



Wealth and Death by Vama Jele

“Poverty is eliminated by hard work only”
This is a lie: they deceive us:
If this went in accordance with my working,
Even cattle I could have bought them,
Even a plough that ploughs like a feather
Then I would have bought a jet plane.

Tsokolo Lecheko, Lesotho

1. A JOURNEY THROUGH A LAND IN RURAL AREA

Mining has a rich and sad history which began from the discovery of minerals, may it be gold, diamonds, copper, platinum and others products dating back in 1900.

Being born in rural community and belief mining employment will bring fortune and rich at home I came to a different experience. Wealth and Death talks about my birth and journey from rural community in KaNzameya Area to the DeelKraal Gold Mine in Carletonville, South Africa.

This is more of live experiences and work through the journey joining the mining industry, underground working experience and return to work in fighting for the rights for those without a voice and those in the shadow of life, the sick and protect the health for those without means and human rights often denied.

On the journey worked at Deelkraal Gold Mine where lately transferred to Leeudoorn Gold Mine which later changed its name to Kloof No.7 Shaft, Westonaria. This is the company owned by the Gold Fields Limited.

I had an opportunity to work as Construction Assistant, Badge Reader System Clerk, monitoring the clocking in and out from work of all employees going underground and out of underground. Later changed occupation to be a Medical Station Clerk and lastly being a Human Resources Practitioner. Through my total working life been a member of National Union of Mineworkers. Served in many ranks at the Branch Committee level including being a Chairperson for Health and Safety, Branch Educator and representing Officials at the bargaining unit,

Lost employment in February 2005 and began a journey in non-governmental organization. Understanding Mining dynamics and being exposed at the human resources function add my opportunity to tackle the issues for miners and their families. SWAMMIWA Offices officially opened doors in February 2013 to date.

We delivered three programmes on labour migration, health and social protection. We have been doing well in most programmes especially the portability of social security benefits, compensation and services. Our advocacy for the rights of miners and their families have spread globally as I have presented in USA, Europe and in Africa. It has improved the programming and increased interest to assist miners and their families.

The journey been challenging and had its own ups and down. I have not been alone in the journey. I thank and acknowledge the contributions from our office team, Carol Simelane, Siwinile Dlamini, Thulani Ngcamphalala, Ndumiso Mkhaliphi, Ayanda Mavimbela, Onias Hlungwani (Zimbabwe), Maud Schumann (Netherlands), regional

team including Moises Uamusse (Mozambique), Rantso Mantsi (Lesotho) and development partners who have been supporting our work, the Southern Africa Trust, World Bank, DFID, Ford Foundation, Abrahams Kiewitz Inc, Global Fund and many others.

Without you, we could not have been able to count the deliveries made so far, and promotion of the quality of life of miners' and their well-being. "History is more than the path left by the past, it influences the present and can shape the future, in 2008 we started the fight for miners, ex-miners and their families whose rights were often denied and violated. Our role was to redress and for those without voice to be heard; those without wealth to have access to health and social security denied, to be accessed.

2. UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION

A handsome boy was born on the 11th of April 1966 in a village called KaNzameya Area under Chief Maqagalane Nhlabatsi. Named Vama Jele without knowing that a leader is born. Raised within a rural setting looking after cattle, goats and sheep. I was one in a family of nine children where two girls and seven boys. My parents got married in church and I can recall as I was very young.

I went to Mzila Primary excelled in most subjects maintaining to be in position one until completing the primary school. Moved to Velebantfu High School to do secondary education. It was the time I started to learn hard on school work. Around 1986 I went to do skills training on woodwork. It turned to be an opportunity creator as I started working immediately after completion and obtaining my skills certificate at SEDCO in Hlatikhulu.

3. MINING CAREER IN 1988

“Working in a gold mine was a pride in any of our communities in Swaziland. Young strong, healthy men were recruited at many TEBA centres at Mzilikazi in Siteki, Manzini, Hlatikhulu, Nhlanguano, KaMageza, Hluti and ...” we were all craving to be recruited to work in the mines”.

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Being keen to work in the gold mines drove me to look for employment there, as I wanted to see and touch gold. I thought it was easier to identify gold from rocks underground. Luckily was employed through Teba Nhlanguano office. I went through the registration process and finger printing for immigration purposes.

