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'Cursed' Communities? Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Company Towns and the Mining Industry in Namibia

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Abstract

This article examines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and mining community development, sustainability and viability. These issues are considered focussing on current and former company owned mining towns in Namibia. Historically company towns have been a feature of mining activity in Namibia. However the fate of such towns upon mine closure has been and remains controversial. Declining former mining communities and even ghost mining towns can be found across the country. This article draws upon research undertaken in Namibia and considers these issues with reference to three case study communities. This article examines the complexities which surround decision-making about these communities, and the challenges faced in efforts to encourage their sustainability after mining. In this article mine company engagements through CSR with the development, sustainability and viability of such communities are also critically discussed. The role, responsibilities, and actions of the state in relation to these communities are furthermore reflected upon. Finally ways forward for these communities are considered.

Abbreviations: CDM (Consolidated Diamond Mines), CSDP (Community Sustainable Development Project), CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), ETSIP (Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme), ICMM (International Council on Mining and Metals), LDC (Long Distance Commuting), MCF (Mine Closure Framework), MMSD (Mining Minerals and Sustainable Development), NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation), WSDP (Whole School Development Project).

Introduction

Company towns have existed for centuries in regions across the world, from 19th century industrial paternalism on the North American resource frontier to far-flung present day resource extraction communities on the edges of the world's habitable regions and in the Global South. While not exclusively the case, company towns have often been associated with mining and wider resource extraction industries. Such company-owned mining communities occupy a particular place in our geographical imaginations. The classic portrayal of such communities describes the dominance of a single industry with company ownership of land, housing and services, company control over local government, and the company centre stage in local economic and social life. Such portrayals have also frequently told a story of boom and bust, and the birth, life, and finally death of such towns following mine or industry closure. While more recent writing on company towns has highlighted their distinctiveness, individual stories, and even their potential to break this cycle of boom and bust, long-term development, sustainability and viability remain common areas of concern for such communities globally. Drawing upon qualitative case based research this paper considers the development, sustainability and viability of company owned mining communities in Namibia in the context of debates and practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In this paper the relationship between CSR and community development, sustainability and viability is critically examined with reference to three case study communities, all of which are current or former company towns.

Research examining mining communities and more specifically company towns in the developing world, is very limited. As is work exploring what happens to these communities after mine or industry closure, and how companies engage with these issues through CSR. Discussions in this paper are framed around three key questions: (1) What are the major challenges faced in efforts to encourage the sustainability and viability of company owned mining communities in Namibia and wider developing world environments; (2) In the case study communities and more widely how successfully have and can these issues be addressed by mining companies through CSR; (3) What is the way forward for mining companies, governments and wider stakeholders in relation to the development, sustainability and viability of such communities. These questions structure the paper, which begins by situating the research in relation to existing literatures and debates. Historical context is then provided about the mining industry, CSR and company towns in Namibia. The methodology employed is then outlined, with the case study communities also introduced. This is followed by consideration of the challenges faced in attempts to make these communities sustainable after mining. Engagements with these issues through CSR by mining companies in Namibia are then critically discussed. Finally ways forward for these communities are reflected upon, with some more practical suggestions made for companies, governments and wider stakeholders.

Mining and Development: Blessing or Curse?

The relationship between mining and development has long been debated, with perspectives on mining's role in national development relatively polarised. On the one hand are the mining industry, mining advocates, and many international institutions, including the World Bank

Group, who continue to advocate mining as a national development strategy (Campbell, 2009). They suggest that mining creates employment, provides taxation revenues for developing country governments, creates opportunities for value addition and beneficiation, and that through CSR charitable giving mining companies are now making a more direct contribution to development and poverty alleviation. However in counterpoint to these claims there is a well development body of critical academic and wider literature, disputing the positive role of mining in national development. Drawing upon 'resource curse' theories (Auty 2001, 2008; Sachs and Warner, 1995) it is suggested that *'natural resource abundance* creates a series of economic and political distortions*'* (Bebbington et al., 2008, p.5) which ultimately undermine mining's contribution to national development. It is argued that natural resource abundance can be bad for economic growth, can foster mineral dependency and market vulnerability, can stunt the development of non-mineral sectors, and that resource extraction occurs within enclave economies limiting multiplier effects (Szablowski, 2002). It is furthermore suggested that natural resource abundance can erode the quality of national governance fostering clientalism, graft and corruption (Karl, 2007), and can in various ways encourage and/or perpetuate armed conflict (Collier and Hoeffler, 2005).

The ambiguity which surrounds the contribution of mining to national development is replicated in relation to its role in regional and local economic and social development. Advocates of mining argue that it creates local employment, provides economic opportunities, and that mining companies often invest considerable resources in improving local health and education services, while also investing in 'host' communities through charitable giving (IIED, 2002). It is furthermore suggested that given the frequent geographic isolatedness of host communities, mining often represents the only viable option such communities have for socio-economic development. However mirroring earlier discussions there is a counter body of academic, NGO and activist literatures that draws upon the idea of a local level 'resource curse', and highlights the social, economic and environmentally deleterious impacts mining can have on communities (Manteaw, 2007; Muradian et al 2003; Newell, 2005). These impacts may take the form of pollution and environmental degradation as a result of mining activity, may manifest in conflict over land-use and the rights of indigenous groups, or may play out in the longer term in relation to life after mine closure and its economic, social and environmental legacies (Kemp, 2010; Kapelus, 2002; Hamann and Kapelus, 2004). Debate regarding the role of mining in local and national development can be conceived as a continuum with pro-mining advocates at one end, and at the other, resource curse critics inside and outside academia (Kemp, 2010). This article examines mining and development at a local community level, focussing in particular on mine closure and its long term social and development impacts. It aims to make an innovative and worthwhile contribution to what remains a topical and contested area of enquiry.

Mining and CSR

There is no universally accepted definition of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). It means different things to different people, and its meaning varies according to the circumstances in which it is applied (Blowfield and Frynas, 2005). In this paper quite a narrow understanding of CSR is employed in order to retain conceptual clarity. It draws upon more practice oriented definitions of CSR, for example that in the European Commission's Green Paper of July 2001 where CSR is defined as *"a concept whereby* companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their *stakeholders on a voluntary basis"*. In this paper CSR is used as an overarching term to describe the policies, practices and engagements by mining companies in Namibia with social, environmental and development issues going beyond legal compliance.

In recent years the global mining industry has become increasingly active in its CSR engagements (Jenkins, 2004). This can be attributed to a number of factors, including: the continuing controversial nature of many mining investments; the widespread negative perceptions which persist in relation to the industry; the social and environmental externalities that have historically often accompanied mining activity; and the fact that mining companies increasingly operate in the global south, in countries where legislation and the state's ability to monitor regulatory compliance is often weak. Through initiatives like the Mining and Minerals Sustainable Development Project (MMSD) and organisations like the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), the industry has embraced CSR agendas. A commitment to 'sustainable development' is now often centre stage in corporate reporting and on company websites, and since its launch in 2010 the industry has started to engage with ISO 26000 social responsibility performance measurement. Individual companies have also developed best practice standards, guidelines and 'toolboxes' in relation to a range of corporate responsibility issues, including mine closure and mining community development and sustainability. In relation to mine closure the ICMM has also developed guidelines including an integrated mine closure toolkit (ICMM, 2008).

However despite the global mining industry's growing engagement with CSR many questions remain about mining's role in social and economic development, and the extent to which through CSR the industry is fully managing and mitigating the social and environmental impacts of its activities. For example Hamann (2004), in discussion of CSR in the South African mining industry, suggests that while engagements with CSR have evolved over time, questions remain about the depth of CSR adoption and how far socially and environmentally responsible business practices have been integrated in core business activities and decision making. A related critique of CSR in the resource extraction industries is provided by Gulbrandsson and Moe (2007), who with reference to the oil industry in Azerbaijan suggest that CSR agendas and company engagements are often focussed on the micro-level, eschewing consideration of macro-level social responsibility concerns, for example wider issues of resource governance and corruption. It is suggested that in their CSR engagements companies are still often avoiding critical self-reflection about the overall role of resource extraction in national development, and the way in which it and they may be implicated in the creation of wider social and environmental problems.

Perhaps the most common criticism of CSR in the mining industry and more widely is that it is often just corporate 'greenwash'. Proponents of this view argue that for the most part CSR is a cover for business as usual, and that in many instances provides a cloak for unethical and irresponsible business behaviour (Christian Aid, 2004; Whitmore, 2006). A comparative assessment of this greenwash critique in the context of mining in Zambia and South Africa is provided by Hamann and Kapelus (2004). The research presented in this paper draws upon, and engages with these wider debates and ambiguities surrounding mining, CSR, and development at national and local levels.

Resource, Mining and Company Towns

A 'Resource town' is a town *"whose economic base is dominated by the extraction and* primary processing of (non-*agricultural) natural resources"* (Hayter, 2000, p. 291). The resources extracted and/or processed in such towns may be non-renewable, as in case of mining resource towns like Virginia City in the USA and the pit villages of the Rhonda Valley in Wales (Humphreys, 1972; James, 1998). Alternatively they may be renewable, for example, the forest and industrial logging communities of British Columbia, Canada (Barnes and Hayter, 1994, 1997). A 'Mining town' is a resource town in which mineral extraction, primary mineral processing, and related activities dominate the town's economic base. A 'Company town' is a community owned and administered by an industrial employer (Lucas, 1971). Company towns are built by an industrial employer, sometimes in collaboration with the state. In such towns, the company owns the majority if not all housing and business premises. The company also often owns health, education, social facilities and infrastructure, and renders municipal services to residents and businesses which are often free of charge or subsidised. A high proportion of the residents of a company town are either employed directly by the company, or work for related contractor or supply businesses. The company town may be 'closed' or 'open'. In the former, access to the town is restricted to employees their families and authorised persons. In the latter public access is possible however business start-up or residency for non employees may be difficult. The case study communities in this paper are mining resource towns that are currently, or have previously been, company towns.

There is considerable overlap in what constitutes a resource town, a mining town and a company town. Reflecting this overlap a disparate body of interdisciplinary literature exists examining these types of community. As previously discussed resource towns are towns whose economic base is dominated by the extraction and processing of resources both renewable and non-renewable. In relation to the former, considerable attention in the literature has been given to examining industrial logging communities in North America. This literature addresses a range of issues in such communities including migration (Halseth, 1999), employment change (Barnes et al., 1999), and responses to industry restructuring and closure (Barnes and Hayter, 1992). While forest logging communities are neither homogenous nor the same as mining resource towns, there are commonalities between these types of resource community. Research examining industrial restructuring in these kinds of logging communities provides insights for understanding such events and their impacts in mining resource communities. This potential for crossover is further illustrated by a number of comparative studies examining both timber and mining resource communities (Lucas, 1971; Machlis et al., 1990; Reed, 1995).

