CSR by mining companies in municipal area unfolds. The description describes the efforts by mining companies in the management of projects from conception, construction and post hand over. As a result, the selected cases are useful in understanding how selected mining companies working along other stakeholders engaged with CSR.

3.10.3 Dependability

Dependability is enhanced by providing detailed descriptions of how the research was conducted, to demonstrate rigour in the processes employed. The present research provides a detailed audit trail of the research process and methodological decisions. The researcher also made use of member-checking, and subjected the research findings to peer debriefing and scrutiny. The researcher also subjected coded transcripts to external review. Upon completion of labelling and assigning codes, the researcher sought assistance from a peer experienced in qualitative research. The review necessitated that some data labels should be amended because they were unclear, others needed to be refined and or merged because they conveyed a similar idea. Transcripts had to be re-coded accordingly. Coding using online platform assisted in making data manageable.

3.10.4 Confirmability

Confirmability relates to issues of bias and prejudices of the researcher. Confirmability is “concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” (Tobin & Begley, 2004:392). Confirmability was enhanced by documenting the methodology and processes followed in the study. Biases and prejudice were checked in the analysis and interpretation of the data through citing of participants quotes. The researcher used verbatim quotes and used different sources of data to cite. The writing of the analysis was supported by evidence supported by subthemes or subcategories.

The researcher also triangulated the findings from the data of the various sources used in the study (see Yin, 2002), to achieve “convergence of evidence” (Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Krefting, 1991).

Qualitative research locates the researcher within the study, which requires that the researcher practise reflexivity to avoid personal biases impacting the study. In this regard, Wolcott (2010:36) asserts:

...our readers have a right to know about us. And they do not want to know whether we played in the high school bans. They want to know what prompts our interest in the topics we investigate, to whom we are reporting, and what we personally stand to gain from our study.

This investigation was motivated by the researcher’s belief that CSR by mining companies is an ideal vehicle for business to contribute to the development of the communities in which they operate. The researcher is not attached to any mining company, and is employed by a municipality that was not included in the study. The researcher took care not to lead the participants in answering the interview questions, and constantly checked for bias and prejudice in analysing and interpreting the data. The researcher also kept memos of salient issues that emerged during the interviews, which aided reflexivity.

A researcher’s pre-understanding of a topic could impact a study. Gummesson (2000:57) defines pre-understanding as “people’s knowledge, insights and experience before they engage in a research programme”, which include explicit and tacit knowledge (Ryan, 2011:222). The present researcher’s academic training is firmly grounded in development studies, and the

researcher has over 16 years' experience on various levels, from practitioner to researcher working with communities for development. The present researcher is not independent from the phenomenon observed; however, the qualitative approach permits interaction between the researcher and the participants. The researcher nevertheless remained conscious of how pre-understanding could affect the research processes (see Coghlan, 2019).

In her previous employment, the researcher attended meetings where mining companies engaged with local authorities on CSR projects and she became interested in the processes of SLP submissions to the DMRE. The mines in question were not sampled for purposes of this study.

The methods employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the current study are summarised in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Strategies to achieve rigour

Trustworthiness	Strategies for the study
Credibility	☐ Member checking ☐ Peer debriefing ☐ Conduct interviews
Transferability	☐ Offer a thick description (descriptive case study design) ☐ Development of propositions ☐ Member checking
Dependability	☐ Digital recording of interviews, verbatim interview transcripts ☐ Use of coding schemes ☐ Detailed description of research methods and procedures ☐ Triangulation of data ☐ Use of research schedules for data generation purposes ☐ Clarity of the researcher's role
Conformability	☐ Citing specific quotes ☐ Using different sources of data to cite ☐ Writing providing evidence including conveying subthemes or subcategories

Source: Generated by the author

The next section reviews the research ethics that were pertinent to the current study.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is critical that the research adhere to high ethics standards, especially when humans are involved. The researcher has to ensure that no harm come to participants. The current researcher adhered to ethical principles throughout the study, as recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2017:88).

The current researcher obtained ethical clearance from North-West University to conduct the study (see Appendix 1) and permission to conduct the study from the organisations involved. Participants were fully informed of the aims of the study. They were assured that participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw from the study at any point, without any negative consequences. Prior to commencement of the interviews, participants had to sign a form indicating informed consent to participate (see Appendix 2). Participants were assured of anonymity, and the researcher replaced company- and participant names with numbers and removed personal identifiers in reporting the findings, in adherence to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) No. 4 of 2013, especially with regard to children on site. The data are securely stored and accessible only by the researcher and study supervisors. Data collected were stored electronically and recordings were labelled using a code assigned to participants to ensure the privacy and confidentiality. Transcribed documents are safeguarded through encryption and passwords for safety of the information obtained. The files will be kept for five years in an external hard drive.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the research philosophy, the research approach and design, and the methods used in conducting the study. The philosophy underpinning this study is interpretivist–constructivist paradigm which assumes that different individuals construct different meanings of the same object or phenomenon. The interpretivist–constructivist paradigm was deemed appropriate for the study because the researcher sought to obtain interpretations of different stakeholders involved in CRS initiatives of mining companies. An inductive approach to theory development was followed underpinned by a qualitative research approach because the researcher aimed to produce thick descriptions of data. A multiple case study design based on CSR projects by two mining companies was adopted. Participants drawn from mine and municipal management were purposively sampled while community participants were sampled conveniently. Data collected were triangulated through interviews, observations and documentary analysis. All interviews were audio-recorded using a digital recorder only after the participants were informed and granted the researcher permission. The chapter outlines the strategies employed by the researcher to enhance the trustworthiness of the study, followed by the ethical principles that were upheld throughout.

The findings of the analysis are reported in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to establish a CSR framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines. The findings presented in this chapter are empirically grounded in two South African based JSE-listed mining companies operating in Mpumalanga province. The company's efforts targeted ECD in the informal sector, whose activities can be conceptualised as survivalist in nature. Data were gathered from mine management involved in CSR, representatives of Steve Tshwete Municipality, and community beneficiaries of CSR. This chapter presents the finding of the study, which informed the development of a CSR framework that could be utilised in developing countries.

For ease of reference, the study's sub-objectives are listed again below:

- i. To determine the specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities that the coal mines had undertaken from 2013 to 2018;
- ii. To determine how CSR projects were managed by the mines to ensure they remained sustainable beyond the SLP period;
- iii. To determine how sustainable CSR implementation was integrated into business processes;
- iv. To document the specific socio-economic development outcomes, the community-based CSR projects had delivered, and how;
- v. To determine what constitutes sustainable CSR by the mine;
- vi. To establish the role played by coal mines to ensure sustainability of CSR projects beyond the funding period;
- vii. To document how coal mines approached communities, how they ensure buy-in, and what they offered communities;
- viii. To determine the organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector and how these are managed to ensure sustainability in community development; and
- ix. To document measures initiated by coal mines to ensure CSR projects remain sustainable.

The next section provides an overview of the cases included in the study, followed by a profile of the participants.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CASES

Two cases of CSR in ECD undertaken by South African coal mines were examined. Company A had undertaken a capacity-building project, while Company B had undertaken a construction project.

Company A's project was focused on providing formal training and qualification for informal ECD practitioners, who play a vital role in educating children in poor communities. This capacity-building was initiated in 2013, and has remained operational to this day.

In company A's capacity-building project, priority was given to young women ECD practitioners in Steve Tshwete Municipality. The absence of formalised institutions in previously disadvantaged areas has resulted in children being left in the care of individuals who do not have formal knowledge of children's development (South African Local Government Association, 2015). A total of 130 women aged 24 to 45 years were targeted. Upon completion and attainment of their qualification, the practitioners became eligible for grant funding for their respective ECD centres. The qualification also made practitioners eligible for employment with the Department of Education as foundation teachers for children younger than five years. Company A funded the training of the unqualified ECD practitioners, which was implemented in partnership with Steve Tshwete Municipality, which was instrumental in the selection of the trainees, co-ordination with all other relevant government departments, managing the logistics around organising venues for contact classes and schedules, as well as the submission of assignments. The accredited training was provided by the University of South Africa (UNISA). This initiative was part of the mine's CSR commitment, and was contained in the mine's SLP.

Company B's project was initiated in 2016. Company B, in collaboration with the municipality, identified the need for an ECD facility that complied with the standards of the Department of Social Development. Many informal ECD facilities are run from crowded and informal dwellings that are unsafe for children. Owing to the influx of hopeful job seekers, the municipality, over the years, invested in housing developments, but did not provide ECD facilities, resulting in overcrowding of existing facilities (South African Local Government Association, 2015). Company B invested R5 million in the construction of the ECD facility.

These CSR initiatives gained recognition from the South African Local Government Association (2015) as community-development best practice. Both projects were implemented in collaboration with the municipality.

4.3 PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Interviews were conducted with 21 participants: four from Company A, two from Company B, four from the municipality, and eight from the community. A total of 14 women were interviewed, of which 11 were from the community, three of whom participated in a focus group discussion. In total, six men participated, and represented a mine or the municipality. They occupied senior- and middle-management positions in which they had direct involvement in CSR. Table 4.8 provides a profile of the participants.

Table 4.8: Demographic information of participants

Participant	Years of experience	Representation	Interview length
Participant 1	14	Municipal representative	61 minutes
Participant 2	10	Mine representative	111 minutes
Participant 3	11	Mine representative	103 minutes
Participant 4	21	Mine representative	55 minutes
Participant 5	10	Mine representative	105 minutes
Participant 6	4	Mine representative	48 minutes
Participant 7	9	Municipal representative	43 minutes
Participant 8	3	Municipal representative	132 minutes
Participant 9	8	Municipal representative	37 minutes
Participant 10	14	CSR beneficiary	62 minutes
Participant 11	25	CSR beneficiary	54 minutes
Participant 12	17	CSR beneficiary	38 minutes
Participant 13	19	CSR beneficiary	39 minutes
Participant 14	20	CSR beneficiary	35 minutes
Participant 15	29	CSR beneficiary	28 minutes
Participant 16	16	CSR beneficiary	41 minutes
Participant 17	25	CSR beneficiary	27 minutes
Participant 18	30	Mine representative	48 minutes

The demographics of the three participants in the focus group discussion are provided in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Focus group participants' demographics

Focus Group Participant	Work experience	Representation	Duration
Focus Group Participant 1 (FGP1)	18 years	CSR beneficiary	57 minutes
FGP2	20 years		
FGP3	18 years		

The next sections report the findings of the study, starting with the outcomes of the site observations.

4.4 FINDINGS OF SITE OBSERVATIONS

The findings of the site observations were not analysed, and are merely presented to orientate the reader with regard to the context of the study.

The ECD centre that was the focus of Company B's construction project is located in Mhluzi township, Middelburg, providing easy access to residents of the surrounding low-cost houses. The precinct consists of an administrative block that houses the reception area, the ECD centre manager's office, sick bay, administrative office, and storeroom. Adjacent to administration block is a spacious kitchen facility. The centre has a capacity to house 200 children in six neatly arranged classrooms with designated ablution facilities for children from Grade 00 to Grade R. At the time of the visit, the facility's enrolment figure stood at 246. According to the manager, this was because community members have a sense of pride about the facility. Care is also provided for infants aged three months to 24 months. The facility is weather-proof and quipped with solar power, and was constructed from face brick with minimum painting and mostly paved areas, to reduce maintenance costs.

Due to its location, the precinct serves low-income households, many of whom are beneficiaries of government housing through the Reconstruction and Development (RDP) Programme. The centre services mostly children of grant-dependent families. At the time of the visit, the centre levied R450 per month per child; however, approximately 25% of the fees were outstanding. The ECD centre's manager highlighted the poverty levels within the community, and noted that, that was why those who could not afford school fees were not shown away.

According to the manager, no child was excluded from the centre, and that some parents paid what they could afford. Government-subsidises registered ECD centres and the subsidy is calculated per child per day for children aged 0 to four years, but only for caregivers who passed an income means test. However, at the time of the visit to the ECD centre, the function had been transferred from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Education, and the grant was five months overdue.

The centre operates in line with the school calendar, from 06:00 to 18:00. The centre serves two cooked meals per day, usually morning porridge and lunch, as well as a fruit and an afternoon snack. Serving meals to the children is considered important to their development, as many of these children came from poor households. On the day of the visit, soft porridge was served, and the cooks were already preparing lunch, as shown in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Morning porridge served at the ECD centre and layout of Grade R classes



Steve Tshwete Municipality made land available to the mine for purposes of constructing an ECD centre. Upon completion, Company B handed the facility back to the municipality. A public participation process was undertaken, and the municipality entered into a three-year lease with the current occupant. In other words, ownership of the asset vests with the municipality. The occupant is liable for a monthly rental fee of R5 000 and the on-going maintenance of the facility. The centre appeared to be well-maintained and secure, with a 1.8 m high ‘clear view’ security fence and a well laid out arrangement of colourful age-appropriate play facilities, as shown in Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9: ECD centre's play facilities and adjacent low-cost houses



Walking around the facility, the researcher noted two empty classrooms, which according to the principal were unoccupied because of a lack of funds to appoint additional teachers. The staff complement at the centre totalled 15: eight teachers, two cooks, a gardener, an administrative clerk, two assistants, and a centre manager. The researcher had an opportunity to observe teaching in one of the classes, and noted that the children were dressed in school uniform, which, according to the ECD centre manager, was aimed at creating group cohesion and build common identity amongst the children.

The manager identified lack of funding as a threat to the sustainability of the centre, noting that salaries, high maintenance costs, and maintaining a feeding programme were the major costs that “gave her sleepless nights”. Due to budget constraints, it was unusual for salaries to be paid on time, resulting in high staff turnover. The manager appreciated the role played by various donors who often stepped in with food donations, noting that they kept the ECD centre running whenever government subsidy payments were delayed.

4.5 FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEW DATA ANALYSIS

The semi-structured interviews yielded rich data that enabled the researcher to probe the core management factors to be considered in establishing a sustainable CSR initiative for community development, which was the objective of this study. From the data collected, nine themes emerged:

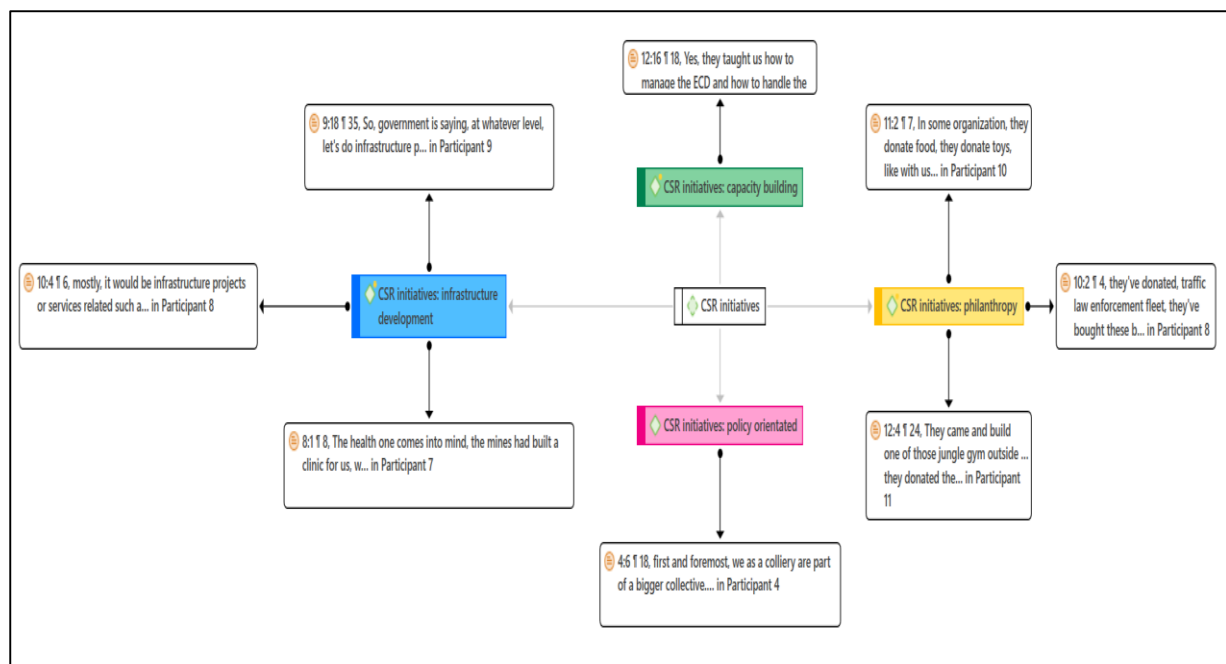
- 1) Nature of CSR as practised by coal mines;
- 2) Perception of management strategies of CSR;
- 3) CSR integration;
- 4) Socio-economic outcomes;
- 5) Defining sustainable CSR;
- 6) Role of mine in sustainable CSR initiatives;
- 7) Coal mines' approaches to communities;
- 8) Organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability; and
- 9) Coal mines' efforts towards sustainable CSR projects.

4.5.1 Theme 1: CSR strategies and activities of coal mine s

This theme related to Research Sub-question 1: **What specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities did coal mines undertake from 2013 to 2018?**

The responses were organised in four sub-themes namely, Policy-based initiatives, Infrastructure development, Capacity-building initiatives, and Philanthropic interventions, as illustrated in Snapshot 4.9.

Snapshot 4.9: Categorisation of responses related to Research Sub-question 1



4.5.1.1 Policy-based CSR initiatives

Participants 2, 4, and 5 shared a similar view, that, first and foremost, CSR initiatives were guided by the company objectives and priority area. Participant 4 outlined that CSR implementation was informed by policy positions taken by the broader company, and should align to the company mandate and local policies. Participant 4 outlined what had influenced the mine to invest in the chosen initiatives: a global and South African mandate.

“First and foremost, we as a colliery are part of a bigger collective. So, that company would have just cascaded its mandate down to the operations. The way that those mandates were established would have taken cognisance of global institutions like the Sustainability Goals, the United Nations Goals, as well as local South African legislative policies.”

Participant 2 described how CSR projects were carefully identified to align with the mine’s focus areas, discharge legal responsibilities, address issues in the community, and to ensure sustainability of the projects once the mine closes. Participant 2 elaborated:

“To identify a project, we start with the focus area that we want to fulfil and which areas will have impact on the business. And the focus areas that we have elaborated on are local procurement, for obvious reasons, because it is also legislated. And we have also looked at local employment. And that is also because it is legislated, as well as the issues that we are getting from the ground. And then we also look at enterprise development, because that is how we looked at the nature of our mine. The mine is not that long, and, with that, we were already anticipating closure impacts. So, if our investments are mostly focused on an operational mine, then it means we continue to create dependency in our communities, which means you might have positive impact, now but in the longer term. There is dependency which cannot be addressed.”

Participant 5 drew a distinction between initiatives that were undertaken to ensure legislative compliance arising from the SLP and those undertaken voluntarily:

“So, our approach to broadly social corporate social investment is twofold. The first one is that, as a mining sector, obviously, we are obligated by law to submit social and labour plans, in consultation with our host communities. So, that is a licence-to-operate issue; however, above and beyond that, we would look at what we call ‘voluntary corporate social investment initiatives’, which is above and beyond the compliance.”

Participants 2, 4 and 5 believed that CSR implementation was influenced by different legislative instruments within which the company operated. In their responses, these participants described the national and local priorities as some of those that CSR implementation had to respond to.

4.5.1.2 Infrastructure development

There was consensus amongst the participants that mining companies' efforts were geared towards advancing infrastructure development for government services. Participants 2, 3, 5, and 8 outlined the mining company's efforts to improve access to water. Participant 5 highlighted the mine's innovation in reclamation and purification of water in order to boost municipal water supply:

"We've ensured that there's access to water, we are quite passionate about ensuring that people have access to basic needs of water. We are even using some of our mine reclaimed water. We will clean it up, and it is then connected to the municipal water system."

Participant 8 noted that CSR projects had been helpful in providing municipal services to rural communities:

"Mostly, it would be infrastructure projects or services-related, such as getting water to our communities, especially in the rural areas farm, such as drilling of boreholes, installation of Jojo tanks, biological toilets, construction of roads ... as I say, they would be infrastructure."

Participant 5 also reflected on the contributions made towards improving waste management services in communities in support of the municipality. The participant also acknowledged that the mines worked with local non-government organisations:

"So, we have also had a huge focus on waste management, wherein we have assisted in equipping the local municipality with waste compactor trucks and waste bins. I remember we bought about 2 000 waste bins for the local municipality, in order to contribute towards the mitigation of waste, and ensuring that we are an environmentally friendly community. So, quite a few environmental education programmes where we worked with local NGOs to roll these out in the community."

Participant 10 acknowledged the mine's intervention in the construction of community amenities such as parks and infrastructure.

"I can testify that there are also beautiful parks around Middelburg, although the community sometimes vandalise it, but we have parks where families can go with their children playing around there."

The researcher probed further to understand why infrastructure development was prioritised, and Participant 7 described mining as a cause of high migration to mining site, resulting in infrastructure constraints and strained service delivery.

"I think you may be aware that the municipality itself is having a whole lot of migration. According to the Stats SA, we were sitting at above 298 000 population, and that growth is projected that, every year, we are growing about 4.4%. The majority of these people who are coming here, they are looking for employment, which is where the mines are playing their role by providing them with the opportunities to work within the mines. Now, you can imagine the community that will have to then access services like water, sanitation and electricity, which can only be provided by the municipality, but, through this, the corporate social labour plans, there were more services provided, your clinics, your roads, your houses themselves."

Participants 1, 8, 12, and 14 acknowledged that ECD infrastructure was constructed by the mine. Participant 1 appreciated the quality of the facility:

"Then, the other project is the construction of an ECD [early childhood development] centre in Nazareth, in Ward 8 and another in Ward 24. That one is called the best Centre of Excellence for the Steve Tshwete, because it was built using the norms and standards of the Social Development Department."

Participants discussed interventions to improve the services provided by the provincial and national government. Participants 9, 11, 12, and 16 noted the provision of healthcare facilities, mainly clinics, and housing. Participant 9 highlighted the commitment of the mine in funding infrastructure related projects:

"As I have mentioned, there is also a school that we can fund, a clinic that we can fund... So, those are the type of infrastructure projects that we fund."

Participant 5 elaborated on the contributions made in support of the South African Police Service, specifically to empower victims of abuse through the construction of the victim support centre, as well as the work of the Department of Health in the provision of health infrastructure:

“We have capacitated the SAPS in terms of providing infrastructure for the victim support, so there’s a trauma centre that we have constructed in support of steps and the victims of gender-based and child violence. So, it is quite a number of what I believe to be big social impact. Obviously, access to health in the form of the clinics that we’ve invested in.”

Participant 7 explained how the mine’s contributions had led to the development of infrastructure in the community that resulted in the township enjoying access to services that were previously non-existent:

“We have a clinic, which has one basic service issue that the community needed. There are houses built in that area. That tells you that the very same community that could have been staying under an underdeveloped area are now having a proper structure where they stay, and they can access services close by to where they live.”

4.5.1.3 Capacity-building initiatives

Participant 10 described the ECD capacity-building intervention as a breakthrough, in that ordinary, unskilled community members were empowered to acquire a formal qualification:

“...the day care training, which was a big breakthrough for us, because most of our members in the community or most of the teachers in the community in pre-schools do not have qualifications. So, when the coal mine came through Steve Tshwete Municipality and offered to give us training, it was a big breakthrough.”

Participant 14 appreciated the skill acquired from the ECD training course, and highlighted the various management areas that the course had focused on:

“The mine assisted us with ECD management training — how to manage ECD, record-keeping, bookkeeping, and administration. They taught us on the norms and standard that the ECD must comply with. There are several things in management, like the types of trees that we need to plant and which to avoid because they are poisonous for children, safety for the children.”

Participant 5 stated that education was the mine's main focus, and that it contributed towards the funding of Saturday classes and enhancing teachers' skills:

"We have ensured improved academic performance by children in schools, for example, in our investments in Saturday classes, after-school support, reparation support to teachers and principals in terms of how to effectively manage schools."

According to the Participant FGP3, the ECD training intervention had a significant impact on the community, as, prior to the initiative, the informal practitioners were not trained. The participant described the ECD CSR intervention as follows:

"The programme of training ECD teachers, that programme really uplifted the community so much because, in our communities, there were no well-trained practitioners to handle young children. The programme helped by making funding available for ECD teachers to be trained and learn how to handle children."

4.5.1.4 Philanthropic interventions

Over and above the implementation of mandatory projects to maintain a licence to operate, the mine occasionally implemented discretionary programmes. Participant 5 described one such programme:

"We have had things like dignity restoration programmes, where in the issue of distributing sanitary pads for girls and dignity pants for boys, but those are more your softer programmes."

Participant 14 appreciated the mine's donations to the celebration of special occasions and their contribution to inspiring parents to register their children for ECD:

"Sometime in December, they assist with hosting Christmas parties for our children. That helps us because it serves to recruit parents to bring their children to us because, when they see children with gifts and toys, they also desire the same for their children. When parents see these gifts, it motivates them to send their children."

Participants 10, 11, 15, FGP1, and FGP2 confirmed the different donations that mining companies made to ECD initiatives. The donations were largely in a form of groceries (Participants 10 and 15), playground equipment, and toys (Participants 11, 14, and FGP1).

Participant 10 described how grocery donations received from the mine helped fill pressing needs of ECD centres, which freed up management to attend to other priorities:

“I could not believe what they have brought us. I was so happy ... a lot of things that I needed, even some of the outdoor play equipment, some tables, chairs and table for the children. They also brought play bikes for the baby side, educational toys, lots of books, everything. It was a lot what they brought us, and they came with groceries, lots of groceries. We used it until March 2021. It made us happy, and that is why we would like the mine to come back to us, to check up on us, how are we doing? Since we are here around where they are operating, that went well with me, even though they did not bring us money, no, but we managed, because I could pay the teachers because we had food, and that is expensive.”

Participants 2, 5, 8, 9, and 19 indicated that the focus in CSR was shifting towards independent entrepreneurial activities. Participant 18 acknowledged the benefits of infrastructure development, and indicated the importance of the community being able to sustain itself when the mine closes:

“...by giving guys medical and schooling, it is fine, it is good, but it will not develop them. We need to look at development programmes that you get the community involved with, to start training them. Most of the guys will argue with me and say education is the first step. But we need to start training intrapreneurs, because it does not matter to send the guy to become academic and become a senior manager and all those types of things. There are other development programmes that we can assist them with: intrapreneurship, small-scale business development. Putting that into a social development plan will be much more benefit towards the community and social development of the country than just to focus on core things...”

In this regard, Participant 5 noted the following:

“So, the messaging or the rationale behind us focusing on economic participation is to make sure that we build the capacity of communities to focus outside the business activity, away from mining and processing.”