About 35 young strong men were recruited with me. Most of us were newly left school since most of us were above twenty five years old. We were all given papers to hand over at the border and corporate permits given to the bus driver who will then hand over to the official in Johannesburg in Booyesen which is Teba Head Office. The bus left in the morning around 09h00 heading to Mahamba Border gate. About fifty four people were in the bus. This include those whom were returning from annual leave. The processing at the Mahamba Border took about 2 hours for all of us to complete the process this include the figure prints too.

We left the border after 12h00 heading to Johannesburg. The bus contracted for the transporting us was Transtate. It drove very slowly for about eight hours to arrive at Booyesen Offices in Johannesburg. We went past Kinross along the road we could see a mine shaft with some burning flame above it. During that day other miners were telling us that it was the shaft where miners were killed by methane gas. This was a lie as it was SASOL plant where they develop gas, petrol and electricity out of coal.

We arrived at Booyesen late at night around 20h00. When entering Johannesburg there was excitement in most of us. We could see street lights as though it was day light on all the streets. Roads were as complicated as they were many roads leading to different destinations.

Announcement was made by one miner stating that we are now turning to Booyesen Offices. We stood and watch outside. Guess what on arrival we met officials and mostly were Nyasa from Malawi and Shangaans from Mozambique. You could tell without asking by the look they were. They spoke to us as new one and welcome us. We all came out and taken to a hall where we were going to sleep. We were given food for supper. The food was not that tasty and most of the miners complained saying that they have cooked, “sihlophoyiya” mine soup.

They counted us and we were told that we will sleep in the hall but it was late at 23h00. At around 02h00 we were woken up to go to take bath. Looking to the number of us we all went to wash our faces only. We met recruits from Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, South Africa (Ingwavuma, Transkei, Ciskei). I cannot recall how many we were but about twelve buses came full with miners.

After taking the bath we joined each other for a breakfast. The breakfast was sour porridge, bread and tea. It was not a good meal at all. We later have to strip off naked for physical medical examination. We formed and queue and the Booysen Teba employees will inspect us and later will put on our clothes. We waited for a train that will transport us to Carletonville TEBA Office for distribution to different mines. The treatment at Booysen was terrible and inhumane. Imagine being naked in winter and being looked at during a cold winter as it was July.

Once arrived at Carletonville we did some procedures and waited for our mine buses. We left Booysen train station at 10h00 and arriving at Carletonville at 12h00. No meal was served to us although we were told that we will have lunch there. We were being registered and doing lot of paperwork. Around 15h30 a bus came from Deelkraal Gold Mine to pick us. All the miners recruited and returning from annual leave boarded the bus to the Deelkraal Gold Mine.

We arrived at 16h30 and reported at the Compound Office in charge of the hostel. We found the clerks waiting for us. We were issued with mattresses, blankets and given a ticket for accessing food in the dining hall. We were allocated houses according to tribal lines. Swazis were allocated to Block B, Shangaan were allocated to Block A, Basotho allocated to Block M while Pondsos from Transkei were allocated to Block K.

It was late evening at 20h00 when a siren rang to mark that night shift must go down. Miners were clad on their working gear which were overalls, rubber gumboots, helmets, rubber gloves just to count a few I saw that day. Our room was with fifteen occupants and all were coming from Swaziland. We were about three allocated into that room. We were introduced to the "Isibonda". The Isibonda was the head of the room who report to the Hostel Admin Officer. Above the Hostel Admin officer is the Tribal Induna who reports to the Hostel Manager. The hostel Manager was an old white man called Mr McClure.

We slept and woke up early at 05h30 for breakfast and medical evaluation. This medical evaluation takes place at the medical station. All new and returned miners will be examined for fitness prior to do acclimatization. The Occupational Nurses test our urine for sexual transmitted diseases, blood pressure, hearing and as well as chest x-ray. Once found sick if you are new recruit, you will rejected on medical ground without being treated. But if you have sexual transmitted diseases you were treated. We were found healthy and sent to the training centre.

The Training Centre starts at 07h00, as we reported there we were taken to the Acclimatization Chamber called, "Umshongolo". This is cubicle which is temperature controlled for acclimatization. All miners will go through the acclimatization in order to assess how your body may react once in the underground environment. We were made to take off our clothes and wear a skirt only without an underwear. You will be there for 4 hours a day for five days. If you make it then you will be sent to the Section Clerks to get a section where you will work. I manage to pass the acclimatization test and proceeded to work underground.