Mining resource communities have long been the subject of academic interest, and there is a well developed body of critical literature addressing such communities. However of particular interest for in this paper is work focussing on mine closure, life after mining and community sustainability. To date literature examining these issues has particularly focussed on mining communities in the Global North. For example there is a substantial body of literature concerned with former mining communities in the United Kingdom, considering issues like the economic and social impacts of mine closure; the impact of closure on health and wellbeing; and efforts to regenerate former mining communities (Beatty and Fothergill, 1996; Waddington, 2004; Waddington et al 2001). Similar work has been undertaken examining these sorts of issues in mining communities in North America (Keyes, 1992; Randall and Ironside, 1996), mainland Europe (Critcher et al., 1995) and Australia (Ingamells et al., 2011; Storey, 2001).

While work exploring mine closure and its effects on mining communities in the Global North is quite well developed, this is much less the case in relation to mining communities in the Global South. Reflecting these wider limitations, relatively little research has been undertaken examining mine closure and mining community sustainability in Southern Africa. Of the research that exists much of it has focussed on single community case studies often in South Africa (Binns and Nel, 2003; Bird, 2009; Kapelus, 2002). At a regional level South Africa has been at the forefront of legislative and policy developments aimed at encouraging more socially and environmentally responsible behaviour within the mining industry, including in relation to mine closure. South Africa is furthermore a regional hub and headquarters location for many mining companies, and thus the starting point for many voluntary CSR initiatives which are often then rolled out across the region, albeit frequently in a more diluted form. The institutional environment surrounding social and environmental responsibility issues for mining companies in South Africa is quite different to that in neighbouring states like Namibia, where legislation and state monitoring capacity is often weaker. Reflecting this difference there is a need, as is done in this research, to look beyond South Africa when considering issues of CSR, mine closure and mining community sustainability.

That the research presented in this paper examines multiple case study communities is also unusual, as is the type of community considered. As stated the three case study communities are all current or former company towns. While there exists a critical body of literature examining company towns and even issues of sustainability and life after closure in such communities, the vast majority of this work has again focussed on company towns in the Global North, for example in the United States (Allen, 1966; Crawford, 1995), Australia (Gibson, 1991; Houghton, 1993) Canada (Bradbury, 1995) and Scandinavia (Johansson et al., 1992). Little academic research has considered company towns in the Global South or Southern Africa more specifically. Studies of mining towns in Southern Africa have mostly focussed on the relationships between and impacts of mining on pre-existing communities or 'indigenous' groups (Newenham-kahindi, 2011). Company owned mining towns are different, with particular challenges associated with mine closure in such places. Company towns have also received limited attention in mining industry closure standards and CSR best practice guidelines. In part this reflects a trend within the global mining industry to where possible now avoid the creation of these kinds of communities. Mining companies do not want to operate towns. However they still require stable operating environments with adequate levels of safety and security, health, education, sanitation, infrastructure etc. Ensuring these requirements are met, without it becoming a significant long term liability, remains a challenge for companies, particularly as operations move into increasingly remote parts of the developing world where local authorities may lack the capacity and resources to fulfil these needs. While the practice of mining companies building and wholly administering towns is becoming less prevalent, the legacies of this approach persist in Namibia and beyond, with these kinds of communities found across Southern Africa. For example: in South Africa the communities of Klein Zee and Koingnass in Namaqualand, and Rietspruit and Masauli in Mpumalanga; in Zimbabwe Kamativi, Mhangura and Alaska; and in Namibia the communities of Korsus, Nauchas and Uis, plus the three communities studied in this research. There is thus a need for more critical academic and practitioner research focussing on these kinds of mining community.

Mining in Namibia

Academic literature on Namibia is sparse and this is even more the case in relation to work examining the country's mining industry. Nevertheless a number of studies provide important socio-economic, historical and political background context for this research, for example reviews of Namibia's political and economic progress since independence by Sidaway and Simon (1993) and Melber (2003), and in-depth discussions of the country's political history and development by Leys (1995) and Dobell (2000). Kempton and Du Preez (1997) also undertake a useful discussion of state firm relations in the mining industry. These works and others are drawn upon in the following discussion which chart the evolution of the mining industry in Namibia over time, providing important background context and highlighting the key role mining has and continues to play in the country's economic, social and political life.

The mining industry is central to Namibia's economy. It accounts for around 16% GDP and nearly 50% of merchandising exports (Chamber of Mines Annual Review, 2009). Taxation from mining companies and their employees represents a substantial part of the Namibian government's annual revenues, and thousands of Namibians are employed either directly in the industry or indirectly by contractor or supply companies. However this macroeconomic significance is not only a recent phenomenon, the mining industry has a long and at times controversial history in Namibia. Mining began in earnest in Namibia during its colonial occupation by Germany (1884-1915). In 1906 copper mining began in the north central region of what was then German South West Africa, centring on the then company town of Tsumeb. Soon afterwards in 1908, diamonds were discovered on the South West (Skeleton) Coast precipitating a diamond rush. In 1911 in a bid to control this rush, regulations were enacted declaring the diamond area as a *'Sperrgebiet'* (Forbidden territory). Access in and out of the Sperrgebiet was restricted and remains so. Initially diamond mining in Namibia centred on the company town of Kolmanskoop. However changes in the dynamics of local diamond mining activity resulted in Kolmanskoop's decline and eventual abandonment in 1954, it is now a ghost town and tourist attraction. In 1920 the various diamond operators in Namibia were bought by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, and the company Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM) was formed. CDM gained exclusive mining rights for the Sperrgebiet.

At the end of World War One South Africa was granted the administration of German South West Africa as a League of Nations mandate territory. This situation persisted until the end of World War Two, when the newly formed United Nations (UN) sought to replace this mandate with a trusteeship agreement requiring closer international monitoring of the territory's administration. However South Africa refused to surrender its mandate and instead occupied Namibia which it then administered as a de-facto province. Namibia only gained its independence from South Africa in 1990 following decades of conflict. Mining continued in Namibia throughout its occupation. Until the 1970s mining activity in Namibia largely consisted of diamond mining in the south and copper mining in the north central region. However in the early 1970s, large scale lead and zinc mining began, and soon after uranium mining. Company towns were established to house the workers of these new mines.

The role of the mining industry and individual mining companies in Namibia before independence was and remains controversial. On the one hand, the industry has been criticised for its labour policies during this period, for issues around taxation paid, and at a wider level the decision by companies to operate in an occupied country (see Kempton and Du Preez, 1997, for wider discussion). However this negative perception is challenged by others who highlight the industry's contribution to development through employment, its role in economic growth, and also its direct development contribution through philanthropy and charitable giving. A comprehensive analysis of these contrasting positions is beyond the scope of this paper. However these debates provide important context for later discussions.

Since the 1970s the mining industry in Namibia has become more diverse. Gold mining now occurs and lead and zinc mining has expanded. Furthermore over the last decade, fuelled by high global uranium prices, a 'uranium boom' has occurred in Namibia centring on the Erongo Region. Existing mines have extended their lifespans, new mines have opened, and many other uranium prospecting and mining licenses have been granted. Historically Namibia's mining industry has been dominated by diamond mining. However non-diamond mining represents an increasing proportion of national mining activity. This change reflects both an increase in non-diamond mining, but also changes occurring in Namibia's diamond mining industry. Land-based diamond mining has occurred in Namibia for over 100 years and has long been central to the country's economy. For example between 1978 and 1985 diamonds alone accounted for over 60% of Namibia's export earnings (UNCTC, 1986). Before independence land-based diamond mining was almost exclusively undertaken by CDM. However in 1994 an agreement was reached, between De Beers the owner of CDM and the Namibian government, that CDM should be transformed into the joint venture company Namdeb, in which the Namibian government and De Beers would each have a 50% shareholding. In the present, Namibia's land-based diamond resources are increasingly marginal. The 2008 global financial crisis exacerbated these problems and triggered an industry slump. While this situation has improved, the position of land based diamond mining in Namibia remains precarious. Over the last decade marine diamond mining has rapidly expanded, with the potential to replace some of revenues lost to the government as land-based diamond mining contracts over the coming years. While Namibia's mining industry is undergoing a period of transition, it nevertheless remains a central pillar of the country's economy.

Research Methodology

An in-depth multiple case study approach was utilised in this research. This use and the approach adopted, was informed by writing on case study research by Stoeker (1991), Yin and Davies (2007) and Yin (2009). An in-depth case study approach was selected reflecting the complex nature of the communities and issues studied, and an understanding that only though in-depth examination could these complexities be unravelled. Multiple case studies were considered allowing for cross comparison, and to make conclusions more widely generalisable. The three case study communities were identified and selected based on their status as current or former company towns, their broad comparability in terms of things like size, geographic isolatedness, social structure and local economic composition, and the way in which they seemed to represent different stages along the same broad development trajectory one of mining fuelled growth and decline.

The study upon which this paper is based was carried out between 2007 and 2011, with data collection primarily occurring during 2008/09 including an extended 12 month fieldwork period in Namibia. Between one and two months was spent residing and working in and around each of the communities. Qualitative research methods were predominantly employed including key informant interviews, focus groups and field note taking. For each of the case studies, secondary document and material analysis was also carried out, for example of annual reports to stakeholders, baseline studies, EIAs, and various more ad hoc company documents. This was both for the purposes of triangulation with data collected using the aforementioned research methods, and also to gain a greater baseline understanding of the communities studied and the historical and ongoing responses of the mining companies examined to issues of community sustainability. Following completion of the primary data collection, secondary data sources including local newspaper reports, and documents and statements released by government, companies and wider stakeholders were regularly reviewed to maintain up-to-date information. Direct follow-up on data collection has been limited, constrained by a number of factors including distance, and personnel and ownership changes in the case study companies.

Semi-structured key informant interviews were the primary method of data collection employed. In total across the three communities and nationally 90 interviews were conducted. Table 1 provides an overview of interview respondents, who are grouped according to type and respective community:

Table 1: Overview of Interviews

Location	No. of interviews	Interview Group
National	2	Government Representatives Ministry of Mines and Energy
	1	Chamber of Mines Namibia
Community A	11	Mine Company Staff
	3	Service Provider (Health and Education)
	2	Town Management Representative
	1	Trade Union Representative
	2	Regional Government Representatives
	1	Civil Society
	11	Business Community
Community B	17	Mine Company Staff (2 mines)
	3	Town Management Representatives
	1	Regional Government Representatives
	2	Trade Union Representative
	2	Service Providers (Health and Education)
	4	Development practitioners
	1	Representative Informal Community
	4	Civil Society
	6	Business Community
Community C	8	Mine Company Staff
	4	Foundation Staff
	2	Local Government
	2	Service Provider (Health and Education)

In the selection of interview respondents a number of key stakeholder groups were identified. Representatives from these different groups were then interviewed for each of the case communities. Three main groupings were identified: (1) Company staff with knowledge and responsibility for different aspects of CSR, community development and mine closure; (2) Local and regional government representatives, staff working in local administration in unproclaimed communities, and health and education providers i.e. head teachers, hospital administrators; (3) Wider community and civil society, for example community leaders, labour representatives, development practitioners and key business people. Interviews were also undertaken with national government and wider mining industry representatives to gain a more overarching perspective.