4.5.2 Theme 2: Management of CSR projects

This theme related to Research Sub-question 2: **How are CSR projects managed by the mines to ensure they remain sustainable beyond the SLP period?**

This theme had eight categories: CSR methodology, Integrated development plan, Need validation, Formal agreement, Project steering committee, Project handover, Impact assessment, and Stakeholder collaboration.

4.5.2.1 CSR methodology

Participants indicated that there was a methodology in place that guided the implementation of these projects. According to Participants 2 and 3, CSR implementation was guided by a governance document outlining the methodology. Participant 3 stated:

“For projects, we have got a procedure on how to do projects in the organisation. Yeah, it is a structured procedure, which talks to what you do on every step of the way, and how you should do it. Sort of a governance document on implementation of projects that is like a method statement.”

Participant 4 indicated the importance of the selection of suitable projects to maximise the sustainability of the projects:

“You choose your interventions to maximise that possibility. So, for instance, in the case of the ECD intervention, it is quite straightforward and simple. Post the intervention, the beneficiaries obtain the qualification and can access the grant, and that then is sustainable going forward, because it is not something that lapses.”

According to Participant 5, to ensure project sustainability, the beneficiaries of the initiatives needed to have experience and were selected from amongst people who were already running ECD centres:

“As part of our contribution, we said, ‘Rather than finding someone in the ECD industry that has never run an ECD [centre] before, let us shop around and look at who is experienced to do this but does not have access to the resources or facilities that are required to run a best-in-class ECD centre.’”

Participant 1 held the same view, stressing that training someone who was already running an ECD centre would have yielded greater benefits:

“We targeted people who were already in the ECD centres. We didn’t want to train any other person except those already running the centre, so that we capacitate them, so that the outcomes in future could benefit children; rather than training you and then you stay with the qualification and don’t use it.”

At project planning, Participants acknowledged the central role of the Integrated development plan (IDP) as a critical source of information guiding the initiatives by the mine as follows:

4.5.2.2 Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

According to Participant 8, the IDP is a strategic planning document of the municipality, and projects that mining companies implemented were derived from the IDP. Participant 8 believed that, because of the stature of the IDP, it was adopted by the Council and was central to the allocation of budgets to respond to the needs of the community. For that reason, the projects that the mines implement ought to be sourced from the IDP in order to deliver impact:

“Remember that our IDP is our strategic direction and plan, and it guides our budget and everything. So, that is the document we use, that is the legal document that we use as a municipality, because it gets adopted by Council. It goes through the community for comments for consultation. Therefore, we as a municipality can easily say that is the ‘it document’ that we can use to ensure that mines, whatever projects that they do, do really come from the community, and they will drive impact because these are projects that come from the community. But, obviously, it is not every project that comes from the IDP or the community. You find that other projects, as time goes, they are not in the IDP, but they are a need. What we then do is to amend the IDP for every five-year review, when we do an IDP review, we definitely add those projects to say: This project was not there initially, but now that the mine wants to do it or has done it, it must reflect on the IDP”.

Participant 9 shared a similar view, and described the process of documenting the IDP. The participant noted that it was informed by the aspirations of the community and provided overall guidance on the development direction of the municipality. Similarly, it guided the planning processes of CSR:

“The IDP is the sort of the Bible of the municipality, and guides our financial allocations, but then we derive it from the priorities that we get from each ward. So, we do ward consultation at the time of the year or financial year; we identify the priorities, we prioritise them, then we put them in that IDP document, which Council approves. Once Council approves, then it goes for implementation, our budget planning centres around the IDP or the approved IDP, which has the community priority needs. Hence, when we approach the mines, we confine it to the IDP to say what we need to do. It is out of this book.”

Participants 2, 4, 5, amongst others, also acknowledged the IDP as one of the strategic documents that the mines consulted when deciding on a project. In this regard, Participant 2 stated:

“I think, early on, we realised the importance of only embarking on interventions that meet both our own company’s goals, mandate and policy, as well as the community’s needs, whether expressed through individual requests and the municipal IDPs”.

The IDP was also acknowledged as a vehicle through which funding for community projects was made by mines. Participant 10 said:

“So, what we usually hear now when we are applying for mines surrounding us is that the mines are putting money in the Steve Tshwete IDP for ECDs [ECD centres].”

4.5.2.3 Need validation

Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 17 agreed that, as part of ensuring due diligence, the initiatives are designed to address an existing gap or problem in society, and are validated by researched data, assessment, or survey. In this instance, Participant 1 noted:

“The Sustainable Development Goals identified ECDs [ECD centres] as crucial for the development of children. As a result, an audit was conducted to assess the level of education of ECD teachers. At that time, there was a study that revealed that matric learners were not doing well, possible due to their early development in schools. As a result, the municipality, jointly with the Department of Education, Department of Social Development, Association for the Early Childhood Development Association, NGOs, like Child Welfare, and the mining sector were involved. The study revealed that most

of the people who were looking after children did not have any education and knowledge, and that children were not developed further.”

Participant 7 echoed the same sentiments, stating that the project was informed by the gaps that were identified amongst ECD centres in the municipality. Participant 7 confirmed that the municipality also conducts studies on the projects:

“The municipality itself did a study, and they were able to see that there is a gap of the ECD training, where most of the teachers that were appointed by the schools around the municipality were underqualified.”

Participant 3 viewed undertaking of pre-feasibility studies as crucial to inform decision making, determining appropriate action, and to inform the design of the project:

“...from the conception and pre-feasibility studies, whereby you must provide your expertise and engage with the people, making sure that you do not do things that are detrimental to the survival of either the community or the environment. And checking the designs as well as monitoring on during implementation, making sure that you use your technical skills to complete the project in the right way.”

Participant 5 highlighted the use of independent service providers to undertake the studies, possibly to demonstrate openness and lack of bias by the mine when approaching CSR interventions:

“In addition to that, we conduct studies, which are done by third parties, wherein they do a deeper analysis in terms of where we need to focus on in our community investment. And that has then resulted in us identifying four key focus areas in terms of our corporate social investment strategy.”

4.5.2.4 Formal agreement

Participant 4 indicated that management approaches differed from one project to another. The participant described the signing of a formal agreement, a memorandum of understanding (MoU), with the beneficiaries of any infrastructure that the mine constructed as an imperative element to achieving sustainability. Additionally, the agreement, according to Participant 4, located the partners' roles and responsibilities for the duration of and post-implementation of the CSR project:

“If you take, for instance, the school infrastructure, there would be detailed discussions and memorandums of understanding between the business and the relevant department as to what the roles and responsibilities of the parties would be post the implementation. Also, the other project, we talked about the industrial park, and that is part of an ongoing intervention by the local municipality to intervene in the local township economies, and it is within their IDPs and municipal planning for the sustainable future. I think it helps them to choose projects, in collaboration with the partners, that, you know, are going to be able to sustain themselves into the future.”

There was convergence of views between participants as the MoU was deemed a strategic tool to ensure project sustainability. Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9 concurred that, whenever CSR projects were implemented, parties signed an MoU with beneficiaries. For instance, Participant 8 stated:

“We sign an MoU with them on the expectations from both institution as they are joining partnerships.”

Participant 7 concurred that the MoU served to clarify roles between the stakeholders so that they could hold each other accountable. The responsibilities transcend project implementation, to ensure that projects are sustainable:

“...the sustainability element, as well, is addressed in the memorandum of understanding, because we need to ensure, as a municipality, that when they develop a particular infrastructure for us or for the community, that infrastructure will be utilised to its fullest potential. So, there is that relationship between the mines and the municipality, which, as a municipality, will play the role of co-ordinating the stakeholders, the stakeholders, in this instance, I mean the departments that will have a concern, whether it is social development, whether it is the case of the clinic, whether it is human settlement in the case of the houses that have been built. So that is how we make sure that such projects are sustainable.”

Participant 9 stressed that sustainability issues were tackled in the project inception processes and served as a green light for a project to be initiated. According to Participant 9, amongst others, the MoU served to assess beneficiary preparedness and readiness to maintain the project post-implementation. This was viewed as an important indicator of commitment to a project being initiated. Participant 9 said:

“Sometimes, we will identify a clinic as a priority need, then we bring in the Department of Health as well as your Public Works Department, in some instance, to say they are putting up a clinic, but have you budgeted for the ongoing sustainability, staffing, the equipping, and the ongoing maintenance of that facility? If the answer is yes, then we construct the clinic. If it is no, we are not in business of managing and owning clinics, so we do not construct it.”

Participant 9 perceived the MoU as a formalisation of institutional relations, and noted that it validated project execution whenever inspections were conducted:

“It is formalising the institutional relations and we also want to provide a proof of project implementation to DMR. When they start monitoring, we’re saying, ‘Yes, the project was done, here’s proof, here is an MoU, and here is a handover certificate.’”

4.5.2.5 Project steering committee

There were two dominant yet contradictory views expressed by participants regarding the mechanisms put in place to oversee CSR projects. First, Participants, 2, 5, 7, 8, 12, 14, and 18 noted that project steering committees were established and that project meetings were held regularly, to monitor progress of CSR projects. Participant 8 stated:

“Then, from there, we establish a steering committee, depending on the need, they will say, as per the terms of reference, how often will they be meeting, quarterly or monthly. So, that is how we then involve ourselves and the mine in this process until the project is complete and handed over...”

Participant 12 confirmed attending project meetings during the construction of a hall:

“We held meetings on how the hall will be built and other things that we needed, maybe after building the hall, what the hall was going to be used for. So, most of the time, it was the meetings on how will the hall be built.”

According to Participant 5, in implementing technical projects, the services of engineers were sourced, and regular project steering committee meetings held with affected stakeholders. Project meetings were deemed crucial, not only for the management of the project, but also for maintaining communication with the community, as articulated by Participant 5:

“We do appoint independent project managers or engineering consultants that will manage and oversee the technical execution of the project. We would then have bi-weekly steering committee meetings, which I chair, and are comprised of various stakeholders, including the beneficiary organisation. In the case of the ECD [centre], it would have been Steve Tshwete, the engineering consultant to the local ward council. So, that there is also that element of communication with the with the community, the broader community, which are the beneficiaries, and that’s how project monitoring happens, where in you will obviously have a Gantt chart of sorts, wherein you are able to track and manage project progress.”

There was consensus amongst the participants that the establishment of project steering committees was the dominant approach to managing construction projects. With reference to management of the capacity-building project, Participant 2 explained that the mine received feedback from the training institution and intervened where necessary. The participant elaborated on the issues that the university provided feedback on as follows:

“With the monitoring, we kept tabs on UNISA. Students attending contact sessions to have registers of those contacts sessions. Are they submitting assignments? What is the rate at which assignments are submitted? And how are they progressing in their performance? And then, if there was a gap in the programme, like, for instance, with COVID, then we had to regroup and discuss if they do not have data bundles. Now, some of the sessions cannot be contacted, we would have to make them virtual. How do we approach that? So, as part of co-ordination role, we engage all the stakeholders to address issues that impact on the implementation of the project, or risks for that matter.”

The researcher probed further to verify if there was any contact with the beneficiaries of the programme, and Participant 2 stated:

“...we had a process with that. So, they had a WhatsApp group, and Department of Social Development, and Department of Gender and Social Development in the municipality would be facilitating, and, as issues come up, they get escalated to the Steering Committee ... it would be as UNISA and Department of Gender and Social Development, where we resolve the issues and provide guidance on how we approach those issues.”

The absence of or limited engagement between the mine and the beneficiaries of the programme gave rise to conflicting views by Participants 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, and FGP2, who believed that the CSR project was managed by the municipality. Participant 10 believed that the mine placed reliance on feedback communicated in meetings held with the municipality without engaging the beneficiaries:

“I do not know if it is through the municipality or it is just their way of doing things. They do not follow us. We were never being followed, and that is what I know about the stakeholders or the mines themselves... The mine is part of that committee, I think. Based on what is discussed, they rely on that meeting. The initiative of following us individually, coming to check as one of the trainees, what do I do and how are you doing? No, so they just rely on the information that maybe we are reporting about some of those who have been trained and what is happening.”

Participant 12 confirmed a lack of interaction with the mine, and assumed that the funding for the capacity-building project was donated to the municipality.

“I think, maybe, with the municipality, since they donated the money to the municipality, I think we were the one they interacted with, but, with the student, there was not that much contact.”

Participant 13 held a similar view, that the project was managed by the municipality, and that the beneficiaries were not involved:

“I think it was managed through municipality, because we were not involved, unless, maybe our chairperson knows something, but we do not know.”

4.5.2.6 Project handover

Project handover was described by Participants 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, and FGP1 as an exit strategy adopted by the mine for the projects. According to Participant 2, the approach to project implementation had changed from simply constructing infrastructure because the resources were availed to one where beneficiaries were engaged and prepared for taking over the asset. Participant 2 stated:

“...it is no longer you go into the school saying, ‘I can build classrooms, so I can do so many because this is the budget’, and you just continue and life continues. So, now, you start with the Department of Education, and whilst you are planning for that project,

they must start planning on their side to take over after completion of the project, so that, when they prepare the budget cycle, they should include maintenance schedule as infrastructure that they must take care of.”

Participant 6 agreed that there needs to be a succession plan for projects, because the mine’s commitment was limited:

“So, you also need to have like a succession plan in place to say, ‘This is a project we’re going to implement. We commit to three or five years of funding, after which that is going to be the next governing body to take over.’”

Participant 9 shared a similar view, citing one of the projects that the mine had constructed, and noting that it was the responsibility of the beneficiary to ensure on-going maintenance after the handover. Participant 9 commented:

“We constructed a clinic and, at completion, it was handed over to Health. They took over the management and ownership of the building. So, the recipient or the beneficiary then becomes responsible for on-going maintenance of the project, so that they do not collapse.”

Participant 9 further punctuated that the municipality was not in the business of owning community assets, and that these needed to be transferred to the rightful beneficiaries, who would be the department that is charged with the legal responsibility of providing the service.

“We are not in business of managing and owning clinics, so we do not do it. So, we will sign an MoU, which is a tripartite agreement, like we have done when the clinic was constructed. It was handed over to Department of Health, not us.”

Participant 5 felt that the mine had no further business being involved in a CSR project post-handover, noting that “the umbilical cord should be cut”. Participant 5 elaborated:

“We do try to cut the umbilical cord, because you also do not want to be too involved post the handover of a particular initiative. But, with high-value type of projects, we do maintain that relationship long term.”

While project handover is the exit mechanism adopted for CSR projects, Participants 1, 5, and 8 stated that the ECD project was handed over to the municipality because the land on which

the centre was constructed belonged to the council but was leased to a community NGO. Participant 5 described this arrangement:

“We constructed the facility, we equipped it, the centre itself is owned by the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. There is a formal contract in place that it will not be used for anything else but for ECD centre purposes. And the agreement was the municipality would then lease it out to an existing ECD centre that did not have the facilities such as those. They [the municipality] went through a bid process, which they ran in conjunction with ourselves, and the best ECD [centre] then was given the opportunity to lease it from the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.”

Participant 8 shared the sentiment, and confirmed the arrangement:

“...the ECD [centre], when it was handed over, it was handed over to the municipality, because it was built on our property, we were supposed to rent it out.”

Participant 1 provided the rationale for the lease arrangement, noting that the Council was better empowered to sustain the maintenance of the asset and wanted to avoid possible vandalism or it becoming a ‘white elephant’. Participant 1 also stated that the municipality wanted to ensure full utilisation of the asset:

“...we want this infrastructure to still belong to the municipality, because there are resources to maintain this infrastructure, because if we give it away, then, if it gets vandalised, it is going to be one of those that was built by the mine but then now is the white elephant. But then we said, we want it to be a municipal building, so that the municipality can maintain this building. And then, secondly, we said we want the municipality to lease this infrastructure to an NGO that can use it effectively, but it should be one of those who benefited from the training that was done by UNISA.”

4.5.2.7 Impact assessment

The mines did not initially conduct an impact assessment once the project had been completed. However, these assessments have become an important aspect in CSR implementation. Participant 2 elaborated:

“As we progress, we also check ourselves, are we doing justice? Is there any area where we can improve? And one of those we identified was impact assessment also needs to be important for us. Yes, we have done this, yes, so many people have benefited, yes, so

many people are occupying or benefiting from either the infrastructure or the support. But now the question should be post-benefiting... What are the results? Because, generally, we stopped at so many people benefited, whether they get employed, do not get employed, whether the business grows or does not grow, whether the infrastructure is used or never used. We never really went back. So, when we started, we commissioned a consultant to do impact assessment. So, now we're going back, it is now walking your belt."

4.5.2.8 Stakeholder collaboration

Participants stated that, for CSR to make an impact and be sustainable, there has to be collaboration with other stakeholders. In reference to a project that the mine had undertaken in collaboration with the municipality, Participant 4 remarked:

"...we talked about the industrial park, and that is part of an ongoing intervention by the local municipality to intervene in the local township economies, and it is within their IDPs and municipal planning for the sustainable future. I think it helps then to choose projects in collaboration with the partners that you know are going to be able to sustain themselves into the future."

Participant 6 shared the same view, and accentuated the importance of collaboration with other mining companies and government:

"So, that is why the collaboration with different levels of governance, as well in collaboration with the other mining houses or other industries, that can assist as well. So, by the time we walk away, we have had a successful handover to say, 'We step back', and have this project run on its own."

The researcher probed further to establish the stance of mines regarding mine-to-mine collaboration on CSR projects. Participant 9 and 2 agreed that the DMR supported such collaboration. Participant 2 remarked:

"I think now times are changing, because DMR is also realising that, with collaboration, there can be more impact, rather than working in isolation on projects."

Participants 14, 4, and 12 also spoke about the significance of collaboration between the mine and the municipality on projects during and after implementation. The crucial contribution

made by the municipality in making land available was acknowledged by Participant 14, who stated:

“The municipality was also involved and donated the land, and the mine constructed the structure.”

With regard to sustainability of CSR projects hinging on management after handover, Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 described the collaboration with other stakeholders as pivotal. Participant 1 said:

“...we involve the relevant stakeholders so that, when you plan together, the mining sector and the municipality, we make sure that all stakeholders are on board, so that these other stakeholders can carry on with the project, so that it does not die out.”

The sentiments expressed above demonstrate the importance of the short-term involvement of certain stakeholders, such as the mine, in CSR projects.

4.5.3 Theme 3: CSR integration

Research Sub-question was: **How is sustainable CSR implementation integrated in the business processes?**

The question was aimed at determining the different strategies that are put in place to foster CSR sustainability as part of business processes. Participants noted that integration was guided by the business plan, multi-disciplinary teams, and reporting.

4.5.3.1 Integration guided by the business plan

Participant 4 stated that CSR integration was anchored in the larger company's business plan and filtered through to the various operations. In other words, the manner of integration was derived from the company's mandate. Participant 4 elaborated:

“It starts with the business plan, the business plan for both the larger company and that of various operations, like, for instance, in our mine, the social performance aspect is part of that business plan. So, we then have a clear mandate as to what we need to deliver in that space. So, it would generally for us, revolve around the more formal legislated aspects like the Social and Labour Plan.”

Participant 5 stated that integration was enhanced in the internal reporting between the teams through platforms created by the company:

“...as part of the business plan, we are required to articulate our plan, which we will effectively deliver on the committee strategy. So, that is monitored at an extra level ... you are part of the team of heads of department that, on a weekly basis, report on the various indicators or commitments that your department would have made to the relevant operation.”

4.5.3.2 Multi-disciplinary teams and internal reporting

Participant 2 reflected on the progress made, from CSR implementation being relegated to community development officials in the company to it now being ‘everyone’s business’. Participant 2 perceived the role of senior management in setting the tone at top as having been the driving force behind establishing multi-disciplinary teams to attain CSR integration:

“We went through a time, we were sort of an adopted child; still belonged to the business, but an adopted child. At that time, the employer realised that we needed to do better. Then there was a massive drive of multi-disciplinary integration. And when that happened, it was a big push. So, everyone was forced to start looking at: What is my role in that person's job? And that person would also be asking themselves: What is my role in this person's job?”

Participant 5 expressed that integration was fostered through participation of community development personnel in internal committees of the company, such as Procurement, to ensure representation of community aspirations:

“...community development specialists and superintendents sit as part of the Bid Adjudication Committee to make sure that the needs of the community find reflection, or the voice of the community is expressed in those committees, to make sure that we just manage community dynamics and noise. Because we find that procurement is the biggest area that can destabilise the business.”

Participant 6 perceived the establishment of an internal committee incorporating a multi-disciplinary team as crucial to foster integration. The participant stated that the practice was that, at this committee’s meeting, CSR projects were discussed, including their performance,

with broad representation, including management, and added that such platforms were crucial for integration:

“...and the other thing that also is key for us is internal communication. So, we have also established a ward we call a ‘ward committee’, where Social Performance gives feedback on the social projects that they have implemented, plan on implementing any of the CSI projects that they plan on implementing. So, we sit with management, and we discuss everything from financials and statistical requirements. A lot of relevant departments will include Procurement, your Environmental, your entire management team, from your GM to your Engineering Manager, your Technical Services Manager, Binding Manager, your entire management team. And Social Performance gives feedback on some of the social projects that they have implemented, or planning on implementing, or ideas or designs, whatever that they have. All that gets communicated once a month in that forum, internally.”

Participant 2 spoke about the benefits of integration, noting that the business could leverage internal resources and budget:

“...how the business then supports us and ... integration. Then we get an engineer seconded ... the other type of support would be in terms of finances, because if we did not make profits, then our finances would really leave a lot to be desired. And then you find technical departments have good budget. Then there are times where we can identify a project and go negotiate with our colleagues that, you know, if you can support us.”

Participant 5 deemed the use of consultants on CSR projects despite the availability of the requisite skills within the company as suggestive of internal company projects being valued more than community projects. Participant 5 described this tendency as an institutional challenge affecting integration:

“You have all the internal expertise that you need, you've got engineers of all sorts in the company, and project managers; however, when it comes to the execution of Social and Labour Planning projects, you are required to go external, because they have prioritised the needs of other internal customers. Is that making sense? So, as much as we realise how critical delivering an SLP commitment is, there is, and I do not think it is deliberate, but there is a tendency to prioritise internal projects, some of results or

infrastructure versus external ones, therefore resulting in us having to go outside to source for such services.”

Participant 18 acknowledged integration challenges, mainly the competing priorities of mining companies to drive “mining fundamentals”, on the one hand, and “CSR” on the other. Participant 18 indicated that having a dedicated person responsible for CSR in the company is crucial to foster integration:

“That is very difficult to integrate. Remember, mining is very much different from a clinic. So, you must have a specific, dedicated person to look after it all the time. And, basically, integrate them into more into your current meetings, on a weekly basis, at least on your management, weekly senior management meeting, and give them x amount of time during that meeting, because, whatever happens, we run on mining, and we look at mining, and we look at making money for the investors or the partners for yourself. And that is obviously the main core focus of any business. Then you cannot have your main core focus being moved away. And core focus tends to engulf this whole meeting. So, a lot of things like personnel and social development and responsibility programmes and all that stuff gets pushed to the last, and it is a quick five-minute agenda. But, if you have a dedicated person on your management team just doing that, then it will be better integrated.”

Overall, participants believed that CSR integration was fostered by having a multi-disciplinary team and internal reporting.

4.5.4 Theme 4: Socio-economic development outcomes

The researcher asked the participants the following question: *What are the specific socio-economic development outcomes that community-based CSR projects have delivered?*

The responses highlighted the following: Access to services, Capacity-building, and Access to economic opportunities.

4.5.4.1 Access to services

The question elicited positive responses of a tangible legacy left by the mines. Participants 5, 7, and FGP1 acknowledged the contributions made in advancing access to education.

Participant FGP1 described how, through the construction of additional classrooms, overcrowding was reduced:

“...here at the school, this was an old building, which did not have sufficient space. Initially, the place was very small, but they built the staff rooms for the teachers, the kitchen, and bigger facilities. Even our classes were small and overcrowded, but things became better when they built for us.”

Participants 3, 5, 7, 8, 9,12,18, FGP1 and FGP3 noted how the various facilities constructed by the mines had improved access to various services. For instance, Participant 9 described how the community multi-purpose centre had brought various government services closer to the people, which would not have been possible through government efforts alone:

“We have constructed a multi-purpose centre also funded by the mining companies. Now we need to house SA Social Services Agency [SASSA], Department of Home Affairs, and our pay point for electricity in that facility. So, it brings the services closer to the communities, something that we cannot do alone.”

Participant 8 echoed the sentiment that infrastructure development had provided improved access across various services:

“If they build a clinic, obviously, there is a benefit that people will now have access to proper health facilities at their doorstep or in their neighbourhood. If there is a boring of a borehole, then people will have access to water, which is a basic service.”

Participants 5, 10, 11, and 14 noted the broadening of access to ECD facilities through the construction of facilities. Participant 11 related the benefit to the children and how the community described the facility:

“They [the parents] say the place is big for the children to enjoy inside, they can also play outside. The place has a large play area for their children to play, the classes are big for the children to learn ... when you teach the children, we have charts that were put in the class room, the children can move around and point at the charts.”

Participant 10 described how the ECD centre had also assisted in creating a sense of pride amongst the community members. The facility had sparked interest in ECD in the community, and people wanted to be associated with the facility:

“You know, as a parent, knowing that my daughter or my granddaughter is attending the facility constructed by one of the biggest mines in Middelburg is a big thing. Every parent wants to take the child there, and it makes the economy of the community to grow a little bit. Every person who was not interested in ECD or not taking their child to the school now says, ‘I want my daughter, my granddaughter, to be part of that school.’”

4.5.4.2 Capacity-building

Participants 2, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, FGP2, and FGP3 believed one of the major outcomes delivered by the ECD capacity-building project was the skills development of ECD teachers in the administration and overall management of the centre. Participants agreed that the ECD training assisted the ECD teachers in their daily functions and the performance of duties. Participant 13 described the skills acquired through the programme as follows:

“...some of the things that I did not know, now I know, especially the planning, management, leading of the centre, and controlling of the centre. How you deal with conflict? How you talk with your staff? How you plan? ... there is a lot that I have benefited and ways to handle my staff; I must be careful. And even the way that we plan for the children, the themes, everything, because the management is not all about the managing in the office, it was managing throughout the centre, even in class...”

Participant 14 believed that the children’s development was significantly impacted by the teacher’s training, a sentiment shared by many participants. Participant 14 said:

“ECD training benefited us on how to handle the children, planning, and to understand the development of a child and where there is delayed development. They taught us how to develop a child for school readiness, to develop the child mentally, physically, and socially. Emotionally, we can love and enjoy our work because we know how to handle children. Without training, it is difficult to stay with a child when you do not know what to do. So, trainings assisted us a lot.”