4. PLACEMENT AT SECTION 33 UNDERGROUND AT DEELKRAAL GOLD MINE

Development ends is mostly hot areas as it uses artificial air pumped by electric fans and especially if it does not linked into other worked areas. It was in 33 Level underground. I am not really sure even today how many kilometers we went down to the 33 Level. But I can estimate to 3 kilometers underground. We were about six in our section, two from Lesotho, one from Swaziland, two from Transkei and one from KwaZulu Natal. Our Team Leader was from Transkei. Our main work was on construction in development end and in the raise development. This section was doing what was called “high speed” where we were to blast twice per shift. Imagine from Monday to Saturday we were blasting twice. With regards to safety we were issued with overalls, rubber gumboots, hard helmet, safety lamp and we were also obliged to do first aid. I cannot remember a dust mask being given to us but only those working at the shaft were using them even those working at the station level as the shaft is the same that use to transport the mined reef.

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Working underground was not comfortable to me in the first few weeks but after three months I got used to. After shift we went to the level station to wait for the cage to travel to surface to knock off. I remember waiting for the cage as late as 16h00 after getting underground on daily bases at 05h15. Imagine the hours we spend underground in the dark. A lot of brilliant ideas will come but immediately after getting into surface and get fresh air all those ideas get blown away.

We had a white Miner who was in charge of the Section specifically for certain number of development ends. Above the Miner was a white Shift Boss who was also supervised by a Mine Overseer (MO). Only white were supervisors in the mines at that time. Blasting Certificate holders were only whites and they enjoyed a lot of benefits as Union Man. They belonged to Mineworkers Union which is now called Solidarity. Their union never accepted black people. Our union was called National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). We were not treated like human beings but we got used to it in order to survive. The white bosses made sure that we remained divided in order to control us. Working underground was always dangerous as we would hear bad news on mine accident resulting to fatalities. Although our section was considered safe but we once had an accident which led me to think otherwise.

We would wash in the showers which was an open hall with taps on top of us. The water was hot and sometimes very cold depending on what time you went to take a bath. There was no privacy in showers as in our rooms too. No women were allowed to come close to the Mine Hostels. We stayed in the farm and we use to shop in a shop nearby the hostel. Those shops were owned by white people suppose were Portuguese or Indians, cannot tell exactly. We spent more time inside the Mine Hostel and extramural activities were soccer, traditional dance (Sothos, Swazis, Zulus and others) and only Xhosa were in rugby. Beer hall was right inside the hostel and most miners spent their money there even though the mine was supplying African Brew on Fridays afternoons.

5. AWAY FROM FAMILY SETTING

The hostel life took us away from our families and never have we known about Valentine's Day and others since were living in single sex hostel. The only females in the mine that time were white ladies working at the Time Office. When I left to work in the Mines I had a girlfriend, her name was Ncobile Mashinini from Mbabane. Our relationship did not work out and separated after few years working in the mine. After nine years I met her in Johannesburg and we were able to recognize each other.

The distant relationship did not work out for me and even though I visited home often I ended up having a relationship in the mine. Around December 1988 I was transferred to work at the surface under the Time Office. I worked a Badge Reader Clerk monitoring clocking for work in and out of all employees going down the mine. Every day after shift we have to ensure that we check if all employees came out from underground which was called Shaft Clear.

In that mine women were not allowed into the mine hostel gate but were attended about one kilometer away from the mine. Those with wives would register to bring their wives in the visiting wives quarters. They were allowed to stay for a month only. It will be the time when the miner will enjoy staying with their wives. But we were more than three thousand employees. So the queue was always long as there about twelve houses. This practice was very bad indeed but we used to enjoy it as there was no choice. Using the nearer Bekkerdal location (settlement) was considered as not safe although there were some miners staying there. White miners were staying in big houses in Glenharvie. Their houses were from three bedrooms and servant's quarters with a garage while our cars in the hostel were parked a distance away from the hostel in uncovered packing.