Local facilitators played an important role in the identification and recruitment of participants. Within each community, one or two key facilitators were crucial in enabling access, and providing information about the best people to speak to and how to contact them. Where these facilitators worked for mining companies, they also played an important role in establishing and maintaining legitimacy for the research within the company (Piekkari and Welch, 2004). Overall the mechanism adopted for participant recruitment was a hybrid of systematic and more 'snowball' approaches (Patten, 1990).

All of the interviews were conducted in English, with respondents given the choice of a translator if preferred. The length of interview varied between half an hour and several hours. Where possible, interviews were recorded however participants were also given a choice in this. When interviews were not recorded copious notes were taken instead. The interviews were all undertaken using a loose semi-structured approach, and before each interview a guide and questions were devised informed by the overarching focus of the research i.e. mining community development, sustainability and viability, and how this is being addressed through CSR. After Kitchen and Tate (2002) flexibility was adopted in the wording, order and whether particular questions were asked at all during interviews. Interviews were conversational and open-ended, with discussion allowed to flow and move into unexpected areas. At the same time the presence of an interview guide was used to kick start conversation where necessary, to retain a degree of structure and replicability, and to ensure that interviews did not slip too far off topic. After transcription the interviews were analysed and coded. Preliminary analysis involved detailed reading and annotation of transcripts. This was followed by a progressively deeper coding process whereby key themes and higher order codes were identified and drawn out (Charmaz, 2004). Coding was undertaken with the aid of NVIVO qualitative data analysis software. Through this coding process the issues of the sustainability and viability of these communities were critically unpacked, as well as company responses to this through CSR. Key recurrent themes were identified, for example it became apparent during the interviews that issues around dependency, locational factors, the makeup of the communities, and their wider nature and purpose were critical in understanding why long term sustainability and viability were such challenges for the communities. Limitations in company responses to these challenges were similarly identified, particularly in relation to timing, planning, and community participation, ownership and buy in. These themes and the limitations identified are used to structure discussions in this article.

Focus groups were a secondary method of data collection employed. In total 9 focus groups were conducted with community members, mine employees and wider stakeholders. Table 2 provides an overview of focus group respondents who are grouped according to case study and type:

Table 2: Overview of Focus Groups

Community	Translator Y/N	No. Focus Groups	Male/ Female	Focus Group Participants
Community A	N	1	F	Women in community
Community B	Y/N	4	M	Mine Workers (2 mines)
	Y	2	M	Residents Informal Community
	Y	1	F	Women in Community
	N	1	M	Contract Workers
Community C	Not possible to conduct focus groups			

The focus groups all involved between 5 and 10 participants, and in 6 of the 9 a translator was employed. After Herod (1999), the translator was fully briefed prior to the focus groups about the nature of the research, its focus and what was required of them. The mechanics of the focus groups involved the raising of particular topics of discussion by the convener, with the translator providing periodic feedback and summarising what was said during breaks in conversation. In a similar way to the interviews, the focus groups were transcribed following completion, and analysed and coded with the aid of NVIVO. Focus group participants were identified and recruited with the aid of local facilitators.

There are a number of limitations and potential pitfalls associated with the use of a translator in qualitative research (Temple 2002, Young and Temple 2004, Twinn 2008). For one direct translation is not always possible, every language has its own concepts, subtleties and nuances, which may not be fully translatable (Thomas, 2005). Secondly, it must be recognised that the researcher only ever has access to the secondary text produced by the translator, rather than the 'original' text, making it an interpretation of an interpretation which has implications for representation and the interpretation of meaning (Twyman et al 1999). The approach to translation, transcription, coding and analysis adopted for this research, was one that recognised these limitations and endeavoured to mitigate for them. For example during and after transcription, and in analysis, there was ongoing communication between the researcher and translator in relation to the meaning of particular terms, phrases and ideas. In addition to data collection through interviews and focus groups, field notes were also kept. Field notes were kept throughout the data collection for this research but particularly during time spent in mining communities. Field notes were kept as a record of events, encounters, people and their behaviours, and as a space for critical reflection on the research experience.

Access was an important consideration throughout the fieldwork. Access is negotiated, especially in organisational research (Lee, 1999), and gaining access to multinational companies is often a long process, involving planning, hard work, persistence and a degree of luck (Van Maanen and Kolb, 1985). In this research access was successfully negotiated with a number of mining companies, including physical access to one of the case study communities which was at the time closed to non-residents. However with case study research there are understandably always limits to access, with the legitimacy of a research project within an organisation also often fluctuating, based on varying levels of staff buy-in and internal politics and organisation change. Some difficulties in this respect were encountered in relation to case study community C, where it was not possible to interview the same breadth of respondents as the other case studies, or to undertake focus group work. It is nevertheless felt that with the inclusion of secondary data, sufficient information was collected to allow for comparison and analysis alongside them. In this article the companies and communities involved are annonymised, as are interview and focus group participants. This was felt to be the best approach given the sensitive nature of the topic. Also as discussions in this paper draw upon three communities from across Namibia, reflecting on their combined experiences as part of a wider consideration of company towns in the developing world, it was felt that individual community identification was not necessary.

The Case Study Communities

There were three case study communities which in this paper are referred to as Community A, B and C. Community A and B are located in the south of Namibia and in quite close proximity, Community C is in central Namibia. Table 3 provides further detail on some of their key characteristics:

Table 3: Key Characteristics of the Case Study Communities

Community	**Community A**	**Community B**	**Community C**
Established	1936	1969	1976
Proclaimed	Yes (2011)/ No during fieldwork	No (Negotiations ongoing)	Yes (1994)
Local Administration	Local authority/ Company during fieldwork	Companies through Section 21 (Not for profit) Company	Local authority
Open/Closed	Open now/ Closed during fieldwork	Open	Open
Population Estimate*	+/- 4500	+/-10,000	+/- 7600
Informal Community	Yes	Yes	No
Number of Mines	1	2	1

*Estimating the population for all three communities is difficult complicated by factors like the inclusion or exclusion of temporary residents, staff changes, and residents of informal communities

Community A is the oldest and historically has been a closed town with access in and out heavily restricted. In 2003/4 the company administering Community A entered in negotiations with the Namibian government for the town to be proclaimed as a local authority, with its administration handed over to the state. As part of this process a town management company was established with the remit of preparing the town for proclamation. Community A experienced a sharp economic downtown in 2008/2009 as the fortunes of the company dipped. Nevertheless in late 2011 its proclamation was formally announced.

Community B is the second oldest and was established to house the workers of a nearby newly constructed mine. The community was governed by the company owning that mine, which provided health and education services, and accommodation for employees and in some instances their families. The community was established before independence and during this period there was a relatively stark contrast in the living and working conditions experienced by white and non-white employees. Non-white employees resided in hostel accommodation and were employed through the migrant labour system, generally working 6 months on 6 months off. When working at the mine these employees were separated from their families who remained in Namibia's various Bantustan 'homelands', particularly the present day northern regions of Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshana and Oshikoto. This contrasted with white employees who were provided with family housing, subsidised services and health and education provision.

Following independence, relatively little changed in Community B. Its population increased slightly with the lifting of movement restrictions, and a small informal community developed on the waste rock of the nearby mine. However in the late 1990s construction began on another mine which opened in 2001. The construction of this second mine resulted in a rapid expansion of Community B's population, going from an estimated 1500 in 1999 to around 10,000 by 2009. The population of the informal community also rapidly grew, and this increase was accompanied by a proliferation of social and environmental problems. In 2007, a decision was taken by the two mines administering the community, after consultation, that the people living in the informal community should be relocated to a new site. In 2007/2008 this relocation was accomplished with the process spearheaded by the Section 21 (Not for profit) company through which the two companies jointly administer Community B. Community B's current legal status is a township, however since 2003/2004 the companies owning the mines, albeit that ownership has recently changed, have been in negotiation with the Namibian government regarding its proclamation.

The final case study, Community C, is the most recently established. However somewhat paradoxically its shorter but more turbulent history, means that it provides a useful template for understanding the types of challenges the other two communities will likely face upon mine closure. Community C was established before independence as a company town to house the employees of a nearby mine. The standard of living offered to employees staying in Community C was comparatively high. In addition to providing accommodation the company subsidised municipal services, provided funding for health and education provision, and supported various recreational activities. Community C was administered by the company until the mid 1990s when it was proclaimed and handed over to the state. The catalyst for this handover was a slump in global resource prices and a related decline in the mine's fortunes. In the early 1990s preceding this handover, the company was forced to undertake a large scale redundancy exercise which negatively affected the local economy.

Throughout the 1990s resource prices remained low and the company administering Community C continued to streamline. During this period the newly independent community struggled to move away from an economic reliance on the wages of mine workers, procurement by the mine from local businesses, and paternal support and subsidy from the company. Problems also surfaced in relation to a lack of skills and capacity in the new local authority. In the early 2000s the company undertook a second significant redundancy exercise which further impacted on the local economy. Following this redundancy exercise many of the remaining businesses in Community C closed or relocated, and there was an exodus of residents. By this point the town council of Community C was also experiencing difficulty in maintaining services and in collecting fees and rates from those who remained. The government of Namibia was forced to intervene and subsidise the running of the town. During fieldwork for this research it was commented in interviews that at this time Community C came very close to becoming a ghost town, for instance:

> *"*I am coming from a place like Community C and I am telling you after a few years it *was almost a ghost town."*(Interview with former resident currently employed by the local authority of another company town)
>
> *"*I think the community has gone through a really bad experience, and we are so fortunate that before we faced ultimate closure, we were granted the opportunity not to

> make the same mistakes as happened 30 years ago." (Interview local authority representative)

Since 2003/04 the fortunes of the company previously administering Community C have improved, and consequentially so have the community's. Global resource prices have increased and the nearby mine has extended its projected 'life of mine' to 2025. The mine was previously scheduled to close in 2009. The mine has taken on more staff, some of them residents, and the company is now in a better position to assist the community. As will be discussed, the company's interventions in the community principally through a dedicated foundation have also become more concerted. Community C has also benefited from the wider "uranium boom" occurring across the region, with the community becoming a more attractive destination for investment. However while the prospects of the community have improved it still bares many characteristics of a closure affected community. It also faces major challenges in breaking its cycle of dependency on the nearby mine, and ensuring that it does not create a new even more unsustainable dependency on the new mines opening across the region.