Participants 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, FGP1, FGP2, who were themselves teachers, expressed a sense of pride and achievement in acquiring a formal ECD qualification. Participant 14 expressed a sense of self-confidence and empowerment in her work, to the extent that she could engage parents and give feedback on their child’s development:

“Training was beneficial because you now know and have the power as the teacher to explain to a parent what you are teaching their children. The parents will also see the progress in their children’s development. You can explain to the parents and show them the recording on the development of their children from the beginning to where the child is.”

Participants 1, 2, 10, 12, 14, 17, and FGP3 described the benefits of having a nurturing facility where children can be left during the day - a safe and secure environment that provides stimulation for their development. Participant 1 described in detail the surroundings within which the project was located and how it had enhanced the developmental capacity of children and stimulate the socio-economic development:

“Had it not been for that ECD centre, the socio-economic issue was going to be even worse, because we know that, in the RDP area, it is where you see children roaming around the streets, not attending school, being neglected, and so on. So, because of this project, children’s self-esteem and development will be boosted.”

Participant 2 also said that these have become places where children’s educational development is nurtured:

“...it is no longer they go to day care and they sleep and they play; they now must have activities, because you have educational material, they train you how to use the material. So, now it becomes you have got course content for your class and the material to use to conduct your classrooms.”

Participants expressed a sense of empowerment and value added by the capacity-building programme.

4.5.4.3 Access to economic opportunities

Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and FGP1 believed that the training had granted them access to new opportunities which improved their economic opportunities. Participant 1 appreciated that four beneficiaries of the ECD training had secured employment in further education and training (FET) colleges and had become lecturers:

“Some of the teachers who went through this ECD training were absorbed by the Nkangala FET. They took four of our students who have benefited in this programme, who are now lectures at the FET.”

Participant 4 acknowledged that training had formalised the ECD centres and rendered them eligible for provincial and national recognition and access to grant funding

“...this intervention basically enabled those people managing and running those institutions to be formalised within the system to get formal qualifications to improve their own service delivery, but it also then entitled them to national and provincial Early Childhood Development grants and support structures.”

Participant 10 perceived the training as a stepping stone to starting an ECD centre which was empowering financially because they became eligible to starting their own ECD's, as the by-laws of the municipality requires a formal qualification:

“The training helps them when they apply for a ECD [centre] with the municipality, because the by-laws of Steve Tshwete says you cannot start an ECD [centre] without any paper qualification and that you are knowledgeable about ECDs [ECD centres], so the training helps a lot.”

Participants 1, 2, 10, 12, 16, and FGP2 indicated that the capacity-building programme had paved a career path for ECD teachers, some of whom had lacked formal qualifications. Participant FGP2 described how the initial training and subsequent qualifications she obtained had opened up economic opportunities for her:

“I managed to undertake the Grade R course. I then pursued my Teacher's Diploma, and then I was promoted to Grade 1 to teach here. I am now gaining more skills, and it opened a lot of opportunities for me, because I wonder where would we be because, with only Grade 12, we would not have gone very far...”

CSR efforts by the mining sector have contributed mainly access to services, skills development, and the nurturing of the children's development.

4.5.5 Theme 5: Sustainable CSR

Research Sub-Question 5 was: *What constitutes sustainable CSR?* The research question sought to elicit an understanding of the elements that were perceived to be critical in the attainment of sustainable CSR. This question elicited mixed views from participants, as shown in Snapshot 4.10.

Snapshot 4.10: Elements of sustainable CSR by participant groups

Elements of sustainable CSR	Focus group	Community beneficiaries	Mine participants	Municipal participants	Total
● Sustainable CSR: Financial benefits	0	3	4	3	10
● Sustainable CSR: Operational infrastructure	3	5	4	7	19
● Sustainable CSR: Independent of mine	0	0	2	3	5
● Sustainable CSR: Without negative impact	0	1	2	2	5
● Sustainable CSR: Stakeholder empowerment	1	8	5	2	16
● Sustainable CSR: Stakeholder relationships	0	5	0	0	5
Total	4	22	17	17	60

Participants described sustainable CSR as encompassing functional infrastructure, stakeholder empowerment, an economic contribution, and the absence of a negative impact. The stakeholders differed with regard to stakeholder relationships and independence from the mine.

4.5.5.1 Financial benefits

Participants 2, 4, 8, 10, 12, and 15 shared the view that sustainable CSR implies the flow of financial benefits. In other words, there ought to be a deliberate effort to ensure communities are also economically empowered. Participant 12 explained this in the context of the ECD centre:

“If it is fully equipped. If there is enough material, I think that is how it can stay sustainable, if there are enough financial resources.”

Participant 8 agreed that while infrastructure projects remained the key focus area in sustainability, there was now a need to augment that by addressing economic demands. In other words, CSR would need to have a dual focus. Participant 8 stated:

“...what we now do is balancing infrastructure. We are now balancing where you find that we construct a road or a clinic, then we also identify a local economic impactful project that the mine can do which is sustainable. For instance, we will say, start also putting up a factory of brickmaking, a chicken broiler project, which will stimulate

enterprise development and make sure that people in that community are economically active.”

Participant 2 accentuated the need for the mines to contribute towards economic development and that there be a visible legacy that is detached from the mine, one that penetrates other markets and industries that operate independently of the company:

“If I [meaning the mine] found you running a small business and you probably had opportunities but you didn't have a sustainable opportunity, then the income generation would have to be improved and, for us, then what would be sustainable would be you not depending on the mine for opportunities, but your business having the ability and capability to do business in multiple industries, so that, whether the mine shuts down, your business remain, because you lose just one client, but you still have other clients from other areas.”

4.5.5.2 Operational infrastructure

Participants also agreed that sustainable CSR also entails functional and operational infrastructure. In other words, the assets that have been constructed by the mine should remain operational after CSR implementation. Participants 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 12 believed interventions that are geared at infrastructure development were sustainable if communities, including future generations, could continue to enjoy them after the mine had closed. According to Participant 9, infrastructure development is a springboard for further development, and that it yields long-term value:

“I will still go back to infrastructure, because infrastructure enables us to do economic development or economic activities. So, if you put up infrastructure that will last for years. It is funding of infrastructure that government cannot fund on their own. So, if you fund those, then we know it is going to be there for the next 30 or 40 years or so on”.

Participant 3 was emphatic that the legacy of infrastructure development was something that the mines need to invest in while mining was underway, to enable communities to thrive post-closure:

“...there is no other way a mine can come back after mining and say, ‘No, we are preparing post-closure infrastructure, we are preparing these for post-closure’, yet they

are not receiving any income from the production of the mineral. While you are still producing, that is where you take part of the income and budget for post-closure. You build infrastructure necessary for post-closure and you engage with communities while you are still realising and reaping the rewards of mining in their communities...”

4.5.5.3 Stakeholder empowerment

There was also consensus amongst the three respondent groups that sustainable CSR was enabled by stakeholder empowerment. Participant 2 described sustainable CSR as interventions that leave a positive contribution that does not rely on the existence of the mine:

“I [the mine] need to leave you better off than when I found you, so, if I found you unskilled and unemployed, then it really means you need to be in employment and that I should consider a sustainable impact. If I found you running a small business and you probably had opportunities but you didn't have a sustainable opportunity, then the income generation would have to have improved, and, for us, then what would be sustainable would be you not depending on the mine for opportunities but your business having the ability and capability to do business in multiple industries, so that, whether the mine shuts down, your business remain, because you lose just one client, but you still have other clients from other areas. So, leaving you better off than when we found you”.

Participant 7 shared the same sentiments:

“...for me, it says the community can live even after the mines have left the project. They can continue living and be sustainable themselves without the support of their mines ... they should leave us in a better position ... being left better off, it means they should empower us make sure that we are economically active even after they have left.”

Participant 18 suggested that the mines should look beyond compliance and implement projects that will empower communities to operate independently of the mine:

“...it is not that I say it's not sustainable, but that is the norm and ticking of the boxes. You build a clinic, you build a pool for the community, you build the crash, you do this. We must look past the four little points that they require from you, or which is a nice-to-have in your social development plan to look at, rather empowering people.”

Participant 13 focused on skills development:

“I think that they are contributing towards sustainability because the way they've skilled us, you must use it. The skill that you received, you must plant it back and make something out of that skill. Just do not sit with the skill that we have received.”

4.5.5.4 Independence from mine

Participants 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 held the view that CSR initiatives should operate independently of the mine, and that mining resources should not only be invested in one project. Participant 5 believed that there should be a separation between the mine and the project in order to prevent dependency:

“I keep referring to cut the umbilical cord but still function in our absence, which talk to our focus areas. Secondly, the things that will be self-running and not dependent on the existence of the mine, and, if we were to close their mine tomorrow, these initiatives will be continuing.”

Participant 8 held a similar view, describing sustainable initiatives as those whose benefit continue into the future:

“...it is something that its impact can be measured long after the project has been completed. So, any project that is sustainable, to benefit the community during their mining and after they finished mining, that would be a project that is seen to be sustainable.”

Participant 6 also emphasised the need for interventions with a lasting impact that are operated independently of the mine:

“...something that can be upheld for a long time, especially with the projects that we looking to implement, whether it be environmental projects, social projects, we need to look at if they can stand the test of time in the absence of the mine. So, if you remove the mine from the equation, will these projects still stand? My understanding of it also is to say that it is not something that is going to negatively impact on, for example, the resources that we need to look at when implementing these projects”.

4.5.5.5 Stakeholder relationships

Participants 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, FGP1, FGP2, and FGP3 noted the importance of stakeholder relationships to ensure sustainable CSR projects. Participant 12 stated that mining companies should maintain long-term relations with beneficiaries and provide on-going support:

“Continuous support to community organisations and intervening where necessary.”

Participant 13 expressed a sense of frustration at the mine’s short-term approach to CSR projects, questioning how sustainable impact would be made. The participant called for long-term relationships that entail monitoring of the beneficiaries to assess impact:

“...they gave us this ECD qualification, but they didn't even come to our centre. They do not know even if we are implementing what we have learned. Even the municipality, they did not do anything about that. They do not do check ... no follow-up nothing. They do not even know if those learners are still there at the centres, because people are changing work. Because, when you take someone to school, you expect that person to make a difference, to bring an impact on that centre, but they do not do any follow-up.”

Participant 10 shared a similar view, and believed that, for CSR to have a lasting impact on the community; mining companies cannot participate with a short-term view without an interest in the returns on investment. According to Participant 10, a short-term perspective deprives the community of a benefit, as beneficiaries of capacity-building programmes do not offer anything back to the community. Participant 10 said:

“The mine must not look at ECD intervention in a short term but rather long term, because the community does not benefit from their investment, as the teachers leave ECDs [ECD centres] soon after training. They go to work at restaurants and kitchens. I used to tell them about the problem that they train the people and then, from there, they do not follow up to check if there is value in training the teachers. There is no long-term benefit to the community.”

Participant 14 was emphatic regarding the mine’s responsibility of developing nearby communities:

“...mines are supposed to help. Perhaps we [the community] do not have water; we need to fetch water from far. It is the mine that is supposed to get boreholes to help the community. Say the community does not have roads but the mine has bulldozers, they need to help. Not that we are only expecting government to help, what then is the role of the mine if they do not help? We cannot suffer with a mine in our space.”

Participant 14 believed that it was the responsibility of the mine to take care of ECD practitioners because they are “community helpers”. The participant felt entitled to receive support from the mine, suggesting that mines are duty-bound to do so because communities suffer the consequences of hosting the mine, such as blasting. Participant 14 stated:

“My understanding of sustainable is that the mines must take good care of us so that we do not live in poverty, because we are community helpers and mines are supposed to help us so that we can be successful, and when we do not have money, they need to step in. It is their duty to help us so that life becomes better.”

The researcher probed further, stating: *“But the mines say their business is to run mines and not run ECD centres.* Participant 14 was emphatic in stating that:

“No, they need to take care of the people in the community that they operate in. Mines are supposed to skill and employ our children. The community needs to benefit from the mine. How can we have mines and yet live in poverty? From time to time, we live with blasting and our houses are cracking. What is the use? They need to skill and train our children so that they benefit the community and us who are running projects. They need to support us. Perhaps the ECD [centre] needs painting or fencing. They need to help so that the children can be safe, the community that they serve.”

Participants 8 and 16 also noted the negative impact of blasting. Participant 16 remarked that blasting was a threat to sustainable CSR:

“Blasting affects sustainability because our houses are no longer stronger; they are no longer strong. You can see they are full of cracks all over.”

The above responses suggest that Sustainable CSR is perceived differently across the participant groups. In describing sustainable CSR, participants agreed on three fundamental elements, namely, (i) CSR should yield post-mining economic benefits, (ii) functional and operational infrastructure, (iii) and stakeholder empowerment. Divergent perspectives surfaced

on CSR being operated independently of the mine versus a relational approach. Some participants also believed that blasting was a threat to infrastructure development.

4.5.6 Theme 6: Role played by the mine in sustainable CSR

The researcher posed the question: “What role are coal mines playing to ensure CSR projects are sustainable beyond the funding period?” This question elicited mixed reactions, which suggested a lack of clarity. Participants 2, 5, and 13 considered the skills development offered by mines as their role in ensure sustainability beyond funding period. Participant 5 elaborated in detail how capacity-building had been expanded to address the crucial elements of running an ECD centre. Training had been offered for centre management, teachers, support staff, and cooks, as well as on landscaping. Participant 5 concluded that a mine has no role beyond capacity-building:

“So, there is an element of training, both intrapreneurial. As I have said, the teachers and the support staff, for example, working at the ECD centre, were trained on ECD basics, that teachers would receive a yearlong UNISA diploma on ECD. The ladies that cook the meals were taken through a basic nutrition course to make sure that they know what they are doing, what children need to eat for the best development. The school principal would have gotten on a management training course in terms of how to run ECD centre; that was done by UNISA as well. And there was a gentleman that, we also fund that through our ESD programme, to run a garden maintenance business, now that you speak of garden maintenance. However, we do not pay that gentleman. He was just equipped with the business skills and start-up capital to buy equipment that is assisting the centre and paid by the each ECD centre to do the facilities management of that facility. I think that is how we have contributed towards the sustainability of the initiative. Beyond that, there is not much we could have done.”

Participant 4 opined that sustainability is ensured at the beginning of a project, and not after handover. Thus the mine’s role is the careful selection of projects and ensuring that projects form part of a broader mandate or policy:

“You ensure those things before the project, not afterwards... I think there would be quite a lengthy engagement to try and see how this fit into the national policy and programmes, because, if you are just going to say, ‘Okay, it sounds like a good idea, here is R100 000, or take this building’, then you are just doing some charity and giving

up of donations. That may or may not be sustainable. But it is not generally something that as a business we would pursue without some kind of sustainability framework ... and the sustainability aspect there would be that we are supporting a national intervention or national programme. And the mere fact that it may not be sustainable to some of the individual beneficiaries is offset by the fact that the programme is sustainable in terms of the country's agenda and policy.”

Participants 7, 8, and 9 believed that the mine had no role to play after project implementation, because the projects themselves were in response to the municipality's priorities, and, therefore, ensuring project sustainability was government's responsibility. Participant 7 perceived the mine's role to be the supporting the municipality in addressing priority areas:

“...most of the things that they do as mines is that they make sure that they are responding to what we require, or as a municipality would have prioritised through the IDP. Hence, most of the projects they are implementing will be informed by the IDP, which is the role of the municipality to then plan correctly. So, that is what they do. But beyond that, as a municipality, we took a further initiative by making sure that we develop a monitoring tool that would assist us to understand what the mines are planning and what the mines are currently implementing.”

Participant 8 shared a similar view, pointing out that maintenance of assets constructed by the mine was the role of the municipality:

“...if you as a local government said, ‘I [the mine] must build you a road or tar your main road, and I have done so, but it is not my budget to make sure that there is no pothole.’ Part of your budget is to ensure that, if there is a pothole, you maintain, so it is a difficult one, it is a difficult one ... it is not for the mine to maintain. Yes, it can maintain it, but, as I am saying, at a particular point, it must be taken over, because, remember, that the mine also has a life of mine.”

Participant 9 concurred:

“...it is not really the duty of the mine to sustain the project, because, remember, theirs is to do as we request, and they hand over or donate the infrastructure to us.”

Participant 3 stated that post-mine-closure budgets as critical for CSR project sustainability:

“We plan for post-closure, and these projects are integrated. And we have got post-closure budgets that will help to sustain these CSR projects. And, besides, we have stakeholders that we engage with prior to closing the mines, and we make sure that we plan for that.”

Participants 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, and FGP1 had no knowledge of the role played by the mine to ensure project sustainability. They claimed they had never had contact with the mine after their training. Participant 14 stated:

“Since they built for us, that is it, they never came back.”

Participant 15 said:

“No, we do not know of such a role because we do not engage with the mines”.

Participant 13 lamented the lack of engagement after the capacity-building project:

“...they gave us this ECD qualification, but they did not even come to our centre. They do not know even if we are implementing what we have learned. Even the municipality, they did not do anything about that. They do not do the checks. No follow-up, no nothing. They do not even know if those learners are still there at the centres, because people are changing work. Because, when you take someone to school, you expect that person to make a difference, to bring an impact on that centre, but they do not do any follow-up.”

Participant 13 complained about the lack of impact of the training because of high staff turnover amongst trained teachers. The participant indicated that, if there had been a post-implementation programme, the mines would have been aware of this. Participant 13 suggested that an agreement should be signed with beneficiaries to ensure tenure:

“That is why most of our teachers, we hire them, we take them to these courses, and, when they want to quit, they quit. There is nothing that binds you that if you want to enrol for this course, you must sign to say you will serve the school maybe for so many months or years before you want to quit. Every time we start our teachers from the start, especially with the mine, even if we as principals can bind them, it is not taken seriously, but if the binding letter can come from the mine or the municipality institution, or maybe the mine or maybe the men's party, maybe it can be better.”

FGP1 posited that, as the mining company had invested funds into the project, it should have an interest in the outcomes:

“I would like them to make follow-up on their projects. Isn’t it that it is like they have given us a car? They should be interested as to how am I maintaining the vehicle, it is in good condition? Is the car still moving, the tyres are they fine, and make recommends on what to be done?”

The researcher probed further, asking: *What do you want them to do?*

FGP3 suggested that an impact study be conducted on the performance of learners:

“Maybe they could also take the learners from those that were trained by their skilled teachers and continue to assess how they are progressing when compared to other learners whose teachers were not trained. They need to conduct an assessment.”

The divergent opinions suggest a lack of clarity regarding the role of the mine, indicating a need for further examination of the role of companies in CSR projects post-funding.

4.5.7 Theme 7: Coal mines’ approach to communities

The researcher posed the question: *“What are the methods used by coal mines when approaching communities, how they ensure buy-in and what they offered communities?”*

4.5.7.1 Approach to communities

There was consistency in the responses across all groups. Participants spoke about public meetings, councillors, stakeholder engagement, and engagement through municipal platforms such as IDP and local economic development (LED) forums. The mines’ approaching of communities was largely facilitated through municipal platforms, as noted by Participants 5, 2, 1, 7, 8, and 9. In this instance, Participant 7 explained:

“They [the mine] are doing that through the municipality. We have LED and IDP forums where communities come and raise issues with the municipality coming from the councillors.”

Participant 5 noted:

“The first one is what is called the Integrated Development Forum meetings that are run in co-ordinated by the meetings with representatives of different wards from the particular municipality, and you're able to gauge and ascertain what community needs are out there.”

Participant 2 stated:

“...we have to acknowledge the democratically elected leaders of the community, which would be the ward councillors, and with ward councillors come ward committees.”

Aside from municipal structures, Participants 2, 5, and 9 referred to engagement forums, which were platforms created by the mine. Participant 2 noted:

“The first layer is the engagement forums. We issued a notification for people to express interest if they want to participate in that platform.”

Participant 4 indicated that there was no specific engagement method for any stakeholder; rather, circumstances dictated the appropriate mechanism:

“There will be various engagement platforms and forums, and we would use the ones that are most suitable in the circumstance.”

Participant 8 described some of the logistical arrangements of the mine to convene a community meeting:

“They call community members to a community hall or erected tent if there's no infrastructure. They just loud hail to say, ‘Look, on this day, the mine would like to meet you’, they set up the meeting, then it becomes a consultative process.”

Participant 18 described engagements with communities as terrifying because of community expectations and demands placed on the mine:

“When the mine goes out to communities, that is the scariest thing to do, because whom you have got on that committee depends if it is going to be a success or not. Because you can end up having years of endless fights of ‘We want this, we want that’, and you say, ‘But it is not sustainable; if we can do this, we can do that.’”

Participants 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 called for direct engagement with mines and not through the structures created. Participant 10 indicated that it was very rare for the mine to reach out to

and engage with community organisations. The absence of direct engagement between the mine and community organisations gave rise to mistrust. Participant 10 said:

“Very rare for them [the mine] to come looking for [name of facility]. This country has changed to something else that I do not know, earlier on around the 1990s, they used to do that [engage directly]. Not now. Now, there is a lot of corruption in our area. You will see things on papers that an organisation has been funded, it depends on who you are, whom you are connected with. That is what is happening.”

4.5.7.2 Mine’s preparation to obtain buy-in

Participants 3 and 5 agreed that the mine has a department that handled community engagements. Participant 5 referred to the department as an interface between the community and the company:

“...the interface between the company and those communities would be through the community development team.”

Participant 3 described the arrangements for engaging communities as follows:

“We have got the Department, which handle communities, our social role players; they are experts in the field. And it's not the responsibility of everyone to engage with the community.”

Participant 5 disagreed that the objective of engagement with the community was to solicit buy-in, and stated that the company followed a bottom-up approach in order to reach consensus. Participant 5 then described the process:

“We do not engage communities with the intention to get buy-in, because our community strategy is the culmination of an engagement process. The very engagement you do allows you to formulate that strategy and execute. So, we wouldn't necessarily have a draft strategy to take out to the community, but it works the other way around. It is a bottom-up approach, where in we engage until there's agreement that, indeed, this will be your focus areas and should find expression in your strategy.”

Similarly, a cautious approach was displayed in Participant 4, who sought to dispel any perceptions of bribery or facilitation of approval. Participant 4 pointed out that requests were handled on a merit basis:

“We engage, and then, if a particular intervention or project or even a request meets our rules or mandates, then we would implement that particular action or project. We do not facilitate approvals.”

4.5.7.3 Coal mines’ offerings to communities

There was consensus that the mines offered attendees of meetings refreshments. Participant 5 indicated that the company offered a meal to community members who attended meetings, because that was a “decent thing” to do, because they sacrificed their time. Participant 5 further noted that promotional materials such as T-shirts were offered during social awareness campaigns:

“It is just a decent thing to do to offer somebody a meal because they have sacrificed their time to come and meet with you. So, that is all that we offer. And there's obviously instances where you are running certain campaigns, you would then have certain giveaways, like T-shirts, etc., gender-based awareness campaigns or HIV AIDS, education campaigns, etc. But, for normal, routine type of engagements, it is just limited to catering.”

Similarly, Participant 3 mentioned that the mine provided water and drinks to attendees, paid for the venue if it was a private facility, and paid the facilitators of the meetings. Participant 2 also confirmed that the mine offered attendees refreshments. Transport was perceived as a liability, and only considered for vulnerable groups. Participant 2 said:

“...yes, refreshments. I think the latest would be there was a hot topic on transport in those type of things. And, you know, the standpoint of the mine has always been that transport is a liability. So, it is something we only look at for immediate ... vulnerable people.”

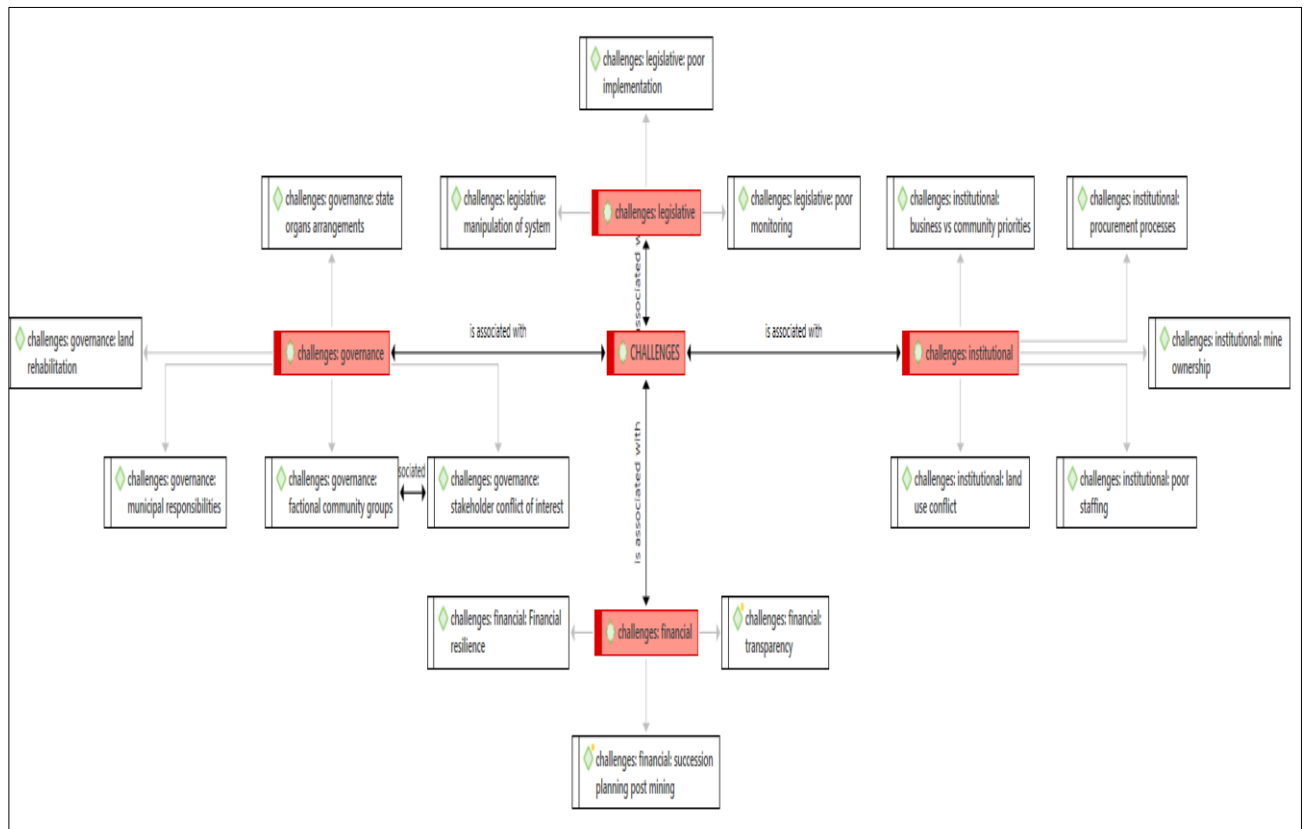
Participants 13, 15, and 16 also acknowledged that they had received catering from the mine during the ECD training. The municipality representatives acknowledged that, where there was no community hall, the mine would procure a tent locally and hire the chairs and tables.