Challenges of sustainability and viability

While all three case study communities have distinct histories and socioeconomic contexts, there are commonalities between them and shared characteristics which make problematic efforts to ensure their long term sustainability. Eventually all mining communities face the question of what next after mining? Such communities have been variously described as *'trapped'* (Watkins, 1963), *'cursed'* (Auty, 1990) and *'addicted'* (Freudenburg, 1992) to mining. As current or former company towns this 'mining addiction' manifests itself in particular ways in the case study communities. In the following discussions some of the principal challenges they face in becoming self-sufficient after mining are outlined, with these challenges identified from the analysis of collected data. These challenges are conceived in four overlapping areas: challenges of dependency, challenges of 'community', challenges of location, and challenges of purpose.

Challenges of dependency

Economic dependency on the mines was encountered in all of the case study communities, and manifest in various ways. This dependency was first apparent in the reliance of local businesses on purchasing from mine workers wages and on mine company procurement and contracts. All three communities had relatively undiversified economies. In Community B this dependency was particularly pronounced owing to the town's longstanding closed status. In Community C this financial dependency had resulted in local business closure or relocation following downturns in the nearby mine's fortunes during the 1990s. Many of the businesses left in Community C at the time of the research were described in interviews as *'survivalist'*. In Community B, while the town was attracting inward investment, this investment was mostly linked to contracting opportunities from the two mines, or sought to take advantage of the relative affluence of mine workers, and was mostly of a short term nature. This dependency is illustrated by the following interview quotation:

> *"Well if the mines close down Community B has no, there is nothing, tourists cannot put them in life so the day when the mines close we are all, yes it will close down...all of the business is related to the mines, if the mines close tomorrow then I will close"* (Large Scale Local Business Owner Community B)

The financial dependency of businesses in these communities was further manifest in problems with competiveness. It was suggested that a lack of competition, and readily available custom from the mine had fostered complacency. Furthermore in Community A where businesses are subsidised in the form of low rents and service charges, it was viewed that upon proclamation many of these businesses would not be viable.

However economic dependency in the case study communities was not limited to the business sector. As is common in many company towns, in Communities A and B municipal services were subsidised for employees. In Community C this was the case before proclamation, while in the present the company continued to provide some support for its staff. In the communities, this subsidy was linked to unsustainable attitudes toward resource use. In Community C it was suggested that such profligacy had continued after proclamation and had contributed to the difficulties experienced by the town council in collecting municipal rates.

Economic dependency in the communities was further manifest in relation to health and education facilities established by the mines. In Communities A and B, the companies administering them have established high quality private primary and pre-primary schools and health facilities. These institutions play an important role in employee recruitment and retention, particularly of highly skilled staff. These facilities are able to provide a high standard of health and education provision because of subsidy from the company. Upon mine closure when that subsidy is no longer available, and when higher paid staff move elsewhere, it is difficult to maintain them at the same standard if at all. In Community C such difficulties were encountered in relation to the former company hospital and local schools that had previously been supported. Following proclamation the company hospital was handed over to the Namibian government, and has subsequently been downgraded. Following proclamation the standard of education provision in Community C similarly declined. Further detail on these difficulties is provided in the following account:

> "When (the company) handed the town over, *(the company's)* visibility was no longer an attraction for quality teachers, you know nobody wanted to come, and when the mine started downsizing, a lot of these teachers would rather opt to work in Swakopmund. So there was constantly this catch 22 situation, where you are trying to bring development but all of these negative things are deterring you from achieving your objective. Then the banks started pulling out and the service station closed down. Any professional person would not want to stay, because you do not have access to good hospitals, you do not have access to banks, supermarkets... so all the highly skilled and better paid people moved basically out and only the lower skilled people stayed behind...so it is no longer *(the company's)* hospital, (company) doctors are not

coming to the hospital, the government is responsible for managing it. And then the government took a decision that it is not viable to maintain it, they downsized it to a state clinic. And this is then where the doctors and everybody sort of moved out*"* (Interview local government official).

In some interviews it was suggested that dependency in the case study communities was not only financial. That a wider mindset of dependency also existed, which should be addressed if the communities are to become self-sustaining. It was argued that this mindset of dependency manifest in limitations in local entrepreneurship, limited community leadership and ownership of development, a perception that the company would pay for everything and solve all problems, and a lack of civic care and responsibility. While problems with leadership, ownership and responsibility were apparent in the case study communities, there is a danger that this idea of a mindset of dependency oversimplifies the difficulties faced by the communities ignoring their root causes. There is furthermore a danger that the communities become a scapegoat for problems resulting from wider circumstances and decision making largely beyond their control. For instance, problems with care and ownership are linked to the fact that many residents still view the communities as a place to live in the short and medium term while they work, but do not intend to stay any longer. In this environment it is logical that residents would be less willing to invest time, effort and resources on things like housing upkeep, or get involved with addressing social problems in communities.

Challenges of 'community'

'Community' is a notoriously difficult term and concept to define. Its use in this research in reference to the case study 'communities', is further complicated by a number of factors. These include: the artificial nature of these communities; the fact that many residents only live in them on a part time basis with their families frequently elsewhere in Namibia or outside the country; many residents are also either temporary contract workers or expatriates; finally the presence of informal communities raises questions about where the community ends, who is in and out, and what kind of separation can be made. The following interview quotation illustrates this reality:

> *"*The problem with what we have here is we do not actually have a community as such. I mean the communities that should be here are the Bushmen. So I mean these guys, the 7000 visitors we have got now are only here for economic reasons they are not here to *stay…as soon as the mines close down they will be gone. They will be the first people that will be leaving. So they are not a local community as such… nobody can actually* determine who the community for this town is*"* (Interview with a government official)

During interviews and focus groups it was clear that for many residents, the case study communities were just *'*places of work*'*. This perception was linked in various ways to the labour policies of the mining companies administering them. Several of the companies made use of long distance commuting (LDC) or 'hot bedding' for lower grade employees. In this system employees travel to the communities, where they work extended shifts for around 10-

14 days, before returning to their places of origin where their families generally reside. In other instances, employees stay in longer term single quarters with their families elsewhere. This situation occurs at one of the mines administering Community B, although historically the families of many of these lower grade employees have opted to move into the nearby informal community encouraging its growth and perpetuation. It is understandable that in this situation these employees often regard the case study communities as simply places of work. It is furthermore understandable why in many instances they are apathetic towards participation in community sustainability efforts, why they often have little interest in local governance, and why they do not intent to stay in the communities post closure. A similar detachment was reported to exist amongst many residents in Community C working at the mine, as suggested by this interview quotation:

> *"Generally they will return to the north. I think most of our employees a lot of them are, call them communal type farmers in the villages they own cows and chickens and goats and what have you. And I think that a lot of them will return there...I suspect that a lot of them will go back"* (Interview mine company staff)

This perception of the communities as temporary places of work was similarly expressed in conversations with higher grade and expatriate employees. Such employees stated that they would likely leave the communities upon mine closure or before if the right opportunity arose. There is a skills shortage in Namibia which extends to the mining industry. This means staff turnover, particularly amongst skilled Namibian staff, is relatively high. Given this situation, the pragmatic way in which many residents viewed their stay is understandable. Furthermore residents are realistic in it only makes sense for them to stay in a community if there are jobs and opportunities available. While these perspectives can be understood it makes planning for the future of these communities difficult. It furthermore raises the questions, who is going to live in them after mining and who are they being proclaimed for?

In Communities A and B it was found that local business people were often the most actively involved with proclamation and the wider sustainability processes. However many of these business people were also found to have similarly short-term perspectives towards their activities in the communities. Often businesses were opened to supply the mines or were heavily reliant on custom from mine employees wages. Many enterprises in the communities were also run either by the partners of mine workers or by mineworkers themselves as a second income. Upon closure, redundancy or retirement, many of these businesses will simply close or relocate as people leave.

In Community B, and to a lesser extent Community A, the presence of an informal settlement further complicates notions of community and community sustainability. Focussing in particular on Community B, the residents of the informal community are for the most part either: employed by the mines, work for a mine contractor company, work for a local business reliant on mine wages or trading with the mining companies, or are looking for employment with any of the above. These residents are often also related to mine workers. Many are economic migrants and will leave upon mine closure in search of new opportunities. In this context factoring them in to sustainability equation is difficult. Who and how many will stay? Where will they reside? To what extent will the future town council be able to support them? How should they be involved in the proclamation process?

Challenges of Location

Namibia is sparsely populated. The case study communities were all built, at least in part, due to the absence of existing communities nearby where employees could be accommodated. All three communities face sustainability challenges relating to their locations. In the cases of Communities A and B these challenges are more obvious. Community A is located within a restricted access area in a remote corner of the country. Historically the town's longstanding closed status has also acted as a barrier to inward investment, preventing the town capitalising on its tourism potential and limiting the ability of business to access outside opportunities and markets to expand their customer base. While Community A has now been proclaimed it is likely that its remote location will remain a constraint on investment. With the right marketing Community A's relative isolation could be turned into an asset. There is also some potential for agricultural activity and for the community to position itself as the gateway to a nearby newly proclaimed national park. However it is difficult to see how the community in anything like its present form could be sustained relying on just tourism and agriculture. The situation in Community B is similar to that in A, and to an extent the communities are competitors in accessing tourism opportunities presented by the nearby national park. However whether such opportunities are sufficient to sustain one never mind both remains to be seen. In both communities efforts to increase their competitiveness were being driven by the mining companies principally through their proxy local authorities.

The location of Community C is less remote, and it is more accessible than either of the other two. It is close to Namibia's main port, providing opportunities in manufacturing, and a tourism hotspot town. These opportunities have proven difficult to grasp however. The town has struggled to gain multiplier benefits from tourism, and has to compete with other nearby more longstanding communities for industrial investment. Community C is also competing with neighbouring communities for opportunities associated with the new uranium mines opening across the region. However as illustrated by this quotation, it needs to ensure that it does not try to solve its current difficulties by creating a larger longer term dependency:

> *"We are managing the process very carefully. We welcome the mines, and we are open to the opportunities for our people but we take our lessons that we should not create a dependency. We basically view the mines as a bonus and then we focus on diversification''* (Interview local government representative)

In relation to manufacturing, the town has been able to attract some light industrial investment, and actors in Community C were also looking to develop a museum and to encourage the return of banks, a fuel station and supermarket. As will be discussed later, this drive to increase competitiveness and make the community *"a town of choice"* has involved collaboration between various stakeholders. Competitiveness is a key consideration for communities like those studied in this research. Historically their competitiveness has been based almost entirely on their relationship with mining. Local assets like high quality schools and health facilities, sports clubs and green spaces, which make them desirable places to live, as well as the residents themselves are all there because of this relationship. When this relationship is broken upon mine closure, there is often little else to attract investors or to encourage businesses or residents to stay. Following proclamation responsibility for ensuring competitiveness should lie with the new local authority, and with regional and central government. However experience from this research suggests that local government actors frequently lack the capacity to address these issues alone, while at regional and national government levels competing demands and the host of development challenges faced means such communities are often a low priority, particularly as they are frequently quite well served with infrastructure, at least upon handover.

Challenges of Purpose

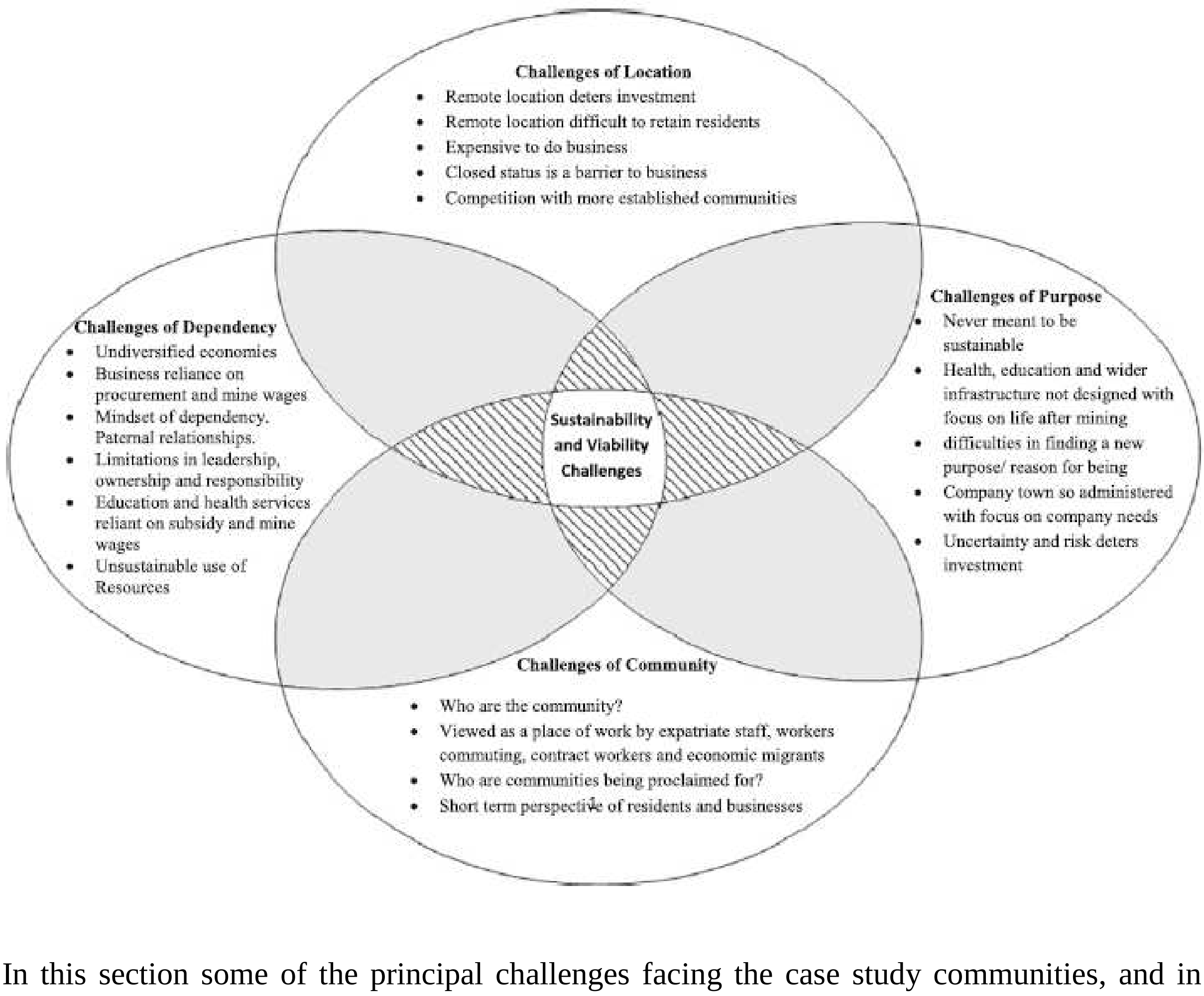
The case study communities were all established for the same broad purpose. They were built to accommodate mine employees and their families during operations as part of establishing a stable operating environment. The communities were designed and created with this goal in mind, and they have been administered with it overriding other considerations. If the communities are to continue after closure an alternative reason for their existence must be found. The historical emphasis on the communities as places of residence for mine employees has created a number of practical challenges for attempts to make them sustainable after mine closure. It was commented during interviews that the communities *"were never meant to be sustainable"*, with this reality manifest in issues around housing and accommodation, in problems with services and town planning, and in concerns relating to health and education provision after mining.

Housing is a complex issue in all of the communities. In all three the majority of housing has been built by the mine companies. Upon proclamation and after mine closure the companies must decide what they will do with this housing stock. If, when, and how do they dispose of it. Do they encourage employees to buy it? Do they hand it over to the local authority, and if so at what price? In the case study communities the issue of housing was further complicated by questions over the long term durability, lifespan and desirability of some of the housing stock, and also its condition and ongoing maintenance issues. Much of the housing in these communities was built with a finite lifespan, rather than as a long term investment.

The history of Community C illustrates the types of service provision and planning challenge Communities A and B are going to face upon proclamation and after mine closure. Since proclamation, the town council in Community C has struggled to balance its income and expenditure. Like many local authorities in Namibia it is now subsidised by central government. These difficulties have a variety of causes including: past internal governance issues within the local authority, a failed and costly attempt to set up a pre-pay water system, limitations in capacity to maintain water infrastructure, and low payment rates amongst residents. However also implicated is the town's wider water system, set up when the town was built, which is difficult and costly to maintain. Community C was designed with an abundance of green space and recreational facilities. While this was of great benefit when the town was subsidised by the company, since proclamation local government has struggled to maintain them.

Challenges of purpose can further be identified in relation to health and education provision. As previously discussed, in all of the communities the companies have built high quality private health and education facilities. Unfortunately these facilities have often been designed without a clear purpose in mind beyond mine closure, or plan for how they might be integrated into Namibia's wider health and education systems. Upon proclamation it is unlikely that running and maintaining these kinds of facilities will be economically viable or an effective use of resources. They may be downgraded or even closed. The case study communities all face sustainability challenges in relation to purpose and their reason for being. If they are to become self-sufficient, those managing the transition need to articulate a clear alternative vision for life after mining.

Figure. 1 Challenges of sustainability and viability in the case study communities



In this section some of the principal challenges facing the case study communities, and in efforts to encourage their sustainability and viability after mining, have been identified. In Figure 1 an overview diagram of these challenges and how they overlap is provided. These challenges have been grouped into four intersecting dimensions. It is not suggested that the list of challenges identified is exhaustive, that these groupings are mutually exclusive, or that the different challenges apply equally in all three cases. An example of the complex interactions that exist between different challenges is provided by the issue of limited economic diversification in the communities. This problem has a variety of causes including: their remote location; risk and uncertainty associated with investment; additional costs and difficulties in doing business in the communities; the short term perspective of residents and business people; competition with other places for investment; and a focus on mining as the primary purpose of these communities. Figure 1 provides greater clarity in relation to the sustainability challenges faced by the communities, and the broad interaction of these challenges. Furthermore, it aims to provide insights of use more widely to understand the sustainable development challenges faced by other communities of this type in Namibia and beyond.

CSR and Mining Community Sustainability and Viability

The companies studied have addressed issues of community sustainability and viability after mining through CSR in different ways and with varying degrees of success. Their responses have also fluctuated through time informed by changes in wider business performance.

Timing it right

In Namibia, when a mining license is granted, it is a legal requirement that after mining has ceased all buildings, structures and accessory works within the license area be removed, and that the license holder remedies to the satisfaction of the Minster of Mines any damage caused to the environment and land (Namibia's Minerals Act, 1991). However in this legislation, there is also provision for mutual agreement to be reached between the owner of the land on which mining has occurred, and the mining license holder, for these structures, buildings and works to be retained. On the basis of this legislation if the case study communities remain or had remained unproclaimed, then there would be a legal requirement for them to be demolished after mine closure. In relation to Community C, the company administering the town negotiated with the Namibian government and local traditional authorities to have it proclaimed in the early 1990s. Such negotiation similarly occurred in the recent proclamation of Community A, and at the time of the fieldwork for this research was ongoing in the case of Community B. For the communities to be proclaimed it should be shown that they can be self-sufficient without subsidy from the state. In Community C this was ostensibly proven before the town's proclamation, yet the community has subsequently failed to become sustainable as illustrated by the following interview quotation:

> *"It was done before with* Community C *and it was a failure. We couldn't maintain the municipality and so forth. They couldn't maintain* the infrastructure, the water and the electricity, *they couldn't pay for it they couldn't generate enough money to be viable and sustainable"* (Interview government representative)

The mining companies studied have and in the case of Community B continue to favour and encourage proclamation. While there is no legal requirement for them to support the sustainability efforts of these communities after proclamation, it can be argued that their role in establishing these communities creates an ethical and relational responsibility for them to at least help in ensuring that these communities can be viable in the longer term. This ethical rather than explicitly legal responsibility was in part recognised by the companies, even if it was often couched within notions of risk management, limiting liabilities and avoiding potential reputational damage associated with former company towns becoming ghost towns, for example:

> *"T*hese are areas that if they are not addressed then you could then go into a downward spiral... *we* have identified Community C as one of the areas that we want to work with the town to make it sustainable. And I think what really informs that decision is the legacy that we have got with the town and then also the possible risk that not assisting the town in becoming su*stainable poses to the company"* (Interview company employee)

The research suggests problems in the timing of the case study companies CSR engagements with issues of community sustainability and viability. Following proclamation the decline of Community C was gradual, with this decline stemming from a combination of the challenges of dependency, location, community and purpose outlined in the previous section and described in Figure 1. These difficulties were further exacerbated by problems in local government. The response by the local mining company to the community's decline could only be described as belated. The company only began to concertedly engage with community's sustainability concerns in the early 2000s, opening an office of its CSR foundation in the community for the first time in 2005. Since then, the company's engagements in the community, principally through this foundation, have expanded spurred on by an upturn in wider business performance. Nevertheless at present the position of Community C remains precarious. While it has experienced an upturn in fortunes largely driven by nearby mining investment, this provides only a temporary solution. In this case, company engagements through CSR with the sustainability and viability of Community C were reactive rather than proactive. At the height of the company's difficulties an endowment fund was established to allow its foundation to continue working in the Community and more widely across Namibia in the event of the mine's closure. While this recognition of the need to provide ongoing support to the community was a positive development, that fund would not have lasted indefinitely, particularly as historically the foundation has been largely reliant on funding from the company. Given the community's ongoing difficulties, it is questionable whether those extra years of activity by the foundation would have been sufficient.