Generally, participants agreed that the mines offered refreshments and transport where necessary. Responses also suggest that the mines’ offerings were discretionary and not the rule. Participant 4 reluctantly confirmed that refreshments were offered to attendees, stating: *“it is on merits case by case basis, but, generally, we would not do things like that”*.

4.5.8 Theme 8: Organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability

Participants ventilated challenges within the governance, financial, institutional arrangements, and legal confronting CSR sustainability. Snapshot 4.11 depicts the challenges confronting CSR implementation:

Snapshot 4.11: Challenges in CSR implementation



4.4.8.1 Governance challenges

There appeared to be misalignment between the DMR and the municipality, resulting in disputes regarding CSR priorities. Participant 4 acknowledged that the two government institutions cannot come to an agreement on CSR matters:

“...we have problems with SLP when the DMR and local municipalities cannot see eye to eye. We are left in the lurch because we can't continue with the project because the organs of state cannot come to an agreement.”

Participant 5 shared a similar view, and described the relationship between the two organs of state as poorly co-ordinated. Participant 5 felt that the SLP guidelines empowered

municipalities to conclude on CSR priorities because the SLP must first be signed off by the local authority before it could be submission to the DMR:

“...the municipality which we are expected to consult as a critical stakeholder by law would shift certain service delivery expectations from them to us. You mentioned something about a huge focus on infrastructure, most of which is talks to the community surveys that we do ourselves. But a lot of it is forced down our throats by the municipality because they fail to deliver on some of their community expectations.”

Participants 18 and 14 shared the view that the municipality was utilising CSR to advance municipal responsibilities, while the mine was aiming to develop the community. Participant 14 described infrastructure development through CSR as the municipality “*working for its pocket*”.

Participant 8 believed that mining companies were non-responsive and escaped working with the municipality, but showed responsiveness to DMR, to whom they are accountable. As a result, the municipality was unable to hold the companies accountable:

“...the mine feels they can bypass municipality mainly because there is nothing that the municipality can do. But they know that DMR could close them down today, and they are more responsive to them than the municipality.”

Participants 7 and 9 identified poor governance with regard to the facilitation of the release of land from the mine to the municipality after rehabilitation. Participant 7 lamented the slow release, indicating that it affected agricultural programmes of the municipality:

“...the biggest issue we have is that, as you know, the mining activities are competing with agriculture. When it comes to rehabilitated land, for instance, we never know as a municipality whether the rehabilitated land is available for agricultural purposes. So, those are the issues that we are still battling with when it comes to knowing when they have concluded their business and closed the mine. What happened to the process of rehabilitating and handing over the land for other purposes?”

Participant 9 believed that the rehabilitation of mined land was poorly managed, and that the funds meant for rehabilitation were not administered as expected:

“DMR cannot even manage the rehabilitation part properly. You see, because even then, there is a trust fund or there is a fund that DMR establishes. When you start

mining, you pay into that fund a lump sum which is to be used for rehabilitation. Sometimes, the mines and, in many instances, they do not give them [DMR] the money. They take an insurance and then cede it to a bank, and then have a way of generating interest out of that and say they will be rehabilitating, but who monitors the rehabilitation?”

Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8, spoke about the emergence of different factions from the community, with different interest groups making it difficult to manage CSR priorities. Participant 2 explained how the dynamics of interest groups had unfolded in the community:

“We first had the system that we all knew and understood with the local government elections; then we have councillors in place who represent the community. But now we have the in-between, where we have community structures saying, ‘We represent the community’, and if you check the interests that are coming from there, I am not even sure if they even align sometimes to the IDP or not. Sometimes, you just find that it is self-interest and that person comes to you and saying, ‘I have 400 members; these are my members, and I am speaking on their behalf’. So, those are some of the dynamics that, for us, are really challenging to achieve impact.”

According to Participants 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, and 18, factions were as a result of conflict of interest, and these delayed project implementation and threatened business continuity. Participant 1 observed that, in an attempt to maintain mine operations, mines gave consideration to different community structures, and no longer worked through the stakeholder forum:

“We used to have the stakeholder forum, but now the mining sectors are entertaining [paying attention to] these structures. I remember one of the mines said their bosses are saying they need to entertain these structures because they are on production schedule and cannot afford the road closures every day by structure. So, for them to produce, they need to entertain the structures, but it becomes a challenge because, as the municipality, then you are no longer in a position to pursue whatever you wanted to pursue, because structures will be looking at their interest, and structures will be requesting resources on behalf of the very same vulnerable groups.”

4.5.8.2 Financial challenges

Participants 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 raised the concern of a lack of financial resources, which affected the sustainability of CSR projects. Employees of ECD centres sometimes did not receive a salary for up to three months. Participant 13 described how difficult it was to hold these teachers accountable at work:

“We have two quarters without any funding, so we are struggling to pay our teachers and we cannot retain them. Some people, if they did not receive their salary, you cannot control them, you can't even go to their classes and say, ‘Hey!’, because you did not pay that person. Imagine working for three months without any salary.”

Participant 11 held the same view regarding the lack of funding being a major threat to sustainability:

“The thing that can make the project not to get through is when these teachers can cry and leave this place because we are not paid enough. That thing can kill us, because where are you going to get trained people to run this place?”

Participants 3, 6, 7, and 9 discussed challenges that would arise once the mine closed. Planning and creating an alternative stream of revenue in a historically mining town was described as essential, but participants noted challenges. Participant 6 said:

“I think is financial, and one is planning, especially when it comes to successional planning. Where a lot of the time, it is all good and well to implement projects that will make the operation look good at that specific snapshot in time. When there is no plan in place to say, what is going to happen when the mine walk away? So, there is no alternative streams of capital that is being investigated or looked into when the operation decides to walk away.”

Participant 7 raised a similar view with reference to re-skilling mine employees for alternative economic opportunities once the mine closes. The participant had observed from past mine closures that unskilled mine employees had been unprepared, resulting in unemployment:

“After they have completed mining activities, the very same communities that were there who were working in those mines never got an opportunity to then be trained for them to do other business. They were only focusing in the mining activity, which led us to have several people who are unemployable people who could not get jobs, and

because they only know how to deal with mining activities. So, if they can just improve a bit in terms of alternative skilling of their own laborers in particular, I am not talking about the skilled employees, those ones, I think they are able to sort themselves out and they can always go anywhere else. But the labourers, that is where our problem is, and that has then ballooned our indigent register, because majority of them are now unemployed.”

Participants 9 and 18 believed that there was non-compliance with legislation and corrupt dealings in the system. Participants 8 and 9 opined that the allocation of 1% net profit after tax was not transparent, and that there was abuse of the system by the mine. Participant 9 thought that there was misrepresentation of information and that the CSR budget was under-allocated because of manipulating of the system by the mine:

“SLPs are based on a certain percentage of their net profit, I think it is 1% of their net profit, but the profit is based on projections. Remember, they committed to an SLP right at the beginning of their operation, not at the end of a particular period and say, ‘We have made this much, we have paid our tax, and this is the net income.’ Therefore, a percentage of this will be how much they project. Now, when you project your project very low, such that your commitment is very low... So, we are not getting out of the mines what we’re supposed to rightfully get the exact amounts and percentages because of these technicalities, which the mines have grasped so, so well. So, they can manipulate the system legally, so and get away with murder.”

4.5.8.3 Institutional challenges

Participants 2, 5, and 6 perceived that the CSR units or departments in the mining companies responsible for driving community development were poorly resourced. Participant 5 felt that CSR implementation was not given the necessary support or prioritised by the mine, especially with regard to the allocation of human resources. This view arose from the observation that CSR was staffed by consultants and not from within the company, as detailed by Participant 5:

“...you have got all the internal expertise that you need, you have got engineers of all sorts in the company, and project managers; however, when it comes to the execution of Social and Labour Planning projects, you are required to go external, because they have prioritised the needs of other internal customers. Is that making sense? So, as much as we realise how critical delivering an SLP commitment is, there is, and I do not

think it's deliberate, but there is a tendency to prioritise internal projects, some of results or infrastructure versus external ones, therefore resulting in us having to go outside to source for such services.”

Participant 2 identified the misalignment between the company’s procurement processes and the goals they sought to achieve in facilitating local procurement. There appeared to be restrictions imposed by the company’s system. Participant 2 said:

“The other would be for us; we always have the view of, if I am doing a project for a community, I should procure community people. And, at times, our systems can be challenging for us to get community people. So, now we must find creative ways to enable that system. So, it is our own internal processes.”

Participant 5 stated that the company tended to prioritise internal projects, to the detriment of the community. Previously, funding for community projects had been delayed in favour of company priorities:

“Previously, the challenge internally was that, from a budgeting perspective, you would find that there are conflicting priorities, wherein I have committed to the DMR and the community that I will buy a waste truck in year one, but, come budget time, the business tells you, ‘No, we are expanding one of our operations, which will make us a lot of money in the next three years; therefore, shift your commitment to year three.’”

4.5.8.4 Legal challenges

Participants 3, 8, and 9 identified gaps in the legislative framework, mainly related to the monitoring and enforcement of the prescripts already in place. Participant 3 described the challenge as follows:

“There is legislation in place but, looking at it closely, I think it is the implementation of such, and the monitoring as well, is ensuring that the mine does not go mine and then close shop and there is no track record. You cannot find mine X which mined in the area and hold them responsible for what they did and making sure that the impact is corrected. So, on the legislation, probably we need to investigate detail. I am aware of what is in the legislation, but it is the implementation part that I need. I think it needs more teeth, more grind, and more grip.”

Participant 9 expressed frustrations at the lack of transparency in the mines' financial reporting, making it difficult to verify if disclosures were truthful. This secrecy led Participant 9 to suspect misrepresentation of information and an inability to hold mines accountable:

“The biggest challenge, which is what most municipalities are facing, is to say mines commit, because, at DMR, they take the actual figures, and now the gap between local government and DMR is what makes it hard for municipalities to monitor SLPs. That is our challenge as an organisation, as the municipality. The monitoring of it and ensuring that what is banked is actually what was made as per the financial statements, which we don't have privy to. We are not privy to it, and therefore cannot hold them accountable to say, ‘The mine made 100 million, therefore 1% should be spent. We can we just take what they are telling us.’”

Participant 9 believed that the mines had not fully embraced CSR, but were merely seeking compliance with the law. Participant 9 also believed that the mines had mastered the system, and were escaping their responsibilities due to weaknesses in the systems:

“They are using it [SLP] as a compliance, other than as a developmental tool. So, they can manipulate the system. So, the system is not strong enough, the controls are not strong enough to can pin them to their obligations. They are able to manoeuvre an office. They are doing other things underhand, which I can mention, but it is that is how they mastered the art. They can use one licence for different operations within the space, and DMR might not even pick it up.”

From the above, it is clear that the discussions on challenges elicited different responses across the different participant groups.

4.5.9 Theme 9: Coal mines' efforts to ensure sustainable CSR

The final interview question was posed only to those who represented the mines and the municipality. The researcher asked: *Why would you say your coal mine has done everything possible to ensure sustainable CSR?*

Participants offered mixed responses in their assessments of coal mines' efforts to deliver sustainable CSR. Participants 4, 6, and 8 believed that important strides had been taken and that some visible impact had been made, albeit that the goals had not been reached. Participant 4 believed the mine had done everything possible, and that lessons had been learned:

“I think it is a constant striving for that, and it is certainly the intention. And, as with everything, I think things evolve, and one learns from what worked or did not work in the past. So, yes, I would answer yes to that question.”

Participants 2, 3, and 5 believed there was room for improvement. Participant 3 stated:

“...we also believe in continuous improvement as an organisation. I have seen that we are open to suggestion; we are open to positive input. And I think there is no individual or organisation that can say, ‘We have arrived and are okay’. We do not have a comfort zone.”

In sharp contrast, Participants 6, 8, and 18 believed that the mines had not done everything they could because there were still mines that were non-compliant in implementing CSR and making the required budget available. Participant 6 pointed out to the lack of projects:

“No perspective. It would come down to the evaluation thereafter. I do not think we have or I can think of anything could be before my time of any project that has really stood the test of time. So, it is more the monitoring after a certain period of implementing these projects. So, there might have been projects that have been implemented 20 years ago, but I do not know about them, so perhaps from a monitoring and evaluation perspective, maybe there is some way that the mine can improve on.”

Participant 18 stated that mines held a negative view of CSR, and that it was the lowest item on their agenda:

“Every mine owner sees it as the biggest pain in the backside is social development project, because the attitude of 90% of the owners is not social development-orientated, its money-orientated. And time for those guys are absolute money and production and all those types of things. So, no, it is very low on the agenda for the guys.”

Although the responses were mixed, overall, participants believed that some work had been done, but that more could be done.

This concludes the reporting of the findings from the interview data. The next section reports the findings of the document analysis.

4.6 FINDINGS OF DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

This section presents the findings of the document analysis. The documents are discussed below, together with their relation to the research questions.

4.6.1 Broad-based Socio-economic Empowerment Charter for the Mining and Minerals Industry 2018

The South African government enacted the MRPDA in 2002 to drive transformation in the mining sector. The mining sector was perceived as strategic area to redress the past imbalances and allow previously disadvantaged South Africans greater access to the sector. Section 100 of the Act empowers the Minister to develop the Charter for transformation and redress. The first Mining Charter was introduced in 2002 and revised in 2010. Its third iteration was published in 2018. Amongst others, the Mining Charter (RSA, 2018) addresses the ratio of ownership that is required to secure a mining licence: 30% black ownership for existing companies and 50% black ownership for new companies. Mines' procurement processes should benefit the previously disadvantaged, including women-owned businesses. The Mining Charter (RSA, 2018), in Section 26, also provides that there should be a minimum investment in beneficiation. The Mining Charter (RSA, 2018) also addresses the poor living conditions of mine workers, and provides that housing and living conditions plans be developed and submitted as a compliance requirement.

Mines have to develop their human resources through skilling programmes that would create other career paths, especially for unskilled workers who become vulnerable when mines close. The Charter III (RSA, 2018) also drives employment equity at all organisational levels, but especially with regard to management positions. Of particular importance to the current study is the community development component. Mines ought to make viable investments towards alternative streams of revenue to sustain the community once the mine closes. The sub-research question on the specific socio-economic development outcomes that community-based CSR projects have delivered is derived from the requirement of the Charter. In other words, the contributions of the Charter in mining communities must be supported by evidence of development in communities. Charter III (RSA, 2018) is an important instrument that not only seeks to transform the mining industry, but also provides measures to address the socio-economic conditions of mine workers and the affected communities.

4.6.2 Social and Labour Plan Guidelines (2010)

To assist mines applying for mining and production rights in preparing SLPs, the DMR (2010) published the Social and Labour Plan Guidelines. The SLP Guidelines are prescriptive with regard the aspects that the mine should address in response to Section 46 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Regulations (2004). An SLP may not be amended without the approval of the Minister, and the mine must report, on an annual basis, on its compliance with the SLP. The SLP remains valid until a mine closure certificate is issued.

The Minister of Mineral Resources in 2002, published Regulation 7949, which, amongst others, spells out the objectives of SLPs. Those relevant to the current study are the following:

(a) Promote economic growth and mineral and petroleum resources development in the Republic (Section 2 (e) of the (MPRDA); (b) Promote employment and advance the social and economic welfare of all South Africans (Section 2 (f) of the MPRDA); (c) Ensure that holders of mining or production rights contribute towards the socioeconomic development of the areas in which they are operating, as well as areas from which most of the workforce is sourced (Section 2 (i) of the MPRDA, and Charter III); and (d) Utilise and expand the existing skills base to empower the previously disadvantaged and to serve the community.

Regulations 46 stipulates the required contents of an SLP: (a) Preamble and the background of the mine; (b) Human resource development programme; (c) Local economic development programme; (d) Processes relating to downscaling and retrenchment; (e) Financial provision for the implementation of the SLP; and (f) An undertaking by the mine to ensure compliance with the SLP and make it known to its employees.

The development of an SLP should be done in alignment with the IDP of the local authority.

4.6.3 Steve Tshwete Local Municipality IDP 2012–2017

The Municipal Systems Act (2000) requires that each municipality develop a strategic plan that reflects the status of the municipality and its plans to address local priorities. An IDP is a five-year plan that is reviewable every year, and is developed in consultation with the community, local businesses, and other spheres of government (Municipal Systems Act, 2000). Consequently, the IDP reflects the status, needs, and priorities of the community, which are documented during various engagement meetings led by local public representatives. Steve

Tshwete Municipality's 2012–2017 IDP was reviewed in the current study because the CSR projects under study were implemented during that time.

The IDP is not limited to matters under the power of the municipality, and issues affecting other spheres of government are also contained in the IDP, such as issues raised by the community. The municipality brings on board its stakeholders, such as the local business sector, sector departments (both provincial and national), and NGOs to assist in addressing these issues. Government departments (local, provincial, and national) are then expected to formulate a plan and commit resources to addressing the challenges raised. Due to mining companies' obligation to contribute to socio-economic development of host communities, they are expected to adopt projects from the IDP and include these in their SLPs. Beyond the needs and the priorities of the community, the IDP provides a long-term perspective of the developmental priorities of the council, which should be aligned to the district and other spheres of government (Municipal Systems Act, 2000).

4.6.4 Company A: SLP 2015–2019

The mine owns an ISO 9001:2008-certified training centre and leverages expertise within the group. There is a history of employee skills development in the company and the reporting period under review. Approximately 280 learnerships were offered, along with various courses, including in health and safety. Training aimed at addressing the mine's operational needs were linked to scarce skills, resulting in the creation of internal trainee positions in the fields of surveying, ventilation, and safety and the environment. The mine also offered bursaries and internship programmes that contributed to overall human resource development.

The mine values its stakeholders, and regular engagements with communities are aimed at promoting strong relationships. Projects that prioritise local people, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness are supported. Based on the list of projects reflected in the SLP, the mine directed its focus to the areas of poverty alleviation, alternative employment opportunities, infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and small- and medium-enterprise development.

The SLP requires that the mine put mechanisms in place to address job losses once the mine closes, including a forum for affected stakeholders, mental health services, and training for

future entrepreneurship. The SLP also outlines the projected budget for the projects to be undertaken.

4.6.5 Company B: SLP 2017–2022

The strategic objectives of the mine include investing in their people and neighbouring communities. The SLP identified education and training as the priority focus areas for social investment, while training and skills development were recognised as key to the success of operations. The SLP indicates that the mine intended investing in community relationships and programmes aimed at maximum benefit for society. The mine undertook to assist employees to access housing through the provision of housing allowances to qualifying employees, and to address transport for their daily commute.

The SLP states that Company B perceived community buy-in and support, as well as maintaining strong long-term relationships, as core to the success of its operations and future endeavours. A company assessment had revealed that the quality of life of surrounding communities had been enhanced through its social/community and enterprise development initiatives. Recommendations were made that programmes targeting education be redesigned to feed into the skills required in the enterprise development programme, which itself should be extended to leverage resources already invested.

The SLP also contains the allocated budget, and states that development initiatives were drawn from the IDP. The SLP did not address closure of the mine, as the mine was expected to be operational for some years.

4.6.6 Company A: Environment, Social, and Governance Report 2022

Company A's Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Report was developed in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Standards (core compliance) and GRI 12: Coal Sector Standard, 2022. Reporting on sustainability is founded on the principle that companies need to be transparent about the impact that their operations have on the economy, the environment, and people, and prioritise addressing these. Company A indicated a commitment to environmental management, stating that it hinges on compliance with statutory legislation and internal standards and controls. The company indicated the importance of effective management of resources such as water, energy, air

quality, rehabilitation, mine closure, and waste, with a specific focus on social aspects, together with the measures taken.

The report indicated the importance of stakeholder engagement, and acknowledged the pressure placed on the mine by unemployment, poverty, and political and social instability, together challenges related to municipal service delivery and infrastructure. The Company reported grievances, including incidents of protest actions and unrest, as well as demands for employment and supply chain opportunities. In the report, the company affirms its commitment to ethical leadership, truthful reporting, and ethical standards.

4.6.7 Company B: Sustainability Development Report 2022

The report contains an overview of how Company B's business processes supported the company's sustainability objectives. The company affirmed its commitment to creating lasting social, environmental, and economic value in the lives of the members of the communities in which it operates, by providing jobs and business opportunities, paying taxes and royalties, developing local suppliers, and supporting community programmes. Understanding the local cultural context of communities and upholding human rights were prioritised.

The company reported having applied a comprehensive process to understand the unique social, environmental, and cultural context of local communities, which included social baseline studies, social impact and opportunity assessments, community perception surveys, and undertake stakeholder identification and analysis. The company affirmed its commitment to the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the UN's Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework, and specifically to acknowledge, investigate, and document all complaints. The company had a grievance system that allowed community members to engage with the business anonymously.

The company noted its support for the South African economic transformation agenda, which it advanced through employment equity, enterprise- and supplier development, community investment, employment, skills development, and local economic development. The company acknowledged the common challenge of ensuring the sustainability of infrastructure projects, and committed to integrating elements of sustainability into project design, funding, and impact measurement.

4.6.8 Company B: Annual Report 2022

The Annual Report provided an overview of the company's performance for the year 2022. The company had aimed to minimise the impact of its activities and to create enduring value for all stakeholders at each stage of the mine's life cycle. The report noted the key strategic risks that may threaten a business's reputation, which include rapidly evolving expectations of employees, governments, investors, lenders, host communities, NGOs, and broader society. The company reported an active stakeholder engagement programme and external monitoring of a wide range of financial and ESG issues, including climate change. The company affirmed its commitment to identifying ways to create enduring social, environmental, and economic value.

The company emphasised the importance of proactive, collaborative, and transparent engagement with stakeholders and broader to build relationships based on trust and shared understanding, as it underpinning its licence to operate. The threats identified were the failure to meet evolving societal expectations with regard to ESG performance, which could lead to reputational damage and negatively impact on the licence to operate. The company stated its unwillingness to take risks that would result in a negative impact on human rights, cultural heritage, modern slavery, and community safety, but stated that the risks related to impacts of mining (e.g., on the environment) and commodity selection were accepted.

4.6.9 Steve Tshwete Municipality Mining Sector Analysis Report 2020

The Steve Tshwete Municipality commissioned a study on the contributions made by the mining sector through SLPs within the municipality's jurisdiction. Amongst others, the study aimed to determine:

- the impact of SLPs on the local economy;
- if SLPs in line with the economic and social needs of affected communities;
- what projects were prioritised and funded;
- how the municipality was involved into the formulation and implementation of SLPs; and
- the root causes of social and labour unrest related to SLPs.

South Africa's coal-mining activities dominate the mining sector (85%) in Steve Tshwete Municipality, due to the country's abundant coal resources and the high number of power stations located within the bounds of the municipality (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality,

2020). The municipality's study entailed consultation with stakeholders, and the findings indicated that mining contributes to local employment and enterprise development.

At the time of the report, 2020, 12 mines were operating in the municipality, and the report acknowledged that the mines were delivering CSR through their SLPs and making significant contribution to infrastructure development, thereby improving the socio-economic conditions of the community. The report noted concerted efforts by mines' development programmes. These programmes address social development through the construction of schools, houses, and clinics. Economic development programmes included a bakery, tree cutting, and an industrial park, and infrastructure development prioritised roads, water, waste, and electricity (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2020). Approximately 58% of the projects were aimed at social development, followed by 25% economic development projects, and just about 18% infrastructure development projects (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2020).

The study revealed that the involvement of mines in CSR had presented diverse challenges. The municipality pointed to poor communication between CSR stakeholders, mining companies, the DMR, and the local authority. The report further noted that, while CSR implementation is performed within the municipality's jurisdiction, the mines had no legal obligation to report to the municipality, which relegated any communication between these stakeholders to informal arrangements that were not enforceable. The report also noted challenges raised by the mines and the community, which are summarised in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Challenges reported by CSR stakeholders

Mining sector challenges	Community challenges
Political interference	Political interference
Lack of communication	Lack of communication platforms
Red tapes and delays	Skill development post-rehabilitation
Misplaced commitments and responsibilities	Misplaced commitments and responsibilities
Uncertainty of expenditure requirements	Sourcing of companies outside the municipality
Monitoring of implemented projects	Lack of community participation

Source: Steve Tshwete Mining Sector Analysis Report 2020

The study recommended a Monitoring Tool Implementation Roadmap that could be implemented to synergise the priorities of stakeholders and enable the municipality to monitor and hold the mines accountable.

The next section reports the themes that emerged from the document analysis.

4.7 EMERGENT THEMES

In total, six themes emerged from document analysis, which were similar to those that emerged from the interview data analysis, namely Nature of CSR by coal mines; Management of CSR; CSR integration; Socio-economic outcomes; Coal mines' approach to communities; and Challenges. The themes are discussed below.

4.7.1 Theme 1: Nature of CSR by coal mines

The MRPDA (2002) requires that mining companies follow an SLP in contributing to community skills development. Due to the prescriptive nature of the SLP, companies have made capacity-building of their staff a priority. Mines have implemented programmes in adult education and training and provided bursary schemes to members of the community. Several training programmes targeting teachers of STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and sponsorship of Saturday classes were contained in both companies' SLPs, Company A's ESG Report, and Company B's Annual Report.

Regulation 46 (c) iv of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act 28 of 2002 (2004) requires that mines direct resources towards infrastructure-development and poverty-eradication projects in their area of operation and major labour sending areas. It was, therefore, not surprising that the mines under study had focused on infrastructure development. The SLP Guidelines (2010) require that measures be put in place to address housing for mine workers, which is a provincial and national competency. Consequently, provision of human settlement featured prominently in the SLPs, together with the provision of water, sanitation, and waste management, which are municipal competencies. The Annual Report and ESG Reports articulated community (social) investments initiatives related to infrastructure.

The implementation of CSR projects was also framed within international frameworks affecting the mining sector. For example, Company B's ESG Report 2022 stated that the company's ESG framework and programmes were closely linked with the UN SDGs, the

Decade of Action, the Paris Agreement, and the requirements of the ICMM. Company A's Annual Report contained similar statements. The companies also made reference to South African legislation and developmental priorities such as the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, the National Spatial Development Strategy, Mining Charter III, and broad-based black economic empowerment B-BBEE codes. This indicates that the mines' policies are aimed at ensuring that CSR interventions are aligned to and responsive to global and local imperatives. It also indicates how the country's laws and regulations have shaped the nature of CSR initiatives.