During the fieldwork in and around Community C, in interviews with almost all respondents, the need to learn from past mistakes was recognised. Unfortunately, in the other case communities, many of these historic errors appear to be being repeated. At the time of the research the two mining companies administering Community B favoured and were actively encouraging proclamation. However their efforts through CSR to foster the creation of a viable community had been very limited. Community B is a boom town, but this boom is fuelled almost entirely by mining. As a whole its economy remains undiversified and is almost entirely dependent on the mines either through procurement, or purchasing using mine wages. Upon closure many businesses presently operating in the community will relocate or close. Community B's present prosperity is unsustainable, and in its current form it is hard to see how the town can become self-sufficient in the long term. If proclamation is unavoidable, resources need to be invested now to plan and establish alternative economic activities before closure, while in a wider sense steps must be taken to articulate an alternative vision and purpose for the community's existence. At the time of the research, such resources were not being invested by any of the principal stakeholders in the community. CSR engagements with these issues by both companies were still small scale and ad hoc.

In Community B some of the difficulties faced by Community C are beginning to manifest. In 2008/9 the company administering the town undertook a voluntary separation/ redundancy exercise. Around this time the company also entered a "production holiday" with mining operations suspended for several months to reduce costs. These staff reductions and the suspension of mining activity negatively impacted on the local economy. This affect is highlighted in the annual company review for 2009 which states that during this period *"Company B almost became a ghost town"*. While the global financial crisis was a catalyst for these events, the company was entering a period of transition before this and as early as 1996 entered into negotiations with government over the proclamation of Community B. However despite this lengthy period for preparation limited progress was made on all sides in readying the town, its residents and business community for life after mining. The economy of Community B was almost entirely dependent on mining, and preparation and mitigation efforts were rapidly overtaken by wider events. Community B has now been proclaimed, however whether a town that was recently so close to going out of existence can become a viable community is questionable.

Concerns have been raised about the timing of the proclamation of the case study communities, and the timing of CSR efforts by companies to foster their sustainability and viability. The case study communities have often been handed over at the most difficult time, when mining companies have begun to experience financial difficulties. In these circumstances the companies are often less willing or able to commit resources to assist communities. Historically, proclamation has also often occurred at the same time as large scale staff reductions, creating immediate challenges for the new local authority, as residents leave, services become less viable, and spending power is reduced impacting on the local economy. Company engagements with the issue of community sustainability through CSR have furthermore often been belated, in some instances only kicking in when communities are already long down the road to decline.

Planning for Sustainability

Further limitations in company engagements through CSR with issues of community sustainability can be noted in relation to planning and strategy. Historically, the interventions of the two companies in Community B in this area have been quite ad hoc. Neither the Namibian government nor the two companies administering the Community appeared to have the clear, long term vision for its future necessary for tackling the challenges of purpose outlined in Figure 1. Interaction and collaboration in planning between the companies and the state was also weak, with Community B receiving little attention in regional development plans. In Community B there was furthermore limited evidence of collaboration between the two local companies addressing these issues. Rather a difficult and at times competitive relationship existed, as illustrated by the following interview quotation:

> *"*It seemed a bit tense, because you know, one wants to do this and another one wants to do that and eventually you thought one would just do it its own way...there is no consultation you just hear (clicks fingers) that they have done this*"*. (Interview with company staff)

Community B is jointly administered through a Not for Profit Section 21 company. However during the fieldwork for this research, there were within this organisation no dedicated staff or structures responsible for local economic development or sustainability planning. In this absence the companies had largely addressed these issues internally and on an individual basis through staff in CSR departments. While the companies had worked together on a number of community interventions, including: the relocation of the informal community and local health and education provision, communication between them remained problematic.

Concerns in relation to planning were identified in the community interventions of the other companies in this research, albeit to varying extents and showing improvement over time. The policies and practices adopted by the company formerly administering Community C and its foundation will be discussed in detail later. From 2006/7 the company administering Community B began to engage more concertedly with local sustainability issues. In 2007 a town management company was established with the remit of providing municipal services and managing the transition towards handover. In 2008 this town management company appointed a local economic development manager, and began to develop internal structures to facilitate local economic development and diversification. The company furthermore commissioned consultancy research to assess the potential for larger scale alternative economic activity, including the town's tourism potential and potential for various agricultural activities. These steps reflected recognition of the need to establish an alternative purpose for the town beyond mining, and a realisation that small scale traditional CSR type interventions would not be sufficient to address the substantial challenges the community faced. The company also refocused other aspects of its wider CSR engagements towards Community B, for example redirecting a programme aimed at funding and supporting small and medium sized enterprises across Namibia to more exclusively target the community.

While these various interventions indicate a greater awareness on the part of the company of the problems the community will face in becoming sustainable, and also the risk the community's decline poses to the company. At the time of the fieldwork for this research the various stakeholders in the community were still a long way from developing a realistic long term vision or post mining strategy. No local economic development plan was in place, little practical progress had been made in attracting alternative investment, and it was unclear how much potential there really was for the town to continue in anything like its present form based on tourism and the suggested agricultural developments. As highlighted previously this progress was also overtaken by events relating to the global financial crisis and the company's wider financial difficulties.

Participation and Ownership

The fuzziness of notions of "community" when applied to the case study communities has been previously highlighted, with the complexities around this issue recognised in the following discussions. Nevertheless it is suggested that if the case study communities are to become sustainable after mining there is a need for greater community participation in sustainability planning, and involvement and ownership of sustainability interventions. As is the case in most company towns, community participation in governance and decision-making in Community B was limited, particularly participation by informal community residents. The following interview quotations illustrate this reality:

> *"*The big thing is that the mines rule the town so you can come in and say what you want to and they will say yes we listen but when you go out there it is still the way that the mines do it.*"* (Interview local business person)

> *"The community that is living no*w in (informal community) they are not really having enough input. They are not really having enough rights on how their affairs are being run*"* (Interview Informal Community Leader)

Community B was paternally administered by the two companies, with this top down relationship extending to deliberations on proclamation, and sustainability planning and interventions. Within Community B's proxy local authority there were few avenues for direct community input in governance and decision making. In this context it is unsurprising that community involvement and ownership of these processes was limited. The CSR interventions undertaken by the two mines in Community B were also for the most part managed internally, as was decision-making on them. It is recognised that gaining community participation in any kind of local political or planning process is difficult to achieve anywhere (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). In a place like Community B this is doubly the case. Although these difficulties are recognised, and the disinterest of many community members understood, it is suggested that the two companies administering Community B could have been doing more to involve at least some sections of the community in local economic development planning and decision making. The lack of openness in these processes is illustrated by the following interview quotation:

> *''My brother I would really like to answer that question I am still in the dark, I spoke to the previous guy who was here and he didn't give me really an answer. W*hen I asked *him ''what has happened?' Seriously there is nothing up you can read what why are* the obstacles to it, and why not, who is the, nothing, there is not a clear cut scenario but I would have to say that information is hard to come by*"*(Interview local government representative)

Concerns of sustainability after mining are perhaps more pressing, and are certainly more immediate in Communities A and C. In both, attempts were made to gain community participation in local economic development efforts. In Community A, representatives of local business and the community sat on the board of the town management company. In 2008 a member of staff with responsibilities for communicating with the wider community was also appointed, with the town management company also holding periodic community meetings. While these signs were encouraging, difficulties remained in relation to community participation. Like Community B, the history and context surrounding Community A makes any kind of community input difficult. Nevertheless it is again viewed that community participation in sustainability planning and the proclamation process could have been improved. It was commented in interviews for example that at community meetings it was always the same faces in attendance, and that overall attendance was often low. There was furthermore a suggestion that communication at such meetings and more widely was relatively one way, dominated by company voices and priorities, representing a consultation process rather than one involving real participation.

As has previously been noted, in many ways Community C provides a template for the types of sustainability challenge the other communities are likely to face upon mine closure. However recent interventions by the company, town council and wider stakeholders working in partnership also have the potential to provide a best practice example for the other case study communities and more widely, in how to begin addressing at least some of these concerns. These developments are outlined in detail in the following section, with community buy in and participation an important component.

Implications for Practice

The decline of Community C represented a significant risk for the company previously administering it. It was a risk to the company's reputation both nationally and internationally, with implications for the company's 'social license to operate' (Manteaw, 2007). Reputational damage resulting from the community's decline could also jeopardise any future investments in Namibia by the company. The company furthermore needed to in ensure a stable operating environment and adequate accommodation, services and wider living conditions for its employees, many of whom still resided in Community C. These kinds of risk need to be more fully recognised by the other companies studied, particularly in the context of limitations in their engagement with community sustainability through CSR. In 2005/6 the company commissioned a research and consultancy exercise aimed at identifying the sustainability threats faced by the community, and opportunities available for it to become self-sufficient. This consultation exercise also considered the effectiveness of the support provided by the company and its foundation, and assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the town council as a vehicle for driving local economic development. This study provided a baseline of information upon which subsequent interventions by the company and its foundation have been founded, and upon which local economic development planning and activities by the town council have been built. In Community C, following the completion of this consultation and based on its recommendations a Community Sustainable Development Project (CSDP) was created.

Through the CSDP key stakeholders in the community have come together in partnership to encourage sustainability. In particular the CSDP has brought together the company, its foundation and the town council, where previous interaction between these actors had been quite limited, with their respective roles and responsibilities not clearly defined. This had restricted collaboration, and reduced the cumulative impact of interventions. It had also resulted in inefficiencies in resource use. A principal area of activity for both the company and foundation has been to improve the capacity of the town council to take on the role of driving development within the community. A principle objective of the CSDP has been to establish structures, expertise and leadership in the town council and the wider community to help it address its problems independently rather than relying on paternal company support. These interventions can be conceived as particularly targeting the challenges of dependency and community outlined in Figure 1. The various stakeholders in the CSDP further recognise the need for community participation, ownership and buy in to the sustainability process. Gaining this involvement in Community C is difficult for many of the same reasons previously discussed in relation to Communities A and B. Nevertheless community involvement and participation in the CSDP has come in a variety of forms, ranging from formal community meetings to interaction and discussion with key stakeholders and community leaders on a more regular basis.