4.7.2 Theme 2: Management of CSR

Three main considerations related to CSR management emerged, namely the IDP, mines' strategy in exiting projects, and stakeholder collaboration.

4.7.2.1 IDPs

Regulation 46 (c) iii of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (RSA, 2004) stipulates that CSR implementation must be aligned to the IDP. The companies' reports indicated that the IDP had been central to the crafting of their SLPs. Ensuring that CSR initiatives are aligned to the IDP unites the mine and the municipality in driving and managing local economic development.

The Minerals Council South Africa in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (2020) pointed to weaknesses in IDPs, noting that they "fall short of being detailed as strategic plans which accurately define and reflect the real needs of community. Unfortunately, the perception is that IDPs have become mere 'shopping' and 'nice-to-have' lists that have no real long-term planning or any real strategic implication" (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2020). In other words, delivering CSR within the confines of a poorly crafted IDP places the management of projects in jeopardy.

4.7.2.2 Mines' CSR exit strategies

According to the documents of both mines under study, project handover appears to be the exit strategy after CSR project implementation, especially in construction projects. For example, after constructing a clinic, the asset would be handed over to the Department of Health. Once a project has been handed over, there are no clear mechanisms in place for monitoring the

maintenance of the project, which may lead to mismanagement (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2020).

4.7.2.3 Stakeholder collaboration

Consistent with the interview data, the importance of stakeholder collaboration was evident in the documents. The Mining Charter III (RSA, 2018) states that holders of mining rights operating in the same area may collaborate on identified projects to maximise the socio-economic developmental impact, in line with the approved SLPs. This indicates a need for collaboration with other stakeholders, such as private and government institutions, internal employees, shareholders, communities, and suppliers, to maximise impact. Company A's ESG (2022) report acknowledged that stakeholder collaboration requires meaningful relationships with stakeholders to ensure sustainability of the projects.

4.7.3 Theme 3: CSR integration

Company A's ESG Report (2022) noted that CSR integration into the company's operations fostered by working with a multi-disciplinary team in executing projects. The report described the internal arrangements, including a management committee, to facilitate the integration of social performance across a diverse range of functional areas. According to the report, the committee, which is chaired by an executive, meets monthly with representatives from various departments to ensure CSR performance, monitoring, collaboration, and risk management.

Company B's report (2022) noted the prioritisation of the governance and integration of closure activities by developing a procedure to support the internal closure standard. Management controls associated with incorporating the social aspects of mine closure into closure plans had been the focus. The company acknowledged climate change as a material strategic and governance issue confronting the company. Integration of climate change mitigation and incorporation into the business strategy was perceived as important, together with the appropriate management of relevant risks and opportunities.

4.7.4 Theme 4: Socio-economic development outcomes

According to the Mining Charter (2018), the mining rights holder must contribute meaningfully towards mine community development, in keeping with the principles of the social licence to operate. According to Company A's (2022) ESG report, the goal of the business is to improve

the quality of life of people living in the host communities. The company ensured this through meaningful engagement, embarking on appropriate projects, and upholding human rights. The companies' CSR investments focused on infrastructure, capacity-building, and local economic development. The reports noted that the outcomes of the projects were improved service delivery, enhanced skills, job creation, and procurement contracts awarded to local entrepreneurs.

4.7.5 Theme 5 (Theme 7): Coal mines' approach to communities

Community engagement featured prominently in the companies' plans, and was focused on building relationships in order to effectively address challenges and gather feedback. The companies employed various methods, including stakeholder forums as required by Regulation 46 (d) (i) of the MPRDA, surveys, impact assessments, stakeholder mapping, baseline studies, impact assessments, and opportunity assessments. Both companies had instituted an avenue to lodge grievances or complaints, and which could be done anonymously.

4.7.6 Theme 6 (Theme 8): Challenges

Document study revealed governance and legislative challenges.

4.7.6.1 Governance challenges

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (2020) reported that continual change in the leadership of community structures made it difficult for mines to implement projects, as new leaders held different perceptions and expectations of mines' CSR. Disagreements had led to tension and volatility. The municipality further noted that SLPs do not require that a mine report back to the municipality on the projects approved by the DMR. Thus, the municipality is engaged in the mine's crafting of the SLP, but the SLP can be finalised and amended without consulting the municipality. However, the same report noted that the municipality seemed to be dictating what mining companies specified in their SLPs.

4.7.6.2 Legal compliance challenges

The report of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (2020) noted that there were several disused mines in the municipality, and that rehabilitation of the land should have been undertaken; however, due to a lack of monitoring legal compliance by the mines, it remained unclear if

rehabilitation had been completed. The report further noted a lack of capacity to ensure legal compliance with regard to mining licences and permits, resulting in mining companies escaping legal and financial obligations. While information on rehabilitation is pertinent to the planning processes of the municipality, mining companies are unwilling to transparently divulge this information.

The document analysis included credible company documents, national guidelines, and municipal reporting.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 4 presented the data analysis for the study grounded on two South African based JSE-listed mining companies operating in Mpumalanga province. Data were analysed using the qualitative computer software program Atlas.ti 22. The findings of the site observations were not analysed, instead, they were used to orientate the reader with regard to the context of the study. Semi-structured interview data analysis produced nine themes from the data. Six themes emerged from document analysis, which were similar to those that emerged from the interview data, namely: Nature of CSR by coal mines; Management of CSR; CSR integration; Socio-economic outcomes; Coal mines' approach to communities; and Challenges. Data analysis reveal that CSR implementation faces many challenges which inhibit CSR contribution to the community. The analysis reveal that there are internal and external factors that requires management attention for CSR to deliver sustainable community development.

The next chapter discusses the findings of the interview and document study analysis.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an in-depth discussion of the findings and their contribution to answering the research questions and meeting the main research objective. The findings were derived from the themes that emerged from the interview data and document analysis, which were reported in Chapter 4. The discussion of the findings is presented under the respective themes and synthesised with extant literature. The chapter concludes with a discussion of shortcomings identified in practice.

5.2 THEMES FROM INTERVIEW- AND DOCUMENT DATA

The themes that emerged from the data are summarised in Table 5.11 and discussed below.

Table 5.11: Themes from interview- and document data analysis

Themes	Interview themes	Document themes
Theme 1: Nature of CSR by coal mines	■	■
Theme 2: Management of CSR projects	■	■
Theme 3: CSR integration	■	■
Theme 4: Socio-economic development outcomes	■	■
Theme 5: Sustainable CSR	■	
Theme 6: Role of mines in ensuring CSR sustainability	■	
Theme 7: Coal mines' approach to communities	■	■
Theme 8: Challenges	■	■
Theme 9: Coal mines' efforts to ensure sustainable CSR	■	

Source: Created by author

5.2.1 Theme 1: Nature of CSR strategies and activities by coal mines

This study sought to establish the nature of CSR strategies and activities undertaken by coal-mining companies. The analysis was aimed at determining the reasons for these companies' actions, and what motivates their policy position, infrastructure development, capacity-building, and philanthropy. The subsequent sections discuss the themes that emerged from the data.

5.2.1.1 Policy-orientated CSR initiatives

CSR by MNCs is influenced by global trends and policies affecting the mining sector. MNCs are foreign capital investors and play a central role in global economic, social, environmental, and political changes (Held *et al.*, 2000). These companies belong to international bodies such as the ICMM and subscribe to, amongst others, the principles of the GRI, Sustainability Reporting Standards, the GRI Mining and Metals Sector Supplement, the ICMM Mining Principles, and the UN SDGs. Due to their international status, company mandates and strategies are developed with cognition of global trends and often cascaded down to foreign countries. At country level, companies are expected to align and synergise their CSR efforts and priorities to these global principles.

Attempting to localise global practices will inevitably lead to misalignments (Orihuela & Paredes, 2017), due to country-specific disparities and stakeholder expectations. Placing greater emphasis on meeting global performance targets may put at risk being relevant to the local context. The socio-economic disparities between developed and developing countries are significant. Challenges such as malnutrition, HIV/Aids, and malaria are some of developing countries' priorities that may be addressed through a dedicated CSR programme (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016). With reference to Peru's Green State case, Orihuela and Paredes (2017) showed that fitting a complex reality into simplified concepts is never a simple task. Making public declarations on the adoption of international goals has little or no relevance when there is no organisational capacity to enforce them (Orihuela & Paredes, 2017).

Companies are required to comply with the legislation and regulations of the host country (Awuah *et al.*, 2021). In South Africa, CSR is legislated (MPRA of 2002). Companies, therefore, have to ensure that they align their policies and practices with the local context. In the absence of a strong legal environment, as is often the case in developing countries, companies pay lip service to CSR (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016). For companies to translate global statements into practice, the regulatory autonomy of the state is required in order to govern companies conduct.

Weak legal frameworks (Cheruiyot & Onsando, 2016:97) and countries' fear of de-investment (Samy *et al.*, 2015:16) are some of the conditions that enable companies to operate as they wish in emerging economies. The absence of strong legal environment leads to CSR activities that are disconnected from the host country's cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic

realities (Ghemawat, 2001). Bhattacharyya (2019) found that companies based on India were inclined to replicate their CSR activities in foreign countries. CSR-related decisions, company allocation of resources, the capabilities and specialists brought into and consulted in projects were of Indian origin. Bhattacharyya (2019) argues that this was enabled by legislative voids.

South African legislation prescribes stakeholder engagement in CSR planning as a condition to obtaining a mining licence MPRDA (2002). This helps prevent companies acting unilaterally and importing CSR practices. Companies have the privilege to decide on which programmes they wish to fund provided such programmes aligns with the priorities of the business. Thus, it is at the local level that global statements are translated into practice. Adopting global policies but not translating these into practice may harm the company's reputation and lead to stakeholders demanding action.

5.2.1.2 CSR initiatives: Infrastructure development

Poor living conditions and the legacy of inequality in South Africa resulted in CSR being practised from a developmental perspective, especially around infrastructure development. Infrastructure based development which is centred on provision of water, sanitation, waste management, roads as well as the construction of houses for mine workers reflects the framing of CSR initiatives to be responsive to the local social context. This finding is consistent with literature on MNCs operating in Africa which notes that companies tend to prioritise developing social infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, and community centres (that is, micro-level CSR issues) in their community development efforts (Aguilera-Caracuel *et al.*, 2017; Idemudia, 2011).

When developing their social and labour plans, mining companies are required to consult the municipal IDP so that their interventions are responsive and relevant to the local conditions. This gives local government the upper hand, allowing it to dictate where CSR investments should go, and they inevitably channel these resources towards government priorities.

Directing companies to invest in infrastructure development is, from the municipality's view, justifiable. Mining brings prospects of employment and development, resulting in an influx of job-seekers, which puts pressure on local infrastructure and services (Mancini & Sala, 2018). By directing investments to infrastructure, companies are forced to take responsibility for problems they have caused. In other words, the mining boom effect gives rise to mass in-

migration which puts pressure on the local infrastructure making it difficult for municipalities to cope (Maraisa, Cloetea, Lenkaa, 2022). As a result, CSR initiatives are directed to infrastructure based development. A study of a TNC oil company in Nigeria conducted by Idemudia (2014:429) revealed that CSR has become a domain of contestation to pass on the cost associated with community development. CSR focused on government infrastructure development has the potential to obscure the responsibility of companies to society. This is because such investments may be associated with government's budget, and may lead to violence as communities await contributions by the companies. In this regard, the Mining Chamber observed that SLPs of companies were overburdened with municipal priorities to the point that "they themselves were becoming municipal plans" (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2020).

This finding is consistent with that of a case on Chad that showed that, in developing countries, CSR efforts are geared to respond to infrastructural challenges due to government's gatekeepers' and expectations (Cash, 2012). There is limited evidence of CSR initiatives that addresses socio-economic and developmental issues of the community beyond what government demands. Nevertheless, infrastructure development based on CSR cannot be disregarded. Examples are the construction of roads and bridges, which enables safe movement of people (a social aspect), rivers and streams being protected (environmental sustainability), and the transportation of goods and services is facilitated (economic development).

CSR in the form of infrastructure development has enabled business to implement projects that are contextually relevant and benefit the broader community. If implemented according to a high standard, these developments could yield long-term benefits. However, a heavy reliance on companies to deliver government services impairs objectivity in assessing mining companies' efforts (Cash, 2012:151). Furthermore, an infrastructure-development approach to CSR runs the risk of other initiatives required to create livelihoods and stimulate economic growth being neglected.

5.2.1.3 Education and capacity-building

At the global level, UN SDG 4 (Unilever, 2015), which focuses on education, seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable high-quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning by 2030. Amongst others, the aim of this goal is to increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, to ensure employment and decent jobs,

and to encourage entrepreneurship. Targets under this goal include broadening access to education and bursaries for boys and girls.

Educational capacity-building was one of the projects initiated by a company examined in this case study of mining companies' CSR initiatives. The project included sponsoring Mathematics and Science educators' training, funding Saturday classes, and the provision of tools such as interactive boards. The project further included skills development programmes to train youths as machine operators and drivers. Informal community-based ECD teachers underwent a year's accredited training, with recognition of prior learning, and earned National Qualifications Framework Level 5 qualifications in education management and ECD. The training equipped the beneficiaries in the fields of administration, management, and delivery of ECD learning, and the qualification opened employment opportunities. It also led to the ECD centre qualifying for a government subsidy.

Capacity-building CSR is important, especially in the context of the remote communities where mines usually operate. The delivery of the ECD capacity-building programme helped to address structural barriers to accessing formal training. First, access to formal education would have excluded most beneficiaries if recognition of prior learning was not facilitated. Investing in recognition and certification processes and skill assessment modalities is important to ensure that skills acquired informally can be validated and easily recognised (International Labour Organization, 2013). Secondly, direct and or indirect costs may be a limiting factor in access to training. The costs associated with formal education and training, such as tuition fees, accommodation, and study materials, which they could not afford, may have led to their exclusion. Most formal education and training providers tend to be peri-urban- or urban-based, with providers in rural areas tending to be more geographically disbursed (Palmer, 2020). Therefore, arranging that a tertiary institution provide onsite training removed the barriers associated with a poor transport infrastructure and a loss of income while on training (Arias *et al.*, 2019). After completing the training, the beneficiaries received formally recognised certificates, which became a springboard for further growth and progression, enhanced by access to government support grants.

Despite their positive contributions, the high unemployment rate in developing countries raises questions about the relevance of capacity-building programmes. Beneficiaries expect that capacity-building will secure them a job. Communities have raised the bar, and expect that capacity-building should enable beneficiaries' access to economic means. Communities have

become confrontational; soon after completing training, they demand employment and or placement in these companies. Consequently, empirical evidence suggests that mining companies are moving away from offering mining-related training for positions like machine operator, electrician, fitter, and rigger courses. Instead, capacity-building programmes target skills gaps in other sectors, such as ECD, teaching, the municipality, and community organisations. However, such programmes exclude the poor and vulnerable, those who are unemployed and marginalised from economic opportunities. Companies do not want to risk inheriting the burden of becoming employment agencies over and beyond job opportunities available within their operations.

Pressure from communities suggests that capacity-building CSR initiatives can no longer be offered merely for the sake of spending and ticking the box. Rajak (2006) observes that capacity-building should address the purpose and impact for which the capacity is being developed. Communities are critical of capacity-building interventions that do not generate access to economic opportunities and are merely the imparting of skills. The success of capacity-building programmes is judged based on the value that can be derived from such interventions.

Palmer (2020) observes that on-the-job learning is emerging as an important contributor in emerging countries. The informal or unregistered economy is responsible for between 80% and 90% of employment in much of sub-Saharan Africa. The informal ECD sector also represents an informal market, and capacity-training should be geared towards addressing the structural challenges inherent in these markets. Due to the resources allocated to capacity-building programmes, these programmes are highly successful. However, the current study's empirical evidence also points to younger recruits leaving the ECD centre to seek more lucrative employment elsewhere. As a result, training impact cannot be sustained at ECD centres unless structural factors that result in high staff turnover are addressed. Evidence from research in a Columbian context has shown that capacity-building initiatives lack continuity due to the absence of long-term commitment, resources, co-ordination, and collaboration amongst stakeholders (Gibson, 2001).

Empirical data from this study suggest that education- and capacity-building programmes should grant communities access to economic opportunities through direct employment or self-help programmes. If the outcomes delivered by education and skills development are only measured by the resources allocated to programmes, companies will continue to be at

loggerheads with beneficiaries of these courses. Communities require much more than a learnership, as some labelled the CSR intervention. There ought to be a critical reflection on what training delivers in the entire value chain. Mining companies appear unwilling to take on unnecessary responsibilities, as these will attract further risks to the company. For as long as companies approach training through a philanthropy perspective, by merely being concerned with making funding available because they have the funds, capacity-building will not address long-term challenges such as unemployment. Unless the costs, benefits, and sustainable impact of these interventions are evaluated, community development will not be sustained. As long as the mining sector is willing to direct resources to ECD, government should seize the opportunity and collaborate to help formalise this sector, which is already making a difference in poorer communities.

5.2.1.4 Philanthropy

Under the banner of corporate social investment, companies continue to undertake philanthropic practices and report these on an annual basis. Philanthropic gestures are characterised by the donation of blankets, food, hygiene packs, and equipment. Philanthropy plays an important role because, through it, companies can maintain relations with communities. Philanthropy is mutually beneficial, because companies appear responsive to community needs, and communities accrue some benefits. Philanthropy is the second-highest level of responsibility (Visser, 2006), after economic responsibility, that companies have in legitimising their existence in communities. The challenge with charitable actions is that they do not impact companies' core business practices; as a result, they cannot deliver the sustained change that is required to counter the negative impact these companies have on host communities.

Communities are becoming critical of the relevance of companies' charitable deeds, as they have much more pressing needs. There have been incidents of companies donating blankets when, in fact, food was a priority. Despite their shortcomings, communities are not in a position to reject handouts, largely due to poverty and the power dynamics involved, which may be misleading to companies. Nevertheless, philanthropy continues because companies retain the upper hand; there is no obligation or accountability to government.

This study argues that, even under the banner of CSR, companies' initiatives are embedded in charity. While companies have started to invest in programmes such as capacity-building, the

delivery therefore still resembles the character of charity, in that companies are hardly involved in programmes, the programmes lack monitoring and evaluation, and there is no documentation of what has been learned. In other words, companies continue to engage with a short-term perspective.

This finding is consistent with existing African literature in this area. For instance, Visser (2006) characterised South African CSR practices as predominately philanthropic. Muthuri *et al.* (2013) and Kivuitu *et al.* (2005) reached a similar conclusion with respect to Kenya and Zambia, as did Amaeshi *et al.* (2006) regarding the approach to Nigeria's socio-economic challenges. Literature on context-specific CSR activities is still lacking, resulting in companies resorting to charity.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Management of CSR projects

Measures have been instituted to ensure that initiatives undertaken by the companies deliver the intended objective. The findings revealed the following.

5.2.2.1 CSR project identification from IDP

During the planning phase, the IDP plays a central role in locating CSR efforts of mining companies. To guard against initiatives that are irrelevant to society, mining companies are guided to consult the municipal IDP as a source document. An IDP is a culmination of public consultation processes undertaken by the municipality with its constituencies, to uphold a participatory government. It gives the municipality an opportunity to engage with members of the community regarding their concerns. It reflects the priority issues that municipalities must address in the respective wards. An IDP provides an overview of local developmental issues, and contains the needs and aspirations of the local community. Municipalities use the IDP to articulate their developmental goals and strategies and to engage investors such as mining companies. Any CSR project must be identified from the IDP, and this is the first aspect that companies engaging in CSR need to manage.

Some participants referred to the IDP as a “strategic direction plan” or an “it document” that guides the allocation of the municipal budget. The arrangement of the IDP suggests that companies' efforts are ushered in by the municipality and CSR is not implemented unilaterally. Municipalities and mining companies need to work together as partners in CSR implementation

(Patel & Mushonga, 2014). From the perspective of the companies, working from the IDP presupposes that sufficient problem identification and in-depth analyses have been conducted. The IDP prevents companies from engaging in imported interventions that may not have been prioritised or are irrelevant to stakeholders. Noble as the idea is, a closer look at IDP-centred planning suggests that the IDP addresses matters related to government services. For MNCs, framing CSR within the confines of the IDP is limiting. Opportunities are lost, as companies could leverage technological advancements and help tackle voids created by the industry, such as climate change, an area most concerning for coal mines (Rampersad & Skinner, 2014). By directing the efforts of companies through the IDP, companies cannot be held to account for their inaction regarding, for instance, climate change. If companies cannot be held responsible for CSR projects' failure, it begs the question whether implementing IDP priorities is still part of corporate responsibility. In other words, the approach to CSR is transactional, and not transformational.

Engaging in CSR from the IDP perspective is not beneficial to beneficiaries and companies seeking to maximise social, economic, and environmental impact in the community. Implementing CSR based on the IDP priorities may run the risk of serving only government interests (Nadjib & Zainal, 2020) and CSR resources being diverted to politically aligned constituencies (Patel & Mushonga, 2014:59). Undoubtedly, CSR project identification that arises from the IDP will be focus on infrastructure development and poverty alleviation, which is the domain of local government.

5.2.2.2 Validation of need

While companies are well-resourced to undertake CSR initiatives, the need for such interventions are first validated. The need for the ECD capacity-building project was validated by the study commissioned by the municipality, whose findings compelled Company A to invest in the project. Both case companies' decisions on CSR investment were supported by feasibility studies, assessments, and surveys that confirmed the need for these interventions. This assists in managing the risk that these projects could become white elephants. Undertaking need validation suggests that CSR interventions would offer solutions to real problems, thereby producing lasting impact. Need validation suggests that the companies did not merely rely on municipal IDPs to frame their interventions in communities, but independently assessed the conditions in planning their interventions. However, it could not be determined how the

company, in accepting to partner with the municipality, advanced the programme further, or if they merely acceded to the municipality's request.

In the capacity-building case study, it is unclear how the role of Company A advanced this community-based project beyond injecting funding. Crucially, opportunities for assessing pre- and post-training teacher competency, impact, technological advancements, providing further qualifications, and many more are lost when projects are not critically assessed. This is not to suggest that projects may not be initiated by the municipality or community members. In such cases, companies through their skills, knowledge, and resources ought to help shape these interventions further to maximise impact and sustainability for beneficiaries. Doing so, the role of companies in projects will transcend funding.

5.2.2.3 Signing agreements

Entering into a MoU is viewed as an important instrument in managing CSR. The project stakeholders initiated signing a formal agreement amongst themselves. The agreement spelled out the roles and responsibilities of parties and bound the institutions to the fulfilment of tasks. The MoU was signed at the beginning of the project, and helped remind the parties of their responsibilities. Formalising CSR implementation by way of an MoU is indicative that stakeholder collaboration is required when implementing projects. By appending their signatures, the parties indicate acceptance of the responsibility bestowed on the institution and the stakeholders in a collaborative effort. Signing an agreement before implementing projects also assists in determining if the required resources are available before undertaking the project. Furthermore, an MoU helps the stakeholders to anticipate and plan for handover of the project. Thus, the MoU serves as a management tool, ensuring that programme activities are performed timeously.

Despite its benefits, the MoU falls short of addressing post-handover management, including project monitoring and evaluation. This is because the MoU is crafted to leverage stakeholders' collaborative efforts, which cease after project handover. This could be the reason why some projects fail soon after being handed over. Companies rely on receiving institutions to take over the management of projects. For infrastructure projects that are commissioned and inherited by government, the responsibility for maintaining the assets lies with government. Incidents of infrastructure assets such as a clinic that were constructed and handed over to government but remained idle for a year after completion have been minimised. Signing the MoU seem to have

enjoined the parties post project implementation. Nevertheless, the absence of mechanisms to subject government to give account of projects handed over has proved to be challenging, as the government is not accountable to the private sector, due to the absence of legislation addressing this arrangement. For projects handed over to corporates and or NGOs, it is advisable to extend the terms of the MoU and demand accountability. This, however, is a role that government, and not the private sector, should play.

5.2.2.4 Steering committees

Both case companies had established a project steering committee to oversee the projects. The committees consisted of representatives from the municipality and the community, councillors, mine representatives, and implementing agents. Establishing a participatory platform through a project steering committee is consistent with legitimising the project from the perspective of the local community members and inspiring public confidence (Kasimba & Lujala, 2022).

The ECD capacity-building programme was born from a children's rights community forum, in consultation with the municipality. Forum members served on the steering committee, together with representatives of the university and the Department of Social Development. Similarly, Company B, established a dedicated steering committee to oversee the ECD centre construction project. The steering committee maintained communication between stakeholders, escalated community concerns and grievances, and advised on matters such as recruitment.

Community stakeholders were not exposed to the intricacies of managing the CSR projects; their involvement was limited to community-related responsibilities. They were involved in crafting the capacity-building project, but were not involved in high-level decision making. Some did not know which management mechanisms that were employed in the projects, except that a project steering committee was established. This omission was glaring in the capacity-building project, where the findings revealed that community stakeholders believed their participation had been limited.

The cases provide interesting insights into how community stakeholders could direct CSR investment. The capacity-building project had been conceptualised by the community and municipality, resulting in a state-of-the-art ECD centre that serves a low-income community. The project steering committee ensured participation throughout the project, as suggested by

(Ife, 2013) from planning (initiating the project), through implementation (participating in the survey and completing assigned tasks), to benefit realisation (teaching qualification). However, the community stakeholders criticised the companies for not monitoring and evaluating the projects and conducting impact assessments to determine the benefits of the programme for learners and the community. In this regard, Pratiwi *et al.* (2023) found that participation in community projects was reduced to tokenism, evident in the voices and opinions of participants not being considered when making decisions. Appointing representatives of the children's rights forum to the project steering committee ensured that the committee consisted of genuinely interested stakeholders.

5.2.2.5 Project handover

Post-CSR management begins with companies handing over the asset to the stakeholders stipulated in the MoU. Project handover is the mechanism through which mining companies transfer the asset to a third party and withdraw commitment. Project handover is an important milestone in CSR implementation and management, because it marks the “cutting of the umbilical cord”, as described by a mine participant. Project handover pre-supposes that sufficient adaptation capacity has been established for the project to operate independently. Moreover, ceremonies are held to officially release the company from the project, and a handover certificate is issued to the recipient. Liabilities of the company, such as security and financial obligations, come to an end. In the capacity-building project, the teachers obtaining a formal qualification marked the end of company's involvement in the project.

Due to the temporary nature of these projects, it is not surprising that companies believe that their responsibility ends at handover. Considering that CSR projects aim to create post-mining livelihoods, it could be expected of companies to have a vested interest post-handover. Building the adaptive capacity of communities will alleviate the burden on government and help manage transition during mine closure. Unfortunately, adaptive capacity has not yet been integrated into CSR programme management. Ensuring that there is capacity to sustain projects will help prolong the benefits and impact of these projects. This approach requires companies to be invested in a project for a longer term than what is currently the case. The current arrangement tends to reduce these investments to donations, gimmicks, and branding.

The study conducted by Oino *et al.* (2015:758) on multiple projects implemented in Kenya suggests that project sustainability is a major challenge for many developing countries. Oino

et al. (2015:758) found that the life of community-based programmes beyond the original funding period is quite short, and that their impact on nearby communities is negligible. Project sustainability can be achieved if community beneficiaries are involved in designing, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluating these projects. Projects should be undertaken to transform the landscape of the community as the projects are not, in themselves, end goals. Thus, the focus should be on achieving goals rather than implementing projects.

The municipality played an active role by assuming guardianship of the ECD centre. The municipality resolved to retain ownership and control of the asset, thereby leveraging municipal capacity to ensure longevity of the centre. As a result, the ECD centre benefits from municipal asset insurance cover and will be maintained by the municipality. The municipality is not involved in the day-to-day running or management of the ECD centre, and therefore well-positioned to hold its lessee accountable. By retaining ownership of community assets, the municipality has demonstrated how government could support community-based CSR projects.

There is lack of clearly articulated institutional mechanisms, approaches, and strategies in companies to provide post-handover support, suggesting that CSR is practised in an ad hoc manner. Embracing project management principles in CSR could enhance its management. CSR practitioners would benefit from the application of success matrices such as measuring the social outcomes of CSR in the community (Salazar *et al.*, 2012) and assessing the return on investment for stakeholders (Demirkesen & Ozorhon, 2017; Salazar *et al.*, 2012), project scheduling, value for money, impact of the project on society, its relevance to society's priorities, and sustainability. All these needs should be embedded in company policies and systems in order to create a lasting impact on society.

5.2.2.6 Stakeholder collaboration (Emergent theme)

The stakeholder collaboration brings a network of actors including local communities together and foster self-help capacity, while creating a positive feed-back loop to company performance (Gold *et al.*, 2018). Stakeholder collaboration is closely associated with stakeholder theory and CSR literature. The actions of the companies under study had different impacts on different stakeholders. Collaborations ranged from mine-to-mine collaboration, which entailed more than one company engaging on the same project. The two case studies depict opportunities in

CSR for mine-to-mine collaborations that could only be facilitated by the municipality during preparations of SLPs, such as pooling resources for a large project and sharing skills.

The development and implementation of CSR by the mining sector presupposes a collaborative relationship between mines and municipalities (Van der Watt & Marais, 2021). Companies are enjoined to work together in planning in response to municipal priorities, from the development of an SLP, which must be aligned to municipal IDPs, to delivery of houses to mine employees. Implementing public benefit programmes requires land that often belongs to municipalities, as was the case in the ECD centre construction project. Sustainable CSR implementation thus hinges on efforts of other stakeholders. Mine–municipality collaboration in South Africa lacks a formal framework that regulates this relationship, which presents challenges, because such arrangements are based on a gentlemen’s agreement. Currently, the regulatory frameworks does not provide guidelines regarding the alignment process between the SLPs and the IDPs, and the procedures for facilitation and management are not stipulated (Van der Watt & Marais, 2021).

Stakeholder collaboration in the absence of regulations presents several governance challenges, as discussed in Section 5.8.1.1. The challenges identified in these case studies are not unique, and lend support to Van der Watt and Marais's (2021) work, which established that mine–municipality collaboration in South Africa has severe shortcomings. These authors describe this relationship as a ‘reluctant partnership’ because critical aspects of collaborative governance are not established, resulting in the partners developing their own procedures that may disregard and undermine weaker stakeholders. The absence of legislation has led to self-regulation, with companies signing agreements with municipalities. These agreements suffer a trust deficit and power imbalances, together with challenges related to accountability and transparency, as detailed in Section 4.5.6. Despite their shortcomings, MoUs play a significant role in keeping the stakeholders engaged until completion of the project.

In the South African context, self-regulation appeared to be propelled by the need to maintain relations between case study companies and the municipality. This was because the companies were at the mercy of municipalities if they wished to retain their licence to operate, and, in initiating measures to self-regulate, the companies were seeking to harmonise relations. These relations were crucial for the continuation of companies to operate in a municipal area. This study argues that making an SLP a condition for the issuance of a mining licence is a mechanism through which the state has demonstrated its power and control over MNCs.

5.2.3 Theme 3: CSR integration

CSR integration is crucial for sustaining and maintaining change because implementing CSR cannot be relegated to individuals in a company. CSR integration should be driven by strategy, especially when companies profess to be responsible and acting in the interests of stakeholders. An integrated CSR implies that day-to-day activities are embedded on companies systems and tools (Vitolla *et al.*, 2017) and a seamless co-ordination of resources (Demirkesen & Ozorhon, 2017). The case companies' documents suggested that methodologies were in place to guide the companies for integration. A mine participant made reference to the Plan, Do, Check and Act model suggested by Deming (1994), which describes an iterative approach in continuously monitoring change and assessing its impact. Plans were in place to deliver the projects, but there is limited evidence to support the application of an integrated approach. For instance, the capacity-building programme that produced first graduates in 2016 had still not been assessed at the time of the current study. The contributions of the ECD centre construction project had also not been documented, which is indicative of non-implementation of company procedures.

The findings suggest that mining companies are yet to embrace CSR and integrate it into their core processes. The companies had established a CSR unit to maintain CSR discussions within the business and community. Organisational processes such as departmental meetings, internal reporting, and participating in workplace committees like supply chain management are some of the mechanisms that helped sustain CSR dialogue within the business. There is limited, if any, evidence suggesting that CSR had been integrated into the business processes. The data suggest that CSR in companies is sustained by external pressure from stakeholders. The systems through which CSR would be driven were not prioritised, aligned or consistent with the policy position of the companies. An example is the postponement of CSR commitments due to a lack of funding, delays in procurement, and a misalignment between policy and practice. These shortcomings point to systemic weaknesses that ultimately result in CSR not achieving the intended objectives.

Essentially, CSR exists parallel to mining operations, and because mining generates revenue, it tends to be prioritised. Companies tend to give priority to internal mining projects, and use external service providers for CSR, despite having capacity internally. This arrangement hinders integration. At the practice level, CSR in companies is surrounded by tensions regarding organisational identity versus social responsibility expectations (Sitaloppi *et al.*, 2021). Sitaloppi *et al.* (2021) contend that CSR tensions are intra-organisational, and that they

arise from efforts to implement the ideas, policies, and practices associated with CSR simultaneously with the pursuit of business targets. Companies are fully aware of the negative impact of their operations and their responsibilities regarding the social impacts of their activities. Blasting impacts houses and infrastructure and causes underground water pollution and dust, and heavy trucks damage roads. Environmental degradation leads to social and economic challenges. Embracing CSR requires investments in environmentally friendly equipment, implementing stricter quality controls, and new health, safety and environmental programmes (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). The environmental and social decline of mining communities constitutes a sufficient business case for integration to be fast-tracked. A fully integrated CSR should exploit business processes from the source, through its value chain, until distribution.

The above suggests that management tools for translating CSR into everyday business practice are limited (O’Riordan & Fairbrass, 2014). There ought to be a shift to recognising the inherent links between business and society. In summary, the findings suggest that mining companies are yet to fully embrace CSR at the practice level. CSR is partially driven by externalities such as stakeholder pressure, and, for that reason, CSR produces fragmented and unsustainable outcomes.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Socio-economic development outcomes

In the capacity-building project, the following achievements were attained:

- ECD teachers were trained in ECD centre management, which included lesson preparation and delivery, observation, nurturing, and record management;
- the constructed ECD centre is safe and conducive to nurturing and teaching;
- the trained teachers yielded the ECD centre eligible for a government stipend;
- ECD centres realised higher enrolment as parents gained confidence in the centre, creating more jobs for women, who are in the majority in this sector; and
- due to the training, some teachers progressed, and some gained better employment in other sectors.

It is indisputable that the two companies’ projects delivered tremendously positive outcomes. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration with community beneficiaries sustained the project. It is worth noting that the capacity-building programme is continuing in Company A, and other companies, including Company B, have since adopted similar initiatives.

Despite the positive outcomes and sustainability potential of projects, companies continue to engage in projects with a short-term donor perspective. Projects continue without project evaluation or impact assessments being conducted. It is certain that capacitating teachers had also benefited learners, yet these benefits remain unaccounted for because assessment of the teachers and learners was not conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Outcomes and contribution of the projects in the community were also neither assessed nor documented. Addressing these shortcomings would greatly enrich the programme and help the company to develop and maximise opportunities within their programmes.

It is puzzling why companies continue to engage in CSR with a short-term perspective when the impact of mining will be felt after closure of the mine. Companies claim that a long-term relationship will breed dependency is misplaced because ECD centres have been operational for years without companies' support. Instead, companies should direct their efforts at capacitating these community institutions and empowering them in sustaining their operations. This suggests continuing working with community organisations to the point where on-going support is no longer required and they are sufficiently enabled to operate independently.

With regard to environmental issues, companies have a legal responsibility to make financial provision for rehabilitation of the site. The absence of legislation regulating the social impact of mining on communities perpetuates the mines' lack of accountability. Legislating post-CSR impact assessment and many other areas seem necessary to enforce diligence amongst mining companies, as there seems to be a lack of long-term commitment in creating community livelihoods.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Sustainable CSR

The mining companies under study had adopted sustainability principles in their strategic documents and reported annually on their ESG practices. Yet, what is framed as sustainable CSR by stakeholders presents multiple perspectives. Participants' definitions converged on four points. First, sustainable CSR was defined as including stakeholder empowerment, which necessitates skilling, training, and equipping beneficiaries. Second, participants noted that sustainable CSR should yield access to financial resources and establish livelihoods to support the community when the mine closes. In other words, CSR should also address the economic aspects of development. A business development mind-set can be achieved by investing in a long-term strategic vision supported by relevant stakeholders. Initiatives such as procuring

locally manufactured goods and services from the community, while noble, are still dependent on the existence of the mine.

Third, participants stated that sustainable CSR denotes a functional infrastructure that benefits the community for years after the mine has closed. There was consensus amongst the participant groups that CSR interventions should outlive the mine. Municipal participants framed their responses along functional infrastructure, possibly as a validation of the municipal preference for infrastructural development by companies. Mining activities attract migrant workers to the area, altering the demographics (Mancini & Sala, 2018) and putting pressure on municipal services.

Fourth, participants noted that interventions should not have a negative impact on the environment or the community. In other words, the co-existence of mining and the environment should be harmonised. Whether this will be achieved remains questionable because, by its very nature, mining is disruptive. It ruptures the boundary between the surface and the sub-surface, upsets pre-existing modes of living on the surface, changes biogeochemical, social, and economic flows across surfaces, and transforms imaginations of the future (Bebbington & Humphreys Bebbington, 2018). Dust and blasting impact are some of the consequences of mining. Stakeholders in mining development are aware of the negative consequences of mining for nearby communities. In developing countries, communities embrace mining development because there are limited alternative economic opportunities.

Essentially, stakeholders' definition of sustainable CSR encompasses economic, environmental (legal and ethical), capacity-building (social), and infrastructure (philanthropy) aspects, consistent with the definition of CSR as articulated in Section 2.2.

A disconnect emerged in two perspectives. Both the mining companies and the municipality perceived sustainable CSR as those initiatives that could be operated independently of the mine, which is, essentially, a short-term perspective. The mines perceived their role in CSR as that of an enabler of an on-going system, and not the system itself. The companies were thus of the view that projects should be undertaken in support of an already existing system, such as a government department, so that it could be sustained independently of the mine. This perspective could possibly be an attempt to shy away from ongoing responsibilities associated with operationalising CSR. The finding is consistent with that of Gardner *et al.* (2012:174) in a study of Chevron's CSR programme at a gas field in Bangladesh, a developing country.

Gardner *et al.* (2012) found that the corporation remained detached from the local population as part of their company policy to achieve detachment and not encourage dependency. It could also be an attempt by companies to appear to be doing more projects, thereby accounting for CSR in quantity as opposed to quality.

In sharp contrast, community beneficiaries indicated that it was important to maintain long-term relationships and on-going interaction between stakeholders. This viewpoint could be motivated by the ongoing resource challenges confronting ECD centres, in an attempt to leverage support from companies. Community beneficiaries expressed a sense of entitlement regarding ongoing support from the mine because of the poor quality of life caused by hosting the mine. As such, CSR was viewed as a trade-off, whereby communities accepted a compromised quality of life in exchange of local investment by the mine. Evidently, communities are compromised by mining activities, and with little benefits accruing, community stakeholders are resorting to violence. Communities desire an on-going relationship with companies to leverage support and resources. The finding reveals discrepancies in interpretation, and aligns with literature that notes that communities view development as more about relationships than simply tangible benefits (Banks *et al.*, 2016).

There is thus a need to reconcile these polar opposite perspectives. Isacowitz *et al.* (2022) note that successful CSR requires “an alignment of short and long-term goals that balances a mining company’s aspirations with a community’s immediate needs”. The absence of a common understanding has implications for the legacy that mining leaves.

5.2.6 Theme 6: Role of mines in ensuring CSR sustainability

The findings of the present study revealed a lack of clear role assumed by companies to foster CSR sustainability. Their approach focused on capacity-building and skills development, as well as making post-closure budgets available. The role of companies in ensuring CSR sustainability was disputed, as discussed below:

5.2.6.1 Capacity-building and skills development

The companies in the current case study offered different skills development programmes. These programmes were seen as the companies’ role in equipping communities for life after mining. The ECD capacity-building programme equipped beneficiaries with skills, knowledge,

and a tertiary qualification, enabling the centre to access government subsidies. These contributions were viewed as sufficient for the ECD centre to operate independently of the mine. A mine interviewee believed that skills development was the only means to ensure sustainability. Prior to being undertaken, CSR initiatives were assessed to establish how they would be sustained and measures were built into the programme. In other words, sustainability was assessed at the beginning of the project.

The ECD capacity-building programme benefitted informal centres that had been operated for many years by teachers without formal training. These informal ECD initiatives could be categorised as survivalist in nature. In spite of the challenges they encountered, they demonstrated resilience in adapting and transformation in changing circumstances not related to mining. The capacity-building programme aided in formalisation of the ECD centres, and the programme was described as “a huge breakthrough”.

The extent to which the capacity-building was sustainable was contested. While benefits accrued in the form of skills development, there was an assumption that capacity-building was a panacea to stimulate ECD centre performance. The sustainability of ECD centres is under threat, mainly because these facilities operate in remote communities that depend on social grants and often cannot afford to pay school fees. This makes it difficult for ECD centres to retain teachers. Delays in pay-outs of government subsidies exacerbate the problem. Amidst these shortcomings, it was difficult for community participants to concede that the capacity-building programme contributed to sustainability. The lack of access to mining companies, whose programmes appear to be driven by municipalities, makes it difficult for community priorities to feature prominently in CSR programmes. As such, the capacity-building programme was delivered, but the community is unable to operate the centre independently. Capacity-building cannot be undertaken as though there are no structural barriers affecting these efforts' sustainability. This finding is consistent with literature (Oino *et al.*, 2015:763) that posits that capacity-building is a means of preparing the community for sustainable development, but, in itself, does not constitute sustainability.

5.2.6.2 *Funding post mine closure*

Prior to commencing a mining operation, companies are required by MPRDA (RSA, 2002) to develop an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that outlines the actions to be taken to mitigate the environmental impacts of mining. The suggestion that providing for rehabilitation

constitutes sustainable CSR is a narrow view, and the adequacy of such provision by companies is debatable. Little information on these provisions is made known, leading to suspicions of companies escaping responsibility. Given that rehabilitation occurs years after mining operations, questions arise about the adequacy of such funds due to the impact of inflation, which could leave communities compromised. The lack of transparency around the management of the rehabilitation fund poses a risk, and does not inspire confidence in the mining sector. Although companies disclosed their rehabilitation investments in their respective 2022 annual reports, these are reported cumulatively, making assessment difficult. It is unclear why the information is not shared with the municipality, considering its vested interest in the development.

A study by Tambo and Theobald (2018) on disclosures contained in the annual reports of 11 JSE-listed mining companies in South Africa confirmed that there is a veil of secrecy surrounding rehabilitation of mining sites. These authors concluded that, due to a lack of disclosure, they were unable to draw definitive conclusions regarding adequacy of the provisions to cover rehabilitation expenses. For companies claiming to subscribe to good governance, it is of utmost importance that site-specific rehabilitation information is shared with critical stakeholders like municipalities.

5.2.6.3 *Sustainability is government's responsibility*

The CSR landscape in South Africa is influenced by a socio-political mandate of nation-building (Plagerson & Stuart, 2018). The mining sector is expected to play a transformative role in addressing the socio-economic challenges of their host communities. For this reason, infrastructure development has been the focus of companies' interventions. Companies are increasingly expected to assume a role of development agent, using company resources in collaboration with government. It is unclear whether companies have a role to play in ensuring CSR sustainability after handover. Municipal participants held the view that companies have no role to play to ensuring sustainability, as the projects initiated are based on municipalities' recommendations. Thus, companies are directed by government on where to invest and, upon completion, the infrastructure is handed over to government to operate. At this point, the role of companies ceases. It is then the responsibility of the recipient of the project to ensure it remains sustainable.

If this argument is accepted, it implies that companies merely engage in CSR as followers, and cannot claim to be agents of development. There is a need to clarify whether business is expected to be simply a tool or an agent of development (Blowfield, 2012). This is particularly important because it would help clarify the expectations society has of business. As a tool of development, business has no responsibility beyond contributing to development, while, as a development agent, business should be held accountable for its developmental role and impacts (Blowfield, 2012). While clarity is necessary, companies who are adhering to moral and ethical guidance should accept the developmental role based on morality.

The sustainability agenda requires integrated awareness and management of social and environmental aspects. These aspects makes it difficult to clearly delineate responsibility between the state, civil society, and the private sector (Hamann, 2003). The companies under study appeared comfortable implementing government-led development projects, because doing so rid them of additional liability and embarrassment due to project failure. Labelling companies as ‘illegitimate’ stakeholders whose efforts are merely supportive of government reinforces the posture adopted by some companies who engage in CSR for the mere sake of compliance. The perception points to lack of ownership of the process, and limits the positive contributions that the private sector could make by working with government. From a systems theory perspective (Kalio & Isaac, 2018), there is a need for a system that aligns government- and private sector efforts, one in which stakeholders can remain accountable for projects during and post-implementation.

5.2.7 Theme 7: Coal mines’ approach to communities

Consistent with stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1999), the companies perceived stakeholder engagement as critical to their continued operation. The companies leveraged platforms created by the municipality and their own platforms as follows.

5.2.7.1 *Municipal platforms*

These study findings revealed that the companies adopted a flexible approach in engaging with the community. The companies leveraged existing municipal platforms, such as ward engagements that are led by the councillor, the IDP, and LED meetings, to engage their stakeholders. Engagement through municipal platforms implies that mining issues are slotted into the agenda, and are not necessarily the focus of the meeting. The use of municipal

platforms creates a sense of collaboration between the stakeholders, and political leaders are accorded the status of chairing the meetings. The municipality representatives expressed satisfaction with the engagements driven through their structures.

Contrary to this, community participants preferred direct engagements with the companies. Their discontentment with indirect engagements stemmed from mistrust and suspicion that their views were not heard. Discussions between the mine, community, and municipality were largely about local development, and these engagements gave rise to the projects. As a result, communities wanted to be present at the negotiating table. One participant expressed a lack of confidence in being represented by the municipality, suggesting that the municipality was representing itself.

5.2.7.2 Future forums

Mining companies have established future forums, which is a legislated structure for engaging communities directly. Future forums are centred on matters relating to mining operations that affect the community. These include economic opportunities like procurement and employment, as well as operational issues like blasting, noise, and dust that could be impacting the community. At the request of the community, the municipality does not attend forum meetings, so that stakeholders can engage freely. Engaging the community directly is unsettling because of the demands that are placed on the company, which have the potential to create instability, as noted by Participant 18: “...you can end up having years of endless fights of, ‘We want this; we want that’, and you say, ‘But it is not sustainable. If we can do this, we can do that.’” Furthermore, direct engagements have the potential to displace elected community leaders, such as councillors, who are often excluded from these community engagements. While future forums displayed a high level of community participation, they have the potential to create two centres of power. Participants also noted that future forum engagements were attempts to influence the allocation of discretionary funds by the mine.

The companies under study also established grievance management systems through which communities could log complaints with the company. The company reports were not detailed enough to establish the nature of the grievances. It was disheartening that none of the participants made reference to this mechanism, which raises questions about its usefulness.

The findings revealed that approaches to communities are not static. Mining companies are able to adjust to the environment and engage through methods that are relevant to their communities.

5.2.7.3 *Coal mines' preparation to get buy-in*

Coal mines resort to direct engagement with communities through their social or community development units. Buy-in is secured through public meetings. Given the power dynamics and public nature of these consultative meetings, only those who are vocal and are able to attend such gatherings may be privileged to make inputs in developmental projects. Furthermore, the hostile nature of some of these meetings had potential to silence and or coerce other members. Notwithstanding the above limitations, communities are engaged using a bottom-up approach to secure buy-in in developmental projects.

5.2.7.4 *Coal mines' offerings to communities*

The data revealed that both case companies offered refreshments to community members attending meetings. The companies linked this practice to *ubuntu*, as pointed out by Participant 5: “...obviously, it is just a decent thing to do to offer somebody a meal, because they sacrificed their time to come and meet with you. So, that is all that we offer.” Community participants confirmed receiving refreshments at meetings and training facilitated by the mine. Transport was offered in exceptional circumstances, and mostly to parties directly affected by mining operations.

The CSR practices resemble a hybrid of a value-based system called *ubuntu* and a philanthropic relationship between companies and communities. In contrast to developed countries, CSR in Africa is characterised by philanthropy, with gestures that stems from cultural and value based practices (Visser, 2008). A study by Puoane *et al.* (2006) on the social meaning of food and the values attached in South African context revealed that sharing food is to show love, acceptance, and humanity, which resonates with *ubuntu*. However, value-based CSR approaches tend to be ad hoc and fail to deliver sustainable development outcomes.

5.2.8 Theme 8: Organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability

Mining companies operating in South Africa face several governance, financial, institutional and legal challenges that have potential to render CSR projects unsustainable. These are discussed below.

5.2.8.1 Governance challenges

CSR sustainability is a cross-cutting responsibility that encompasses the private sector, national department (DMR), and local spheres of government. The DMR is the authority responsible for the issuance of mining licences and holding mining companies accountable for developing and implementing SLPs. Yet, for purposes of implementing CSR initiatives, companies ought to function under their respective local municipalities. Mining companies find themselves having to account to two authorities, due to the provisions of the Minerals Petroleum Resources Development Act (2002), which appears challenging in practice. Both companies and the municipality raised challenges associated with having to function within dual structures. The lack of transparency regarding the approved SLP hinders the municipality from holding companies accountable. While companies consult municipalities when developing plans, municipalities are never involved on what these ultimately contain. This reduces municipal inputs to mere suggestions. Similarly, companies experience challenges when the authorities are unable to reconcile their views on which priorities the SLP should address, resulting in project delays.

Collaboration between stakeholders, including government institutions, is critical to addressing social issues effectively. Yet, collaborative efforts appear to be challenging, and are unable to achieve the desired outcomes because they are ineffectively governed (Ramadass *et al.*, 2018). Governance challenges prevail in the facilitation of release of rehabilitated land back to the municipalities. Although some pieces of land appear to be available, sourcing information on land that could be repurposed is challenging. The lack of transparency results in lack of confidence in the DMR's processes and administrative diligence in the management of provisional funds, despite assurances that provision for rehabilitation is made and ring-fenced.

It is estimated that South Africa has approximately 5 700 derelict and ownerless mines, which will require 800 years to rehabilitate, at a cost of R100 billion (Van Druten & Bekker, 2017). A study by Watson and Olalde (2019) revealed a lack of applications for closure certificates by

South African mines, which signals a possible low success rate in the application, or difficulty in successfully rehabilitating large mines. With underfunded rehabilitation, it is easier and cheaper to put a mine on indefinite care and maintenance, or sell it to avoid closure. For the municipality and communities hosting the mine, concerns over rehabilitation are genuine. Failure to carry out effective rehabilitation could result in irreversible environmental impacts that will compromise the community's quality of life.

Governance challenges are also emerging in the rise of different factions and interest groups in communities. Companies are accustomed to production stoppages caused by individuals claiming to be legitimate representatives of the community and demand employment and opportunities for survival. Mining companies in pursuit of performance targets are forced to give in to demands that undermine governance. In addition, companies are vulnerable in identifying the legitimate structure in the community, which has the potential to delay the implementation of CSR programmes.

5.2.8.2 *Financial challenges*

The life of a mine, albeit long, does come to an end. During mining operations, mines are often the major source of revenue in communities. Preparations to establish alternative streams of revenue are thus critical, but are lacking, and municipalities face a future financial challenges arising from unemployment and indigent households. Mine closure and the resultant unemployment are likely to leave the municipality with disgruntled residents and mounting protests.

The institutional and governance arrangements within which CSR initiatives are implemented do not facilitate transparency. Consequently, there is trust deficiency amongst stakeholders, due to suspicions of corruption. The lack of transparency of financial information, coupled with participants being excluded from discussions with mines, fuels these perceptions. Companies are suspected of misrepresenting their profits in order to escape CSR liability. This is possible, because SLP commitments are based on projected profit. It is easy for companies to underestimate their profits, and thereby commit less towards CSR. The lack of a transparent system where company profits could be validated independently fuels mistrust and aggravates hostility amongst stakeholders.

Failure to attain the financial sustainability of CSR projects remains a major concern. The socio-economic profile and landscape within which CSR projects are implemented warrants special attention, as these projects are operating as survivalist efforts. Although the majority of the parents of children who attend ECD centres are recipients of child support grant, school fees are simply unaffordable. There is no doubt that ECD capacity-building programme delivered positive outcomes, including improved teaching, formalisation of the centre, and enhanced beneficiary self-confidence. However, the closure of some of the centre's facilities, a high turnover of teachers, and on-going financial challenges are evident.

Consistent with findings of Devenin and Bianchi's (2018) study of 10 CSR projects of copper mining companies based in Chile and Australia, the current study concluded that CSR initiatives lack flexibility and are unable to adjust to the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiary group. Due to the significant risk of financial collapse amongst CSR projects, CSR interventions should be designed to prioritise risk identified by participants. Companies should move away from cast-in-stone interventions that lack the flexibility to respond to pertinent community concerns, so that shared value is achieved. Shared value is attainable when the social, economic and environmental factors of development are addressed (Wójcik, 2016).