An important strand of the CSDP has been to establish Community C as a centre of educational excellence, as part of wider drive to become a “town of choice”. This can again be conceived as an attempt to tackle the challenges of purpose previously identified, as well as those of location and dependency, increasing the community’s competitiveness and attractiveness for investment. Community C seeks to capitalise on the presence of a highly regarded technical institution in the community and build upon its historic reputation for high quality education. A significant related CSR intervention by the foundation in Community C has been the Whole School Development Project (WSDP). Through the WSDP the company and foundation have provided support to local schools improving teaching, management and leadership. They have also funded the building of science and technology centres, and are working collaboratively with the government of Namibia to compliment its Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). As part of the WSDP the foundation and government of Namibia have signed a memorandum of understanding, outlining their respective roles and responsibilities. Participation and the need for effective and complimentary partnership between different community stakeholders are the cornerstones of the approach adopted in the CSDP. In Table 4 an overview of the CSDP, its principal actors, their interventions and areas of activity, and the sustainability challenges addressed is provided. This is based on interviews undertaken for the research, baseline and livelihood studies, and annual reports and reviews by the company and its foundation.

Table 4: Overview of the Community Sustainable Development Project: Actors, Interventions and Challenges Addressed

Development Actor	Intervention	Description of intervention	Partners	Sustainability and Viability Challenges Addressed
Company	Funding for sewerage and water system improvement	Water supply has been a major problem for the town council and water loss and low payment rates have historically been a significant drain on the town council's finances. This intervention aimed at repairing and improving the town's water and sewerage system.	Namibia's central government	Challenges of purpose and dependency. Without a functioning water and sewerage system the town will always be dependent on external support and funding. A water system that better suits the needs of the community.
	Funding for consultation and baseline study	Provided funding for a baseline study to be undertaken identifying the problems the community faced and forming the basis for future interventions	Town council, foundation	Challenges of dependency, purpose, location and community. Identifying risks, threats and opportunities.
	Funding for technical training institution	Funding for a technical training institution focussing in particular on mining related disciplines		Challenges of dependency and purpose. Establish a new reason for the town's existence
Foundation (activities funded by company)	Capacity building of Town Council.	Capacity strengthening for staff members. Leadership training	Town Council	Challenges of dependency and purpose
	Construction of a fuel station	Funding for fuel station construction	Town council provides land	Challenges of dependency, purpose, location and community
	Establishment of foundation centre	Foundation centre as a base for community activities. Assist with community transition		Challenges of purpose

	Adult literacy programmes	Programmes to improve adult literacy in community		Challenges of dependency
Foundation (activities funded by company)	Free to grow peer educators	Programme to improve financial management skills		Challenges of dependency
	Youth Skills development	Youth skills development		Challenges of dependency and purpose
	Mathematics and Science centres	Construction of mathematics and science centres. Part of making town a centre of educational excellence and "town of choice"	Local Schools, Regional Council, Government of Namibia	Challenges of purpose, dependency, community and location
	School based teacher and learner support	Support of various kinds to both students and teachers part of wider engagement with government of Namibia's Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme	Local Schools, Regional Council, Government of Namibia	Challenges of purpose, dependency, community and location
	Agriculture development initiatives	Support for local agricultural development	Town council	Challenges of dependency, purpose and location
	SME development	Support for local SME development, including the building of business space	Town council	Challenges of dependency and purpose
Town Council	Mining Museum	Development of mining museum	Foundation	Challenges of dependency and purpose
	Development of Local Economic Development Plan	Development of a local economic development plan	Foundation	Challenges of purpose
	Attract inward Investment	Attract inward investment i.e. a bank, proposed supermarket, light industry. Investment related to new mines opening. Tourism investment.	Foundation	Challenges of purpose and dependency

It is not suggested that the CSDP represents a panacea for Community C’s development and sustainability problems, and it remains to be seen whether the community, even with the CSDP, can overcome the various deep-rooted challenges it faces in becoming self-sufficient. Furthermore despite the importance of establishing a clear vision and future purpose for the community, and recognition of this need by stakeholders, at the time of the fieldwork this vision had yet to really crystallise. Finally material progress on the ground had been slow, particularly progress which could be directly attributed to the CSDP. While Community C had undergone a recent resurgence, much of this appeared to have been driven by the improvement in the nearby mine’s fortunes, the extension of its life of mine and subsequently greater investment in the community, and also the wider uranium boom occurring across the region. In this context it must be questioned whether this renaissance is sustainable.

The CSDP model should also not be seen as a ready-made solution to the sustainability challenges of Community A and B or those they will face in the future. While there are many commonalities between these communities, they are still different as are the circumstances surrounding their future development trajectories. The CSDP does however provide insights and better practice advice for these communities, for the various stakeholders active in them, and for these kinds of scenarios more widely. Building upon the experiences of Community C and the CSDP, and the wider case studies, a number of key implications for practice are identified:

(1) Multi-stakeholder partnership is critical in addressing issues of community sustainability and viability after mining. These issues are complex, requiring the knowledge, resources and expertise of actors from public and private sectors, and wider civil society. The roles and responsibilities of these different actors should also be clearly defined and mutually agreed upon.

(2) Interventions to help mitigate for the effects of mine closure and to assist communities in becoming sustainable should be undertaken in a timely fashion, proactive rather than reactive. In a wider sense proclamation should not be a vehicle for cost saving by companies during periods of financial difficulty. The social and environmental externalities associated with mining should not be transferred to government and to the current and future residents of these communities.

(3) Interventions should occur as part of a long term strategy and clearly articulated vision for community sustainability. This vision and strategy should be developed collaboratively with broad stakeholder input, engaging with issues of competiveness and developing an alternative purpose for the community beyond its relationship with mining. As part of this strategy there should be clearly defined goals and objectives, with monitoring of progress.

(4) Planning and decision making should be transparent and participatory going beyond consultation, with scope for community and stakeholder accountability. There should be

community and stakeholder buy in and ownership of interventions, and the encouragement of civic responsibility.

(5) Within companies and local government there should be dedicated structures and staff to address issues around local economic development and community sustainability. It should be ensured that sufficient capacity exists in local government and the wider community to take the lead in addressing these issues.

(6) Interventions should be knowledge based, undertaken with an in-depth understanding of communities and the particular challenges they face.

Making Ghost Towns?

The case study communities face numerous challenges if they are to become sustainable after mining. However an exclusive focus on these challenges can lead to a number of important wider questions in relation to CSR and community sustainability being overlooked. In particular, why are these communities being proclaimed? What drives the timing of their proclamation? Should they be proclaimed at all? Is it even possible for them to become viable and self-sufficient?

As has been outlined, a desire for cost saving has been a key driver behind mining company efforts to have the case study communities proclaimed. In the case of Community C, the community was handed over when global commodity prices were low and the company administering the town was experiencing financial difficulties. The cost of running Community C was substantial, and this cost would reduce with proclamation. Circumstances surrounding the recent proclamation of Community A were very similar. The community had existed for over 75 years. Yet it was only in the last decade that concerted negotiation about its proclamation occurred, and it was only in the last five years as market conditions deteriorated that this proclamation process was readily entered into by all parties. Cost saving in the short and longer term was a central rationale behind the company's desire to have the community proclaimed. In the short term, the proclamation of Community A will immediately reduce costs to the company in administering the town with minimal disruption to its operating environment. In the longer term proclamation will reduce the company's costs as it will no longer be required to demolish the town after closure. In the final case study a desire to reduce costs is again a key rationale behind efforts by both companies to have the township proclaimed.

Ghost mining towns and declining former mining communities can be found across Namibia. It is questionable whether any of the case study communities can be viable after mining, even with effective CSR interventions and company support. The benefits of proclamation for the companies in terms of cost saving are readily apparent. The benefits of proclamation for the communities, their residents both current and future, and the benefits for the Namibian government and people who may have to subsidise these communities indefinitely are less clear. In interviews the proclamation of these communities was often seemingly taken for granted. A perspective illustrated by the following interview quotation:

> *’’So the only way to go is to make* Community A, proclaim Community A as a town that will run its affairs, that is self-sustainable through raising taxes and charges for *services that is all. There are some other opinions but they do not hold water’’* (Interview local authority representative)

In this statement proclamation is described as the only option, this should not be the case. In all three communities the companies involved are subsidiaries of multinationals. The international ownership of these mines raises questions about proclamation being unavoidable on the grounds of cost, and also the responsibilities of these parent corporations for the actions of their subsidiaries in Namibia. The decision by all of the companies to seek proclamation for the case study communities, and particularly the timing of these moves, can be contrasted with the sustainable development rhetoric so prominent in corporate reporting. It highlights their prioritisation of financial imperatives over social and development concerns, and the potential limits of CSR as a tool for addressing these kinds of issue. These communities are central to the way in which the companies operate in Namibia. Addressing the issue of their sustainability after mining requires the attention of the whole business rather than just the CSR or sustainable development department. A radical rethink in areas like labour policy, recruitment, the ownership of social assets, and stakeholder relations may be required if the social and environmental costs associated with the creation of company towns are to be fully internalised. The current situation raises questions about the depth of company engagements and commitment to CSR, and also highlights how companies may be implicated in the creation of social problems. To an extent whether or not the case study companies are effectively addressing the issue of community sustainability and viability through CSR misses the point. Such efforts may even be regarded as a form of ‘greenwash’, diverting attention away from the role companies play in creating these communities to begin with.

It is not suggested that the mining companies studied in this research bare sole responsibility for either the decision to proclaim the case study communities, which is after all ultimately made by Namibia’s government, or in the event of their proclamation, responsibility to ensure the viability of such communities after mining. However given the historic and ongoing importance of the mining industry to Namibia’s economy, the government of Namibia’s longstanding reliance on mining tax revenues, and the key role ascribed to mining and attracting mineral investment in national development plans (See Namibia’s Vision 2030), mining companies clearly have a powerful hand in negotiations with the state over the terms and conditions of their investment, their in-country operations, and in discussions over community handover. Negotiations on proclamation largely occur behind closed doors limiting transparency. These negotiations furthermore happen largely at a central government level reducing local and regional input. This can be attributed to a number of factors. First historically Namibia’s government has been quite centralised, with moves towards decentralisation, particularly in terms of real decision making power, quite a recent phenomenon. Secondly such is the electoral dominance at all levels of government of the ruling SWAPO party; it is unlikely that local and regional government voices would offer particularly divergent views on proclamation. Third, as discussed earlier, the artificial nature of the case study towns makes problematic efforts to identify a community to involve more. Finally it may be that at a national level government accepts the creation of these kinds of community, and the long term negative social issues often associated with them, as a trade off for the national economic opportunities provided by mining, in particular its contribution to taxation revenues and GDP. Conflicting views and dissenting voices may not be welcome in this equation. This latter idea gains traction when considered more specifically in relation to Community A. The Namibian government has a substantial shareholding in the company that administered the community until its recent proclamation. It would be expected that through this shareholding the government could leverage the company to ensure the issue of the community’s long term sustainability was addressed in a comprehensive and timely fashion. Yet as previously outlined the community recently almost became a ghost town.