5.2.8.3 *Institutional challenges*

According to the case companies' reports, companies subscribe to sustainability principles, and their operations are underpinned by these principles. Sustainability requires much more than a verbal commitment, and the findings of the current study suggest that the companies' commitment was not backed by the required resources, such as the required CSR staff, which compromised performance. The companies relied on one or two employees to handle all stakeholders, and augmented their capacity with consultants, which hampered CSR integration into the company structure.

Poor staffing implies that CSR is not prioritised, despite the availability of such staff in the company. CSR projects also have a high likelihood of being postponed whenever other financial priorities emerge. Also, CSR commitments are not being carried through when a company is taken over, and commitments remain unfulfilled.

Local procurement was identified as a means to drive transformation and development, and the companies under study included this aspect in their reports. The companies endorsed local

procurement in advancing economic development, but there were shortcomings in putting this noble goal into practice. There was a lack of alignment between the policies and practices of supply chain management. Although the companies had undertaken to procure goods and services from local service providers, their policies did not enable attainment of this goal. The implication is that their policies were not aligned to the local circumstance, which is typical of companies operating in different social realities. Furthermore, although the procurement system was in place, it was not fully embraced, and appeared restrictive in practice and characterised by delays.

5.2.8.4 *Legal challenges*

Munnik *et al.* (2010:7) state that, “South African government departments; and in this instance the DMR, Water Affairs, and local government have a progressive legislative base for mining, yet due to constraints, the capacity for regulating and monitoring compliance is limited.” This view sums up the perceptions of stakeholders in reference to DMR. Although different legal instruments are available to empower the DMR to carrying out its mandate, its capacity for regulating and monitoring compliance is limited. The South African Human Rights Commission (2016) also noted the significant capacity restraints in relation to the monitoring and enforcement of environmental authorisations by the DMR. Mining companies have more resources and capacity than government, resulting in efficiencies and innovation that surpass regulatory compliance, which diminishes government’s regulatory responsibilities (Thambi, 2019:482).

Capacity constraints and poor internal controls within DMR give rise to other challenges. Allegations of mining companies deliberately flouting the process surfaced during the interviews, with participants alleging that companies are manipulating this weakness within the systems to their benefit. There were also allegations of different mining companies operating under one mining licence, which may not be detected. Legislative weaknesses will inevitably lead to communities paying the significant price of living in degraded conditions.

5.2.9 Theme 9: Coal mines’ efforts to ensure sustainable CSR

Participants’ reflections on the company’s performance on CSR and its ability to produce sustainable impact suggest that there is limited evidence to support sustainability. It has been almost 20 years since CSR came into effect in the mining sector, and companies claim to have

embraced CSR and to continue injecting significant financial investments. Social infrastructure development such as clinics, roads, community halls, ECD centres, amongst others, bear testimony to the work companies have done. It is based on these investments in infrastructure development that companies prove their contributions. Albeit shallow, these investments help address a need and improve the quality of life of these communities.

The limited number of community-based projects outside of infrastructure development to create alternative sustainable livelihoods is concerning. This does not suggest that companies' contributions are insignificant, nor that their intentions are malicious. Rather, it exposes how infrastructure development has become the soft route out, because government has to sustain such initiatives. There is clearly a need for partnerships focused on economic development which will help create community livelihood.

The current study's findings revealed that the companies had not done enough to ensure that their CSR projects remained sustainable. The situation is not unique to South Africa, with Frederiksen (2017) drawing similar conclusions in reference to Zambia, Ghana, and Peru, where the development impacts of CSR programmes were contested and their extent seen as insufficient by local communities.

5.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the findings of the study according to the nine themes that emerged from the interview and document data, together with findings of previous studies and applicable literature. This study established that CSR implementation is largely influenced by legal prescripts in South Africa, and that its practices are philanthropic in nature. CSR initiatives in the coal mining sector largely comprise capacity-building and infrastructure development. Companies shy away from CSR initiatives with long-term obligations, which hinders maximisation of the benefits for diverse beneficiaries. Although companies claim to embrace CSR, there are several internal challenges, such as a lack of or non-integrated systems, poor staffing, and a lack of alignment between policy and practice. CSR implementation by mining companies is framed within an environment of collaboration between different spheres of government, which gives rise to a plethora of external challenges. The chapter highlighted shortcomings relating to companies' accountability, transparency, trust, and general lack of information. Based on these findings, Chapter 6 proposes a CSR management framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines.

CHAPTER 6: A CSR FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BY SOUTH AFRICAN COAL MINES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a framework for sustainable community development by coal mines in South Africa, which was the aim of the study. The framework is based on the findings of the study, which were discussed in the previous chapter. This contextual framework may assist coal-mining companies and their stakeholders in their efforts to implement sustainable CSR initiatives. The developed framework is the main deliverable of this research project, and constitutes the theoretical contribution of this paper to CSR literature. The framework is discussed below.

6.2 THE CSR FRAMEWORK

CSR encompasses actions taken by business to translate corporate responsibility into action. CSR performance and its outcomes are not coincidental, but reflect management's decisions and actions. To that end, the framework offers systems that could help companies to position themselves to successfully engage in CSR. Systems theory provides a useful process for unravelling CSR challenges from a mining sector perspective, because CSR implementation straddles different institutions and stakeholders. The framework integrates company arrangements and issues identified by external stakeholders (the municipality and community), which constitute core factors in the management of sustainable CSR. The framework seeks to synergise the efforts of stakeholders who are actors in different spheres with those of the private sector.

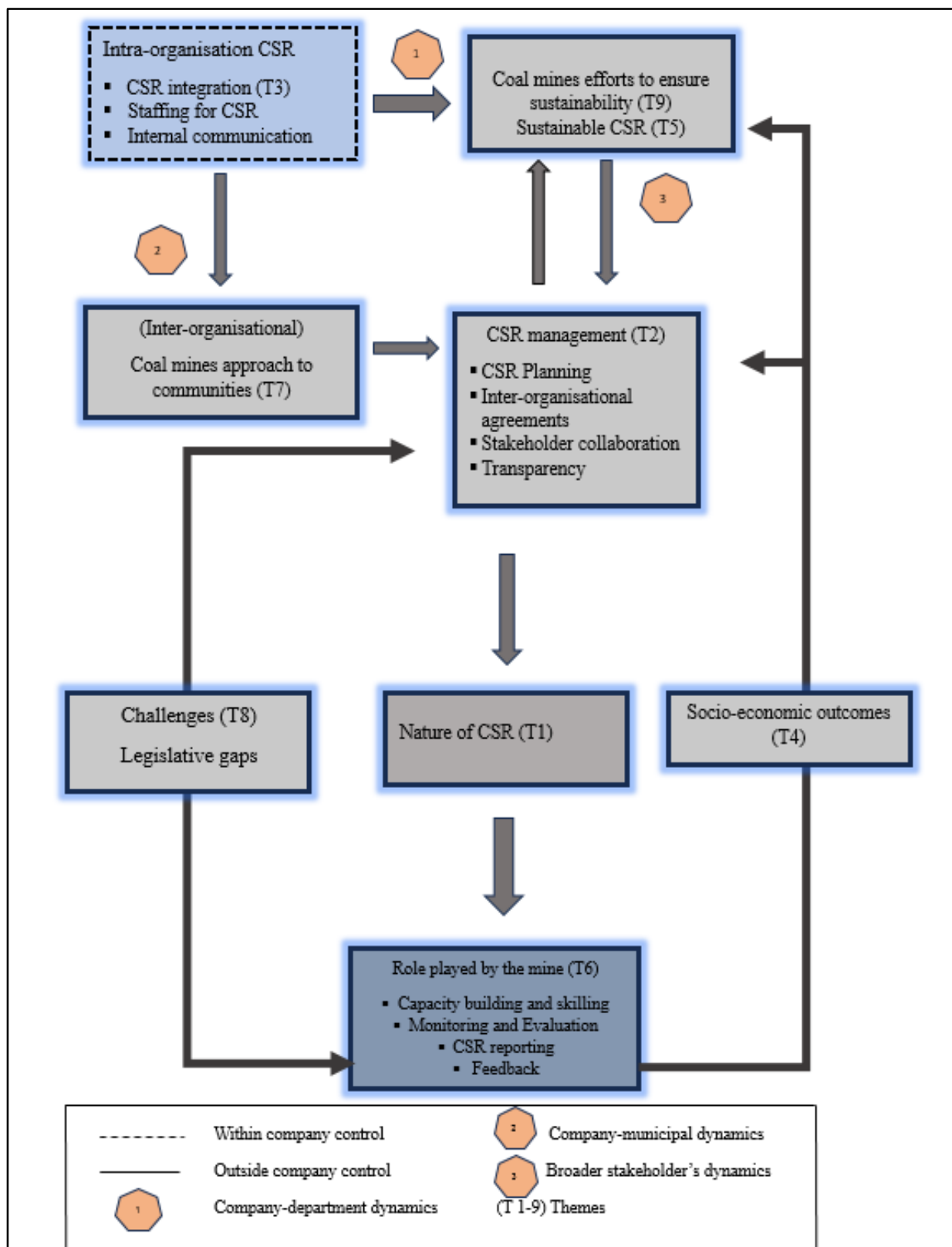
The framework is based on findings derived from rigorous data collection and analysis. The framework is anchored in two independent but interrelated domains. The first is intra-organisational factors, which encompass internal systems and institutional arrangements required within the company to enable CSR implementation. Intra-organisational arrangements are bordered by a dashed line, which represents the fluidity of the arrangements; they can be altered easily by management decisions.

Refer to Figure 6.10 on page 183, where the number 1 denotes company department arrangements. Mining companies are accountable to the DMR, as articulated in the Mineral

and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002. The CSR trajectory is marked by dynamic interactions within and across interconnected systems, which represent the cross-boundary inter-organisational factors. This domain is dominated by stakeholder interactions and activities. The number 2 represents initial interactions and alignment with the municipality, which later expand to include other stakeholders. Companies' relations then extend beyond the planning of CSR to include broader stakeholders, such as communities. This interface is significant, because it requires synergising highly interdependent systems across different CSR stakeholders. Engaging in highly interdependent systems is consistent with the systems approach, which views social systems as nested within natural systems, and recognises the dependency of business on nature (Williams *et al.*, 2017:867). The solid line bordering the inter-organisational domain illustrates the independence of systems and the difficulties in transcending the barriers. Number 3 in the framework denotes the ideal, where communications between the company and the DMR are transparent and allow for ongoing engagement. Implementation of CSR is a complex process, and management should be aware of and attentive to organisational, inter-organisational, and societal issues.

Figure 6.10 on next page presents the CSR framework for sustainable community development by coal mining companies operating in South Africa.

Figure 6.10: CSR Framework for Sustainable Community Development



Source: Created by author

The subsequent sections discuss the framework.

6.2.1 INTRA-ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

Exploring intra-organisations factors requires an inward reflection. Companies are viewed as open systems because of their interactions with their environments by way of inputs, processing, and outputs (Kalio & Isaac, 2018). According to these authors, companies are also regarded as a system because they are comprised of parts, such as “employees, assets, products, resources, and information that forms a complex system”. CSR offers companies an opportunity to work as a unit and contribute towards the development of the community.

A systems thinking perspective infuses three items. The first is the elements that are independent of each other, such as policies, personnel, and assets. The second is their interconnections or relationships, such as integration as a function or the purpose they serve (Meadows, 2008). The third is the relationship between elements inside and outside of the company. Strategic CSR tend to be deeply embedded in organisations, and requires changes in organisational processes. Implementing CSR cannot be separated from management systems and functions (Krisnawatia *et al.*, 2016). Companies should run all business activities, including CSR, in systematic ways. From the findings, human resources, CSR integration, and internal communication were identified as challenging.

6.2.1.1 CSR integration

CSR denotes the translation of a policy statement into action. Companies have strategies and policy statements professing to be aligned to CSR; however, there are considerable gaps between CSR rhetoric and actual practice. Challenges relating to delays in procurement, misaligned supply chain management policies, budget cuts, and outsourcing of CSR components are indicative of a lack of integration. Fostering integration is a process of continuous improvement embedded in honest assessment of company performance. Working within a multi-disciplinary team consisting of representatives from all disciplines would help to solidify a culture of CSR and help speed up decisions.

Key to integration is the reviewing and alignment of systems. Policies need to be reviewed and then assessed against the social context of that specific community and the goals the company seeks to achieve. For instance, a policy statement to advance local procurement should be translated into practice through the processes and systems that the company institutes.

Integration requires planning and specific areas of focus to be targeted in order for meaningful contributions to be made.

CSR offers companies an opportunity for diverse departments such as procurement, environmental, technical, and communication to collaborate in the management of community concerns. Integration of CSR into the company is made possible by the interactions of employees across multi-disciplinary teams. Wheeler *et al.* (2002) argue that a genuine stakeholder approach must become an integrated part of the company. Integration must be driven from the top, and needs champions who will drive it.

6.2.1.2 *Staffing for CSR*

As indicated, CSR is strategic, both within and outside the company, and employees play an important part in fostering CSR culture in the workplace. Employees are the implementers of CSR within and outside the company. How employees perceive the CSR actions of their employer can alter their actions and have implications for CSR in the community. If employees tasked with implementing CSR are of the view that their employer pays lip service to CSR; that perception is likely to manifest in the CSR project delivered to the community. Companies have established units that are responsible for facilitating CSR. The units are located under the management of Human Resources Development (HRD). Despite the proximity of CSR to HRD, which is responsible for recruitment, staffing in community development units is challenging. CSR units are functioning with one or two employees, the fact which compromises the quality of services that can be offered.

Poor staffing will inevitably result in disharmony between company strategy and CSR strategy. When employee-oriented CSR is successful and sustainable, it leads to value creation for both employees and the company.

Employees experience frustration at and feel overwhelmed by their responsibilities. Community development units are responsible for stakeholder engagement, which means they are a link between the community and the mine. They manage day-to-day liaison and complaints, implement internal and external CSR projects, handle CSR projects within communities, act as conveyors of issues from the community to the relevant departments, and facilitate participation during mine closure. Having limited human resources constrains the company's stakeholder engagement, which is required to deliver change. Sufficient human

capital is crucial to translating strategy into action. Moreover, CSR requires personnel to champion and drive it. CSR is often perceived as a company's attitude towards its external stakeholders, while employees are overlooked. Hamann (2003) calls for companies to respond to its employees as stakeholders who are required to carry out duties. Improved staffing will help create a culture embedded in CSR where the social side of the organisation is aligned to its strategy. While companies may have CSR-facilitating structures, it is imperative that opportunities for further competency development, regular interaction with stakeholders, scanning of the context, community projects, community involvement, and follow-up be created.

6.2.1.3 *Internal communication*

Integrated sustainability requires that companies report on societal well-being and environmental matters, and how these issues may impact the company's bottom line (Kloppers, 2018). Internal communication assists in directing the team towards emerging and important issues that affect the company. It also creates an opportunity for companies to have a dialogue about CSR, which is an important element of integration.

Companies need to meaningfully engage with CSR and move away from compliance-based exercises. CSR requires a shift in mind set, and the posture of management sets the tone for engagement. A culture of honest engagement on CSR matters needs to be fostered. It is crucial that companies break the traditional barriers of reporting and discussing CSR matters only amongst those departments that appear sympathetic to the cause, such as HR, communications, and environmental management, and to involve engineering services, which is the department responsible for damage and pollution.

6.2.2 INTER-ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

CSR implementation hinges on the successful interface between companies' systems and that of its external stakeholders. Inter-organisational factors identified are crucial for responsive CSR activities and help sustain desired outcomes post implementation.

6.2.2.1 Coal mines approach to communities

Municipalities are centrally located to enable communication between companies and communities. The local government system institutionalised a hierarchical arrangement from the community and is infused with local government systems. The establishment of ward committees which is chaired by a Councillor represents a bottom up approach to community participation. The use of municipal governing structures by companies when implementing CSR serves to re-inforce the existing power arrangements which are not foreign to communities. In a stable municipal environment, such mechanisms may be enabling but could prove difficult when communities have lost confidence in their political leaders. In this case, companies engaging communities' directly outside municipalities may seem beneficial but risks project sustainability.

6.2.2.2 CSR Management

Management is a process that includes the four functions of planning, organising, actuating, and controlling to achieve the stated goals by empowering humans and other resources (Terry, 1972). The management function of projects implemented by coal mines requires collaboration with municipalities, mainly because infrastructure development is the strategic focus in South Africa. This collaboration is also required post infrastructure development, because companies hand the assets over to the government to operate. Notwithstanding handover, companies still have an interest in how the assets perform. However, there are no legal mechanisms to facilitate a flow of information between stakeholders. There are also no legal mechanisms to ensure a flow of information from companies to municipalities. As a result, an inter-organisational management approach is required.

6.2.2.2.1 CSR planning

Planning is the function of management, and entails setting goals and determining the path to achieve the objectives. The function of CSR planning lies at the border between municipal and company functions. Municipalities are required to plan for the development of their area and develop an IDP, which is the planning instrument containing municipal priorities, including consultation with members of the public. In developing their development plans, companies are expected to consult the IDP. CSR projects should be underpinned by outcomes already

derived from the public consultation processes of municipalities. Van der Watt and Marais (2021) note that municipal consultation processes are not always meaningful, resulting in IDPs that are a wish-list of unsustainable projects. The IDP is supposed to lay a foundation for planning based on concerns raised by the public.

In the absence of a guiding legislation on the interface between inter-organisational arrangements, and in the interest of safeguarding investments, a process referred to as ‘need validation’ allows companies to meet the community, assess their situation, and map an intervention. The company then meets with the municipality in order to reconcile their findings and map a joint plan of action. Joined planning helps the parties to reconcile their views, consolidate their resources, and agree on a CSR project as an ideal intervention for the community. Engaging with the intention to make a lasting impact requires openness and a willingness to adjust where necessary. This arrangement suggests the effectiveness of joined planning between the mine and the municipality, which is crucial for sustained operation of CSR projects.

Companies want to safeguard their investments, and undertaking joint planning is crucial to enabling stakeholders to question and reflect on how projects will be sustained beyond funding. Communities can play a crucial role in the design of projects through their indigenous knowledge and exposure. Communities could help frame the interventions and responses required, and help evaluate their effectiveness.

6.2.2.2.2 Inter-organisational agreements

South African mining companies are required to work in consultation with municipalities. Companies derive their priority areas from IDPs, and should obtain endorsement from the municipality as evidence of consultation. Companies should not operate independent of their local authority. Van der Watt and Marais (2021) recommend ‘collaborative governance’, which is characterised by government and the public, private and civic spheres engaging directly, formally, deliberately and in a consensus-oriented way in a collective decision-making process to make or implement public policy and manage public programmes or assets. Collaborative governance is required when cross-boundary governance systems that range from policy or programme require co-operation, such as in public–private partnerships (Emerson *et al.*, 2012).

Collaborative governance is voluntary in nature, and participation is highly flexible (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson *et al.*, 2012). This makes collaborative agreements fluid and unenforceable. Stakeholders in ECD projects should pledge their commitment through a signed MoU, which is binding on the partnering institutions. The MoU signifies the highest level of commitment, and is an important instrument in safeguarding the project during times of upheaval, such as falling market prices and low margins (Danielson, 2006), as well as mergers and acquisitions (Krishnamurti *et al.*, 2021). In emerging economies, signing formal agreements is significant because it indicates stakeholders' appreciation of their institutional context, regulatory environment, and social aspects (Sardana *et al.*, 2020). Agreements also help the stakeholders to consolidate their resources as they contemplate their CSR practices with regard to sustainability.

This CSR framework suggests that the scope of the formal agreement should be expanded beyond the construction and handover of the project. By so doing, the relationship between CSR stakeholders will be kept intact, and ensure oversight of the transition from implementation to operation. This shift will lay a foundation for stakeholders to engage in CSR from an input orientation to an impact orientation. The extension of the agreement should also require of the recipients of the project to provide other stakeholders with regular updates. Agreements could also provide for regular site visits to verify reporting. Lastly, since CSR projects are an outcome of discussions between companies and municipalities, the role of the latter should be extended to facilitate on-going monitoring of the performance of these projects.

6.2.2.2.3 Stakeholder collaboration

Collaboration relates to a joint operation in support of an initiative (Emerson *et al.*, 2012). Companies rely on government to sustain their projects, while government depends on companies to fund their programmes. Aligned with the views of Emerson *et al.* (2012), the framework includes stakeholder collaboration, which is inter-dependent.

In a collaboration arrangement, it is important that stakeholders engage on an equal footing, to prevent manipulation by stronger actors. It is important for companies to strive to implement all their commitments to their stakeholders. Companies should refrain from reneging on their commitments, to ensure their legitimacy amongst stakeholders. Stakeholder collaboration is important throughout the project, but is critical when the company has exited the project, as sustainability of the project hinges on efforts of stakeholders, some of whom may be ordinary

community organisations. The CSR stakeholders should also consider investing in effective systems for managing CSR post-handover and building the capacity needed to make those systems work (Danielson, 2006).

6.2.2.2.4 Transparency

Mining is a stigmatised industry because its operations pose dangers and challenges to communities (Lee & Comello, 2018). As a result, companies' programmes are looked at with mistrust. In a collaborative arrangement, the flow of information is crucial to enable and maintain trust amongst stakeholders. Lee and Comello (2018) suggest that a higher level of transparency should be integrated in companies' CSR communication to reduce the public's scepticism. Companies report to the DMR on net profit after tax, which should determine the CSR budget and indicate the provision for rehabilitation. Although companies are not legally accountable to municipalities, subscribing to good governance implies that stakeholders should have access to company information when requested. Companies should communicate their CSR initiatives and financial matters through annual reports and websites, and include site-specific information. Public interest in matters such as company profit and rehabilitation provisions necessitate that mining companies also put systems in place to enable reporting to local stakeholders. This reporting is beyond the legal requirement, but crucial for strengthening oversight and accountability. This framework suggests that inter-institutional platforms between high-level CSR stakeholders (companies, the DMR, and municipalities) be created, where stakeholders are able to share information. Ideally, the suggested platform should be embedded in legislation to avoid arrangements that undermine the autonomy of any institution or stakeholder, including the private sector. In the spirit of collaboration, it is in the best interest of companies to use their mechanisms to lift the veil of secrecy surrounding their financial information.

6.2.2.3 CSR action

There is growing expectations for mining companies to create employment and deliver local economic development. Communities living adjacent mines, continue to embrace activities because of the role that these companies play especially on infrastructure development. Companies gain legitimacy in communities where CSR actions respond to societal challenges. Rutledge (2019) observed that communities living near the mines are subjected to environmental issues, such as air, land and water pollution, which impacts on the quality of

life. Mining activities such as blasting close to houses compromises the structural integrity and increases vulnerability. There is also a risk of land abandonment and failure by companies to rehabilitate the land post mining. When mining activities appears disjointed and or undermine the company's CSR policy, then CSR actions are merely conceived for compliance. CSR actions need to be conceptualised jointly with stakeholders and should address challenges caused by mining activities. Directing CSR action to day-to-day challenges caused by mining will ensure alignment between policy and action. This will give rise to strategic and responsive CSR actions that will re-position the community for life after mining. Past and current CSR actions have been unsystematic and outside infrastructure development, their impact is negligible.

6.2.2.4 Role played by the mine

For CSR activities to be sustained, companies' role in CSR implementation in emerging economies is essential in capacity building and skilling, monitoring and evaluation, CSR reporting and feedback to its stakeholder.

6.2.2.4.1 *Capacity building and skilling*

Shortage of skills required in running some community-based projects have necessitated that companies should actively contribute to capacity building and skills development. Through partnerships with municipalities and training institutions, companies can facilitate for development of tailor-made programs required implementing successful operation of community projects. Companies stands a great chance to negotiate on behalf of communities for amongst others that recognition of prior learning; gain admission at tertiary institutions and for long distance learning to be provided through contact sessions. This owing to the resources and positions of companies in communities. The partnership on ECD is noteworthy in revealing the distinctive influence that companies can exert when actively pursuing community development. With the company's financial resources and influence, beneficiaries were able to achieve their Diploma qualifications.

6.2.2.4.2 *Monitoring and evaluation*

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are important tools that can help companies to assess if the goals that were set have been achieved. CSR provides businesses with an opportunity to

intervene in society. As a result, CSR is not an end, but rather a vehicle through which impactful change can be delivered. To improve CSR outcomes, interventions require continuous M&E. It is important that M&E be conducted jointly with the stakeholders who participated in the project, in order to avoid misrepresentation. De Carvalho *et al.* (2015) observe that company documents often present reports of ‘successful’ projects that were measured using traditional criteria, such as timeous delivery, cost, and quality objectives, while stakeholder groups hold a different view. Community participants expect M&E of CSR projects to be conducted against contributions brought about by the intervention. As a result, stakeholders need to agree to the components that will be subjected to M&E. Without undertaking M&E, opportunities for reflection and learning are lost, and stakeholders may provide disjointed and disputable accounts of the same project.

M&E thus assists in reconciling the perceptions of stakeholders (Davis, 2014). Companies that are eager to make an impact should invest in determining the outcomes of projects. Undertaking projects without any form of M&E is tantamount to donations and ticking boxes, which are not beneficial to those undertaking the projects or the beneficiaries. Drawing on project management skill could benefit CSR through the application of a success matrix to measure the social outcomes in the community (Salazar *et al.*, 2012) and to assess the return on investment (Demirkesen & Ozorhon, 2017; Salazar *et al.*, 2012), project scheduling, value for money, relevance to priorities in society, and sustainability.

To maintain objectivity, CSR objectives should be agreed upon, including their measurement, at the conception of the project. M&E should be conducted jointly with all stakeholders and documented. Project impact assessments by independent service providers may provide a deeper and more objective analysis.

6.2.2.4.3 *CSR reporting*

In recent past, it has become standard practice for global companies to provide external assurance of CSR activities (Karaman *et al.*, 2021). Emphasis is placed on reporting audited performance information on CSR in an attempt to comply with GRI guidelines and convey a positive image to stakeholders (Karaman *et al.*, 2021). Company reports provide information about what the company is doing for a host community, but without an account from the community. This framework suggests that companies report the results of M&E to stakeholders

in the project before reporting externally. Reporting to stakeholders creates a platform for dialogue and ownership of project information. Unless companies make their reports transparent and are willing to discuss them in a language that all stakeholders understand, the reports may be disputed and used to serve the company's interests. Disputed reports have potential to spark protests, as communities may view these as misrepresentation, which underscores the need to report to stakeholders first.