The decision by the Namibian government to agree to the handover and proclamation of Communities A and C are difficult to understand, as is the likely future proclamation of Community B. To some extent these decisions may reflect the power dynamics of relations between the Namibian government and mining companies, the latter able to dictate the terms of their continuing involvement in the country. Wider international mining investors are also important actors in this equation, with Namibia desiring to position itself as friendly for mining investment. As discussed there may also be an element of pragmatism in proclaiming the communities, while this may be costly in the long term in the short term it delays mine closure, securing employment and support for the government of powerful mining unions. It also maintains mining taxation revenues. Furthermore even if government was to take a more hardball approach in negotiation, history has shown that in Namibia there is no guarantee that upon closure mine companies will fully address the social and environmental legacies associated with their operations. Finally it may be that there are seen to be a dearth of alternatives to proclamation and the scenarios discussed.

Conclusions

In 2010 The Chamber of Mines Namibia released a Mine Closure Framework (MCF). The MFC outlines various aspects of mine closure best practice and makes positive suggestions and recommendations about how closure should be addressed. Implicit in the MCF are recognition of Namibia’s historic and ongoing problems in relation to mine closure, and the limits of existing legislation. The MCF is a positive step in encouraging mining companies in Namibia to engage with these issues in a more responsible way. However as the name suggests they are only guidelines. In the MCF while there is discussion of what ‘should’ and ‘can’ be done in relation to mine closure, these remain for the most part just suggestions rather than requirements or firm commitments. In the context of previous discussions the MCF also makes no specific reference to proclamation, or how these guidelines apply to company towns, despite the fact that these types of community are a common feature of mining activity in Namibia. While it is recognised that all mining operations are different, that relationships between mines and local communities are context specific, and that the circumstances surrounding mine closure vary, it is nevertheless disappointing that these types of communities and the specific ways in which mine closure affects them is largely overlooked. There is a need for the government of Namibia to strengthen its mine closure legislation, with more detailed requirements on a host of issues. Indeed this need for more detailed guidance on closure, at least in some areas, is recognised within the MCF. Both the Namibian government and the companies studied have responsibilities to ensure that the case study communities are disposed of in ways that are socially, developmentally and environmentally responsible. At present it can be questioned whether this is happening, with failings on both sides.

In the title for paper it is asked whether the case study communities are cursed? At present it is difficult, although not impossible, to see how they can become sustainable and viable after mine closure. These wider questions and concerns are largely ignored within CSR agendas and practices within the mining industry in Namibia. This absence further raises questions about how far voluntary CSR, particularly in the form currently practiced within mining in Namibia, can truly be an effective vehicle for addressing such concerns. As has been noted by numerous observers, CSR works best in 'win win' scenarios, when there is a clear 'business case' (Carroll and Shabana, 2010) for companies to engage in socially responsible behaviour. It is difficult to make such a win win argument for companies not seeking community handover, as ultimately proclamation will save them money. However the final decision on whether to proclaim these communities still rests with the Namibian government, who need to adopt a longer term perspective in relation to decision making about these communities and the costs and benefits associated with handover. Lessons must be learnt from past failings in relation to mining towns like Community C and other similar communities across the country.

As discussed above there is a need for Namibia's government to devise more comprehensive closure legislation, and while recognising its limitations the Namibian Mine Closure Framework may at least provide a starting point for such an undertaking. However this is not the only option, furthermore it raises questions about the form such legislation should take and the areas it should address. Building upon the experiences of the different case studies a number of recommendations and alternatives are identified for companies and governments in similar situations:

- Wherever possible the creation of large scale company towns should be avoided. If the establishment of some kind of settlement or accommodation is unavoidable, then unless an area has a specific natural competiveness i.e. unique tourism opportunities, the size of this settlement should be kept to a minimum and long distance commuting policies pursued. If this approach is adopted then from the initial design phase social assets, including housing, hospitals, schools and recreational facilities need to be properly factored into closure planning, with realistic assessment of what should happen as mining runs down and during commodity price fluctuations.

- The only rationales for proclamation are social and developmental. If a community has a specific natural competitive advantage, and it is proven that it can be viable without mining, then proclamation is possible. This is something that would need to be identified from the initial design phase. In this scenario the community should be proclaimed with an elected local authority from the outset, or as early as practicable. This local authority would then run and own social assets, with such assets designed to meet both mine and longer term community needs. Within this approach there would be scope for community ownership of social assets through entities like community trusts, with these assets then leased to the mines. Through public private partnership the mines could also help to improve social assets owned by government or the community, for example helping to create centres of excellence in education. This overall model for community development offers resilience to commodity price fluctuation, with the community capable of continuing without mining.

- Equity ownership and profit sharing provide another avenue through which community sustainability could be addressed. Currently the Namibian government has shareholdings in several mining companies, including the company that formerly owned Community B. A portion of this shareholding could be divested to an independent trust or similar entity with the remit of encouraging community sustainability. Such an arrangement could be similarly set up elsewhere. Alternatively a portion of government shareholder revenues or mining tax revenues could be set aside for community sustainability interventions. Finally an industry wide tax could be levied to cover the cost of rehabilitating mining’s historic social and environmental legacies in Namibia.

- Existing company towns should not be proclaimed unless it is proven that they can be sustainable without mining. If the company administering such communities cannot afford their upkeep, they should be downsized until this becomes feasible. Operations should be restructured to reflect changing financial realities, with any costs associated with the restoration of land borne by the company or parent corporation. Provision should be made in legislation that from the outset of operations a portion of funding be set aside to cover these costs. This would also help to mitigate for the affects of commodity price fluctuation. Alternatively in these cases an agreed upon portion of income or pre-tax profits could also be set aside for investment in community development and sustainability initiatives. Mechanisms for the transfer of social assets to social enterprise type entities could also be considered.

- Finally in relation to those former company towns that have already been proclaimed, many of the previously mentioned suggestions apply. Including claims for equity ownership and redress informed by the historical responsibilities companies have for the creation of these communities. Cooperative and social enterprise models also provide potential innovative bottom up solutions to social problems in these communities, and to addressing gaps in service delivery and limitations in local government.

The experiences of CSR within the mining industry in Namibia documented in this paper provide a host of insights applicable beyond a single country context, and in a variety of ways engages with wider debates and discussions about CSR, mining and its social, environmental and development impacts. Questions have been raised about the depth of company adoption of sustainable development, and its integration into core business practices and decision making. As discussed, over the last decade the global mining industry has taken steps to transform negative public perceptions, and through initiates like the MMSD sought to show that mining can play a positive role in global sustainable development. However despite these efforts, whether "sustainable mining" is really possible remains debatable (Whitmore, 2006). Experiences in Namibia suggest that there is still some way to go before sustainable development is fully integrated into the core business practices and decision making, and that there is often a disconnect or lag between rhetoric and policy at a corporate level and realities on the ground. This lag was commented upon in interviews where it was highlighted that it took time for new policy initiatives at a corporate level to trickle down, with the uptake of policies often mediated by local level factors including the buy in of management and employees, and on the ground conditions of subsidiary companies. In a broader sense, the practices of CSR observed suggest limits to the potential of CSR as currently practiced in Namibia to act as an agent for social change and transformation. In the context of Namibia's mining industry, CSR is largely instrumental. It is a management tool used by companies as part of risk management and maintaining their social license to operate. It does little to challenge imperatives of profit maximisation. Nor does it engage with wider questions about the role of business in society and the responsibilities businesses have when operating in developing world environments.

As discussed elsewhere, many large international mining companies have now adopted a policy of avoiding as far as practicable the creation of company towns. While this recognition is broadly welcomed, the experiences of towns outlined in this paper illustrate the potential for past business practices, when mining companies may not have been as conscious or as willing to recognise their social responsibilities, to undermine current good behaviour. Yet temporality and the responsibilities of businesses for past practices and their ongoing material legacies have received limited critical attention in CSR literature and research to date. Within existing literature a principal criticism of CSR has been that while it may be useful at a small and micro level, with companies becoming better development actors, CSR and sustainable development agendas still rarely reach macro level decision making. Companies also often eschew critical self-reflection about their overall role in national development, and the ways in which through their day to day business practices and decisions they are implicated in the creation of social problems (Blowfield and Frynas, 2005; Frynas, 2008; Gulbrandsson and Moe, 2007). The research presented in this paper finds broad agreement with these identified limitations.

In its focus on CSR and issues of sustainability and viability in company towns in the Global South, this paper has sought to provide relatively unique insights on what has been a neglected area of enquiry. As discussed, while a body of literature exists examining company towns this literature has almost exclusively focussed on such communities in the Global North. While similarities exist there are many differences between such communities in developed and developing world environments both in their character and the challenges they face. For instance the frequent presence of parallel informal settlements in such communities in developing countries complicates decision making and planning. In developing country contexts the potential for large scale economic diversification is also often much more limited, as is state capacity to subsidise and support such communities and their residents after mining. The position and power of developing country governments like Namibia's, in negotiations with large multinational mining companies over the fate of such communities is also reduced in comparison to that of more developed countries. This is particularly the case where resource extraction plays a pivotal role in the national economy, and fears of "scaring away investment" or threats of disinvestment may stifle or lead to inertia in legislative development. The interaction between CSR and legislative development not just in developing countries but globally is another area needing greater critical attention. This is particularly apparent in light of the ongoing global economic crisis and the failure of 'light touch' self-regulation in the global financial sector. At the start of this paper three broad questions were identified to structure discussions. The paper aimed to understand the challenges faced by the case study communities in becoming sustainable after mining, it would critically examine engagements with these issues by mining companies in Namibia through CSR, and it would try to identify ways forward for the communities studied and to make suggestions for actors in similar situations. These questions and goals have been addressed, with discussions aiming to provide insights useful outside of the particular context of the case study communities and Namibia. This paper adds to knowledge about these kinds of communities globally, with the experiences described potentially informing better policy responses, and improved practical engagements with these kinds of issues and scenarios by all actors.

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