6.2.2.4.4 *Feedback*

DMR is tasked with the responsibility of monitoring compliance and enforcement of regulatory requirements for mining companies, including the approval of SLPs (MPRDA, 2004). Mining companies are expected to provide regular reports to DMR on performance in achieving socio-economic targets and commitments to the community. Reports submitted to DMR are often unknown to stakeholders because there is no requirement for involvement of communities in the reporting arrangements. Such a gap gives companies an upper hand in deciding what should be disclosed to the authority. Yet again, such reporting appears subjective and may be altered to suit a particular narrative. While DMR has the prerogative to verify company's performance, such verifications are hindered by lack of expertise and capacity (Van der Watt & Marais, 2021). This framework suggests dual feedback to be provided to stakeholders and DMR alike. Doing so will help elevate accountability and level the playing field between stakeholders. Community dynamics (if any) which may be fostering or hindering performance will be exposed for stakeholder's attention. Consequently, CSR performance would be enhanced.

6.2.2.5 Socio-economic development outcomes

Attainment of socio-economic development outcomes is the single most indicator that CSR has served its purpose. Improved indicators in respect to access to services, access to economic opportunities and capacity building are some of the contributions that MNC companies would need to make. The disparities between developed and developing countries necessitates that for companies to remain relevant, they need to continue to address responsibilities that seems to be government target. Consequently, failure to address these basis outcomes would render the contributions of companies as irrelevant. While companies' efforts have had a positive developmental contribution, some activities have a detrimental effect to the community. Concerns of blasting which damages infrastructure and houses seem to reverse the gains made

by CSR. As a result, companies would need to ensure that mining is carried in a responsible manner that advances socio-economic outcomes.

6.2.2.6 Coal mines efforts to ensure sustainability

Attainment of CSR sustainability by coal mining companies requires dedicated effort. Companies have come under pressure to improve their efforts in environmental and overall community impact in which operate. The choice of CSR projects and whether or not the projects are informed with the company's long-term strategy and value chain dictates that sustainability be integrated in the business processes. Doh et.al (2015) observe that CSR projects which are closely associated with the core responsibility of the mine yield higher success than community-based projects. This because institutional capacity to support initiatives which resonates with the company's strategy and or priority is provided. This is evident in the budget, provision of technical skills and publicity that is often associated with such initiatives. On the contrary, companies adopt a short-term perspective when undertaking community-based projects, which undermines attainment of project sustainability. Where community-based projects are funded, companies follow a donation approach, this possibly to distance itself from project failure, thereby managing the risks. This posture suggests that CSR management is concerned with company's brand management unlike driving long term sustainable community impact. In its quest to shield the company, government related infrastructure projects have become a suited alternative which has gained moral ground in that, such infrastructure is required but critically that ensuring project sustainability is then passed on to government. Appetite to undertake projects outside government is lacking because there are no systems to provide on-going support to community projects. As a result, evidence is lacking of actions companies undertake to ensure ongoing functioning and sustainability of projects after handover. A similar conclusion can be drawn in respect to infrastructure related projects, this due to the institutional arrangements which renders companies unable to hold government accountable on previous projects. Adopting a long-term approach would be beneficial to the CSR stakeholders and would pave a way-forward for new partnership opportunities.

6.2.2.7 Sustainable CSR

Stakeholders need to reconcile their views on what constitute sustainable CSR. Companies often frame sustainable CSR along framed along legal compliance especially ensuring that a rehabilitation process is undertaken post the life of a mine. In other words, companies perceive the allocation of a budget for rehabilitation more crucial than the actual outcome. This approach suggest that a bare minimum approach is adopted when engaging in sustainability. Sustainable CSR should embrace going beyond compliance to embracing long-term relationships and partnerships with stakeholders. This is crucial given the long-term negative impact that mining related activities has on communities. The maturation of CSR would require that a long-term relational approach be adopted when implementing community-based projects.

6.2.2.8 Challenges Legislative gaps

Research on companies conducting CSR projects has confirmed an atmosphere of mistrust (South African Human Rights Commission, 2016). In part, the mistrust emanates from legislative inadequacies with regard to required reporting of profits generated, approved SLPs, the release of rehabilitated land, and rehabilitation provisions. Companies ought to disclose such information to the DMR, which in this case is the accountable authority.

To enable stakeholders to hold each other to account, legislation on the following aspects is required:

- the procedure for gaining approval of an SLP from the DMR;
- independent verification of company profits to ascertain net profit after tax and subsequent CSR commitment;
- provisions and means of access to funds for rehabilitation of the mined area;
- a system to determine whether land has been rehabilitated and should be released for alternative use by the municipality;
- site-specific grievances received and resolution by companies and
- companies reporting directly to their stakeholders' municipalities.

Currently, CSR stakeholders creatively re-invent procedures under the pretext of “collaboration”. These arrangements vary from one institution to the next and are dependent on personal relationships which hinders accountability. This framework suggests a need for

legislative amendment to address the glaring gaps which hinders attainment of transparency and sustainable development.

6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter fulfils the main objective of this study, which was to develop a CSR framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines. The framework is based on the findings of the study and supported by literature. The framework is centred on two primary domains, the intra- and inter-organisational factors related to the management of sustainable community development. The framework serves as a guide for companies to configure their systems and processes and ensure alignment for seamless integration with the business. Challenges of CSR by mining companies could be ameliorated by better management of the intra- and inter-organisational factors, systems, and processes surrounding the collaborative nature of implementing projects in South Africa. Legislative reforms are crucial to foster transparency and trust amongst the stakeholders.

The next chapter discusses this study's contributions, the theoretical and practical implications, the limitations of the study, and, finally, the recommendations.

CHAPTER 7: CONTRIBUTIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study was to develop a framework for sustainable community development by South African coal mines. This study's findings revealed that CSR by mining companies is characterised by philanthropic interventions and investments in infrastructure development and capacity-building. The findings also confirm that managers and implementers of CSR experience challenges. The shortcomings identified informed the development of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 6. The study's findings and the developed framework have broad implications for managers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in CSR. The present chapter consolidates the findings of this study by drawing conclusions and making recommendations, in alignment with the research objectives. The study's theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions are highlighted in the subsequent sections.

7.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the CSR literature, methods, and practice as follows:

7.2.1 Theoretical contribution

By investigating CSR as practised by coal mining companies, this study makes two main theoretical contributions to the CSR literature. First, the study contributes to systems theory literature through a CSR framework embedded in inter-organisational systems for South African coal-mining companies. The framework addresses systemic challenges in the implementing of CSR by coal mines. The study highlights intra- and inter-organisational management factors between government and companies that are affecting community-based CSR. Alignment of inter-organisational systems and actions is crucial to sustaining the outcomes delivered by CSR over time. South Africa has broad legislation for companies to undertake CSR; however, there is no framework guiding company–municipality arrangements, as mining companies are accountable at provincial level, but CSR is operationalised by local government. The absence of a framework results in CSR producing fragmented results and projects collapsing. The developed framework lays a foundation for sustainable CSR, including the identification of areas that require legislative guidelines.

7.2.2 Methodological contributions

The research examined two cases. This qualitative multiple-case study therefore contributes to the existing methodological literature on CSR in the South African context through the utilisation of multiple sources of data, namely primary data collected through interviews and secondary data collected via a document study and observations, to respond to the research questions. The case studies were centred on ECD interventions by mining companies, and the findings relate to functional and operational projects, thereby offering in-depth insights into current management practices and legislative voids.

7.2.3 Practical contribution

The CSR framework is underpinned by the South African context and challenges in the mining sector and offers practical insights to CSR stakeholders. The framework may assist in the implementation of CSR under the current legislative arrangements. The study identified core management factors required for sustainable CSR development initiatives. Companies' need to ensure adequate staffing within CSR units; alignment of company policies with strategies for seamless CSR integration and enhancing internal communication and feedback on CSR. Stakeholders collaborating on CSR ought to jointly plan the interventions and enter into formal agreements which will help clarify roles and responsibilities during and post project implementation. The management of stakeholder collaboration through mechanisms that allows for transparency between the parties is crucial to foster trust. Regular monitoring and evaluation of projects in order to provide on-going support. CSR reporting should be an outcome of a joint effort and not exclusively for external stakeholders.

These core management factors were derived from data gathered via interviews with representatives of the companies, the municipality, the community, and relevant documents. The study also offered participants an opportunity to reflect on and discuss CSR practices. The focus of the study helped the participants to identify weaknesses in the current practices and express their expectations. This is crucial for reconciling the views of stakeholders in CSR implementation. Thus, the framework is underpinned by wide-ranging views, and offers solutions that could be implemented in practice.

The next section offers recommendations for management.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

The recommendations are presented as core management factors to be considered in ensuring sustainable community developments by South African coal mines.

7.3.1 Staffing for CSR

Mining companies operating in South Africa are required to undertake and implement meaningful CSR, which requires the establishment of units or departments to drive CSR within and outside the organisation. CSR units need to be properly staffed and resourced in order to drive the strategic objectives of the business while remaining responsive to community demands. Staffing gives credence to companies' recognition of employees as their primary internal stakeholder. It is therefore suggested that staffing be reviewed in consideration with the phase of mining operations, such as decommissioning, the nature of projects, grievances and issues raised by the community during operations.

7.3.2 CSR integration

The study findings indicate that systems integration is a challenge that affects CSR implementation and has a negative effect on decision-making. The misalignment between companies' strategy and policies hinders CSR performance, including turn-around time of CSR decisions. It is therefore recommended that company policies, especially those related to the supply chain, be reviewed in line with area-specific dynamics, to ensure that policies facilitate the changes that the company seeks to achieve.

CSR integration is a process that requires attention at management level. Having dedicated integration champions to help identify hindrances and weaknesses in the systems could benefit the organisation. Integration would need to be driven from the top so that the required resources are made available.

7.3.3 Internal communication

In implementing CSR, an intertwined relation and constant communication with the unit responsible for environmental matters would aid the development of a comprehensive response in addressing issues affecting communities. Noting the benefits that come from this partnership, it is suggested that CSR reporting and communication within the company be

extended to other sections, including engineering, which is the department responsible for the mining activities that cause environmental damage.

7.3.4 CSR planning

Companies are expected to consult the IDP of the local authority when undertaking CSR. Investing in sustainable CSR therefore requires company–municipality collaboration in planning and the pursuit of impactful and sustainable outcomes. Joint planning of interventions will help stakeholders to align their plans. CSR planning should extend beyond the inputs by companies, which look at budgets. Project design should include CSR performance assessment, which must outline CSR targets, desired outputs, and impact that will be measured in project evaluation.

7.3.5 Inter-organisational agreements

In the absence of legislations that transcend the institutional arrangements of companies and municipalities, it is important that stakeholders enter into a formal agreement that will govern their partnership. Entering into legally binding agreements will bind partners to roles and responsibilities that are crucial to project sustainability. Such agreements will also ensure that commitments made by the company are passed on to the new company in the event of a merger. It is recommended that the agreements be extended to cover the post-handover period, so that an account of project contributions can be kept. In the case of the selected cases, the mining companies and the municipality hailed the MoU as an important instrument that fostered corporation and collaboration.

7.3.6 Stakeholder collaboration

Concerted effort is required from collaborating stakeholders engage in strategic initiatives that not only addresses the current short-term challenges associated with infrastructure development. Through CSR budget, stakeholders in collaboration should jointly formulate strategic initiatives that would create alternative economic activities that will be required post mine closures. Required is strategic collaborations formulated along long-term perspective to create viable projects for life after mine closure and creation of alternative livelihoods. It can be expected that such capacity may be lacking in some municipalities and therefore, establishment of development agencies solely dedicated to driving CSR initiatives and

leveraging on stakeholder collaborations is recommended. Implementing CSR through development agencies would help balance the power struggle between stakeholders; help hold mining companies accountable and drive local economic development.

7.3.7 Transparency

The mining sector is viewed with suspicion, partly because of its past unfulfilled commitments, which came to the fore during the Marikana incident. Insights from the study also confirmed perceptions of corruption and misrepresentation of information. The mining sector does not report to municipalities; however, in view of the damaging perceptions caused by a lack of transparency, it is recommended that companies share information with their stakeholders. Companies must establish systems that will enable municipalities to access site-specific information on rehabilitation provisions, profits made, final SLPs as approved by the DMR, and other information that may be of interest. Lifting the veil of secrecy on companies' information will help stakeholders engage from an informed perspective. Similarly, information on the flow of funds between the company and the municipality should be shared with relevant community stakeholders.

7.3.8 CSR action

Re-conceptualization of CSR actions would need to be considered. Current CSR investments and actions are misaligned to challenges caused by mining in the host community. Future CSR action should broadly embrace the creation of alternative economy post mining and geared towards investing in renewable energy as seen as the automatic replacement of coal needs to be prioritised. This as the reality of coal mine and coal fire station closures are unfolding.

7.3.9 Coal mines approach to communities

Companies have a prerogative to directly engage the community on matters related to CSR, it is suggested that companies undertake CSR in partnership with municipalities. This will help to affirm the authority of local government and dissipate possibilities of creation of two centres of power. Implementing CSR directly with communities has the potential to isolate and undermine legitimate leaders such as local Councillors and give rise to factional leadership.

Furthermore, working through municipalities will help garner on-going support to projects by other stakeholders such as government.

7.3.10 Socio-economic development outcomes

Attainment of socio-economic development outcomes such as granting access to services, employment, skills development and capacity building should be an aspiration of any community based projects. From project inception, CSR should be designed to deliver specific socio-economic development outcomes which are measurable. CSR should then not be an end in itself but a means to help develop the community. Companies should aim to leave a positive legacy which will be evident post the life of a mine. Without providing an account on the socio-economic outcomes delivered, companies merely undertake CSR as a means to foster companies' acceptance by communities rather than to facilitate local development. For this reason, CSR Stakeholders should jointly assess the contributions made by companies in the community. This will help identify weaknesses that requires further attention.

7.3.11 Monitoring and evaluation

M&E offers stakeholders an opportunity to assess if a CSR initiative has delivered the desired outcomes. Stakeholder representatives from the sampled cases were not engaged in M&E of projects, and neither company had undertaken project impact assessments. Continuous monitoring of project helps to ensure timeous adjustments to ensure that the project remains on course. Useful insights were shared on how both projects could have been improved if participants had been offered an opportunity to evaluate the project. It is thus recommended that companies engage all the relevant stakeholders in the evaluation of the projects, so that future projects could be improved based on lessons learned.

7.3.12 CSR reporting

The absence of M&E has a negative impact on CSR reporting. In line with GRI guidelines, companies report their CSR performance externally. The picture created in the reports is not a collective account or perspective held by CSR stakeholders. There is a void caused by a lack of internal reporting, which increases the risk of reports being disputed by stakeholders. Company reports published on websites are superficial and contain consolidated information, making it difficult for other stakeholders to ascertain details. Furthermore, given that some

community members may not understand these reports, it is recommended that companies utilise the PSC to report to their local stakeholders, i.e., municipalities and communities. Municipalities should access the information from company websites and interrogate it where necessary.

7.3.13 Feedback

There is a legal requirement for mining right holder to report to DMRE on the implementation of development plans, however, municipalities and community stakeholders are not afforded such feedback. To promote transparency and accountability, this framework suggests that feedback on the company performance as it relates to community development issues be shared with stakeholders. When stakeholders receive feedback about progress or lack thereof, they will assist in problem solving.

7.3.14 Legislative gaps

South Africa moved away from voluntary to regulated CSR through the enactment of the Broad-based Socio-economic Empowerment Charter of 2002. The Charter is aimed at ensuring that mining companies act in a responsible manner and transform and develop mining communities. However, the legislation is insufficient to articulate the institutional arrangements necessary for implementing CSR, which requires interfaces between companies, municipalities, and the DMR. The legislative voids are a major hindrance that leads to challenges in implementing sustainable CSR initiatives. It is therefore recommended that the South African government develop a guiding framework that will foster accountability and transparency by companies to their local stakeholders, namely municipalities and affected communities.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite significant theoretical and practical implications presented by this study in the field of CSR management, three limitations were noted. The time interval between the CSR projects' implementation and the time when the study was conducted presented challenges in retrieving projects information. The ECD capacity-building project was implemented in 2016, and continues, while the ECD facility was constructed in 2018 and handed over in 2019. At the time of data collection, that is, in the year 2022, access to some project records was hindered

by poor record management. This limitation mitigated through adoption of multiple sources of data including secondary data as one of the techniques to generate data. Secondary data was retrieved from published company records and therefore were deemed unbiased because the documents were not authored specifically for this study.

The second limitation relates to access to participants. One study company underwent merger prior to data collection. The re-structuring process resulted in employee turnover and access to potential participants with project knowledge were limited to those who were still with the company. Participants who were no longer working for the company declined to participate, while others were not traceable. This limitation was mitigated by the use of multiple sources of information and data triangulation.

The final limitation relates to the scope of the study. This study focused on CSR projects of JSE-listed coal mining companies operating in South Africa. The author adopted a qualitative research approach and a case study research design, which limit the generalisability of the findings. However, a multiple cases study design with a detailed account of the methodology and study context were provided thereby enhancing the transferability of the findings to similar contexts.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This qualitative study focused on two cases of coal-mining companies. Further studies could be conducted based on larger samples employing quantitative and or mixed methods which covers all JSE listed coal mining companies.

The findings of the study reveal that the CSR initiatives of these companies are aimed towards addressing government infrastructure development. Future studies could focus on other CSR investments that may be relevant to the South African context in delivering sustainable community development. Another area for further study, which stems from the goal of SLP implementation, is an investigation of management approaches and their success rate in creating alternative livelihoods for former mine workers after retrenchments and decommissioning of a mine.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This study was motivated by the need to shift the CSR discourse into meaningful actions that can create alternative economic opportunities and create community livelihoods through private-sector interventions. Mining companies are not only strategically located, but are also sufficiently resourced to collaborate with government and the communities in which they operate. Looking back to the enactment of Minerals Petroleum Development Resources Act in the year 2002, the landscape of mining towns has not changed drastically. The nature of projects that companies undertake is gravitating towards government needs. Communities expect companies to move beyond tactical initiatives to strategic interventions that are measured against sustainability criteria.

The development of CSR legislation governing inter-organisational arrangements could help ameliorate CSR shortcomings; however, legislation alone is not a panacea. Companies need to develop systems that could be adjusted as the environment dictates in order to deliver sustainable outcomes in host communities.

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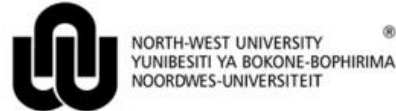
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethics approval letter



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

11 August 2021

Prof Y du Plessis
Per e-mail
Dear Prof du Plessis,

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 30072021 (Round Robin)
Student: Tshabalala, EK (31443184)(NWU-00908-21-A4)
Applicants: Prof Y du Plessis – PhD in Business Administration

Your ethics application on, *Establishing a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines*, which served Round Robin, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number **NWU-00908-21-A4** is given for one year of ethics clearance.

Please note that the ethics approval of this application is subject to the Covid-19 protocols.

Kind regards,

Mark
Rathbone

Digitally signed by Mark Rathbone
DN: cn=Mark Rathbone, o=North-
West University, ou=Business
management,
email=mark.rathbone@nwu.ac.za,
c=ZA
Date: 2021.08.12 07:37:06 +02'00'

Prof Mark Rathbone
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee
(EMS-REC)

Appendix 2: Letter of introduction and informed consent



Date: 8 September 2021

INTRODUCTORY AND INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant

This **Introductory and Informed Consent letter** serves to confirm the following information as it relates to the officially approved PhD research project with EMS-REC ethical number 00908-21-A4 at the North-West University on “*Establishing a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines*”.

The sole purpose of this study is to establish a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

1. Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. You may also decide not to answer specific questions.
2. The research approach is qualitative, which entails detail online interviews (observing Covid-19 protocol) that will take no longer than 60 minutes of your time to complete.
3. Basic background information will be asked e.g. your age, and related experience to the topic for statistical description of the participating sample group.
4. Confidentiality of the data is guaranteed and only the combined results will be used for research and publication purposes.

5. The data gathered from the interviews will be recorded and only be used for research purposes and academic publications.

6. Please note that no participant will be identifiable as a pseudo name/number will be used in the study.

7. Also note that this study does not have a preferred answer to any of the questions as it will explore your experiences and perceptions on the phenomenon of CSR in coal mining.

8. The results and findings of this study will be available on request.

- If you have any questions you can contact the research supervisor: Prof Yvonne du Plessis at yvonne.duplessis@nwu.ac.za or the researcher Elizabeth Tshabalala at lizzyt2019@gmail.com or telephonically at 082 796 7744.

Please indicate your consent- Sign with a personal code:.....

I hereby give my consent after having read the above information that my data may be used as stated above.	YES	NO
--	------------	-----------

Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth Tshabalala

PhD Research Student

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for coal mine and municipal participants

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COAL MINE AND MUNICIPAL PARTICIPANTS

Date of interview: _____ Code: _____

A. Interview Protocol

1. Welcome and introducing the study to the participant- state the purpose:

The primary purpose of this study is to establish a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

2. Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study.
3. Spell out participants' rights regarding voluntary participation, confidentiality, risk-NWU Ethical process and rules.
4. Get consent on Consent Form from each participant.
5. Agree on process and recording of interview- explain process and timeline not more than 60 minutes.
6. Member checking agreement if needed.
7. Where necessary: Taking of photos of projects and company document use for research- obtain permission in writing.

Section A: Demographic information

Some demographic data needed for sample description- your name will not appear anywhere and you cannot be identified by this data. You are free to not disclose any demographic data.

Gender _____

Level of seniority _____

Organisational unit/ section _____

Where applicable your involvement in CSR Project _____

Years of service with the mine and role in CSR _____

SECTION B: Research-specific questions

1. What are the specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities that the coal mines have undertaken between the year 2013 and 2018?
2. How are the CSR projects managed by the mines to ensure that they remain sustainable beyond the SLP period and why?
3. How is sustainable CSR implementation integrated in the business processes?

4. What are the specific socio-economic development outcomes that the community-based CSR projects delivered and why?
5. What is considered as sustainable CSR by the mine? (Probe on Why and examples)
6. What role are coal mines playing to ensure CSR projects are sustainable beyond funding period?
7. How do coal mines approach the communities? How do they prepare themselves to get buy-in? What do they offer?
8. What are the organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector, why and how should they be managed in order to ensure sustainability in community development?
9. Explain to me why would you say that your coal mine has done everything possible to ensure Sustainable CSR? (Probe for detail on Actions, Intentions, Outcomes, Measures...)

Where necessary: Taking of photos of projects and company document use for research- obtain permission in writing.

Thank participants and agree on follow-up if necessary.

Appendix 4: Interview Guide for community participants

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

Date of interview: _____ Code: _____

A. Interview Protocol

1. Welcome and introducing the study to the participant- state the purpose:

The primary purpose of this study is to establish a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

2. Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study.
3. Spell out participant's rights regarding voluntary participation, confidentiality, risk-
NWU Ethical process and rules.
4. Get consent on Consent Form from each participant.
5. Agree on process and recording of interview- explain process and timeline not more than
60 minutes.
6. Member checking agreement if needed.

Section A: Demographic information

Gender _____
Project description and location _____
Years of involvement in the CSR project _____

SECTION B: Research-specific questions (Individual Interviews and/or Focus groups)

1. What are the specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities that the coal mines have undertaken in your community between the year 2013 and 2018?
2. How are the CSR projects managed by the mines in your community? (Probe on their involvement and skill transfer)?
3. What are the specific socio-economic development outcomes (Probe on specifics) that the community-based CSR projects delivered in your community and how did it benefit the community (Probe on benefits and why they see benefits or not)?
4. What do you as community considered as sustainable CSR (Probe- Might have to explain meaning- Check) by the mine?

5. How do the coal mine authority approach you as community when they mine in your area?
6. What role in the community (Probe for detail) are coal mines playing to ensure CSR projects are sustainable beyond funding period?
7. What are the organisational challenges posed by communities when confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector?
8. Why and how should they be managed in order to ensure sustainability in your community development (Probe for detail with examples)?

Date of interview: _____

A. Interview Protocol

8. Welcome and introducing the study to the participant- state the purpose:

The primary purpose of this study is to establish a Corporate Social Responsibility framework for sustainable community development in South African coal mines.

9. Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study.
10. Spell out participants' rights regarding voluntary participation, confidentiality, risk-
NWU Ethical process and rules.
11. Get consent on Consent Form from each participant.
12. Agree on process and recording of interview- explain process and timeline not more
than 60 minutes.
13. Member checking agreement if needed.
14. Where necessary: Taking of photos of projects and company document use for research-
obtain permission in writing.

Section A: Demographic information

Some demographic data needed for sample description- you name will not appear anywhere and you cannot be identified by this data. You are free to not disclose any demographic data.

Gender	_____
Age	_____
Level of Seniority	_____
Organisational unit/ section	_____
Where applicable your involvement in CSR Project	_____
Years of service with the mine and role in CSR	_____

SECTION B: Research-specific questions

10. What are the specific community-based corporate social responsibility strategies and activities that the coal mines have undertaken between the year 2013 and 2018?
11. How are the CSR projects managed by the mines to ensure that they remain sustainable beyond the SLP period and why?
12. How is sustainable CSR implementation integrated in the business processes?
13. What are the specific socio-economic development outcomes that the community-based CSR projects delivered and why?
14. What is considered as sustainable CSR by the mine? (Probe on Why and examples)
15. What role are coal mines playing to ensure CSR projects are sustainable beyond funding period?
16. How do coal mines approach the communities? How do they prepare themselves to get buy-in? What do they offer?
17. What are the organisational challenges confronting CSR sustainability in the coal mining sector, why and how should they be managed in order to ensure sustainability in community development?
18. Explain to me why would you say that your coal mine has done everything possible to ensure Sustainable CSR? (Probe for detail on Actions, Intentions, Outcomes, Measures...)

Where necessary: Taking of photos of projects and company document use for research- obtain permission in writing.

Thank participants and agree on follow-up if necessary.

Appendix 5: Turn it in summary report

Turnitin Originality Report

31443184:Draft_1_Thesis_E.K_Tshabalala.pdf by LIZZY TSHABALALA
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Appendix 6: Certificate of Editing

TERESA KAPP

Phone:
+27 82 789 7878
E-mail:
tekapp@mweb.co.za
info@teresakapp.com

This serves to certify that I duly edited:

**Establishing a corporate social responsibility framework for sustainable community
development in South African coal mines**

EK Tshabalala

orcid.org 0000-0003-3004-9721

I am an accredited editor with the University of Johannesburg, University of Stellenbosch Business School, NWU, UP, UCT, and GIBS, and my clients include the United Nations Global Compact, Absa, FNB, Takealot, and various other universities and organisations in South Africa and Namibia.

Please note that all editing is done in *Track Changes*, and I therefore have no control over what is accepted or rejected by the author. Furthermore, I have no control over text added at a later stage.

Should there be any queries, please contact me on the number provided above.



Teresa Kapp