6. LATE SHAFT SHIFT CLEAR

It was only in January 1989 where we couldn't signed Shaft Clear as one employee clocked in to work but never clocked out. Investigation was launched by the Shift Boss who was clearing the shaft that day. His room was checked and also if he returned his work clothes and helmet which again was not in his room. His team leader was asked about his whereabouts with the total miners working with him. None of them knew where he was. The Shift Boss then reported the matter to the Mine Overseer and the Mine Overseer reported to underground Manager for that Section. Immediately a rescue team was called to go down into the section to look for him. Search was carried over night and the following morning without success of locating the miner. He was finally found after seventy two hours in a worked area with a dead lamp torch and exhausted, could not walk. They took him to hospital and we were lucky he was still alive. It is dismissal to sign off a shaft clear without ensuring if all employees came out from underground.

7. TRANSFER TO LEEUDOORN GOLD MINE IN 1989

There was no difference from Leeudoorn Gold Mine I found, you live in crowded single sex hostel under constant surveillance. Living the same schedule dictated to by the mine. Sleep, eat, and work. Dig, drill, blast. Get exposed to heat, dust and fear. Racial violence

also occur as in any other shaft where you will be beaten by your white supervisor without hitting back at three km underground. They claim to have invest in your physical strength, feed you up to ensure you are fit and productive. When you are off work, you imbibe liquor in mine beer halls to numb down and forget. That forgetting also include forgetting about your family, look for quick or nearer sex, local woman. Return home once a year for a few weeks when on annual leave. As much as know our wives but some of our children might not know us, have nothing to say. You don't fit in your home any more, you don't know your family, and they don't know you. Go back to the mines, otherwise you lose your job then you lose your survival.

Working at the Medical Station as a Clerk was much better at Leeudoorn Gold Mine comparing the job I was doing in Deelkraal Gold Mine. Promotion was promising as I ended doing a training for hearing and vision assessment at Western Deep Levels No.2 Shaft. Then I passed and returned to work based on the qualification in assessing vision and hearing to all mine employees. I have been doing this until 1998.

It was in this mine when I started to be involved with the Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association (SWAMMIWA). We worked along with Cain Sihlongonyane, Paul Zwane, Jabulani Mayisela and many others. These were in the leadership during the early days of Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association. The association fell apart and seems not function lately in 1995. We started to revive it in 1996 and conducted elections at regional level at Carletonville, Westonaria, Rustenburg, Klerksdorp and Johannesburg in 1997. Finally election for National Executive Committee (NEC) was conducted in October 1997. The new NEC at that time was President – Bongani Mdluli, Deputy President – Christopher Mdluli, General Secretary – Vama Jele, Deputy General Secretary – Moses Khanyile, Treasurer – Aaron Dladla, Members were Aaron Ndwandwe and

8. THE COLLAPSE OF APARTHEID IN MINING

Even though you may not believe that these mines had innocent names like Anglo American, apartheid was the backbone of mining. We fought and survived in oppression for a long time but we use to fight the system through unionization. I recall the General Secretary of National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) that time was Cyril Ramaphosa now the Deputy President of South Africa. As member of NUM I was also a member of South Africa Communist Party. I was serving at the branch structure as a Shop Steward with our Chairperson at the time Merriman Nyamende. During this time black people would be assaulted by white miners without being charged and would call us kaffirs without fear of reprimanding by management. Law was in the hands on the whites. But there was traces of calls for change. Some white miners were members of Terblanche AWD.

After release of Comrade Nelson Mandela many changes blew in the mines including appointing black miners into supervisory positions. Many miners were nominated to be trained as General Miners, Onsetters, Winding Engine Drivers and others were trained to be Shift Bosses. These position was reserved during the past history of apartheid for white people only. Even illiterate white miners were supervisors in the mines during the apartheid time. This changes were brought by the political changes in South Africa. New

policies and legislations were proposed from health safety to education and targets were set for the mines to meet. This is the time where by all mine employees regardless of colour were forced to do medical evaluation in the mine together with their black colleagues. It never went down well with white miners and their union up until 1994 election. It was internal wars. Some places continued to be reserved for white even in change rooms black miners were harassed by their white counterparts.

Mining had been unsafe place to valued black men as cheap such that white bosses would say if five black miners are killed we can be able to bring fifty new black miners. If your father died in a mining accident, the mining company offered a replacement by a family member. You are torn, knowing what it's like growing up fatherless. You don't want to repeat the cycle. You dropped out of school to help your mother cultivate the fields and tend the cattle. Your uncle advises you to take up the offer, you're one of the lucky ones as the gold mines are scaling down. Men at the shebeen tell you that the mines will make you a man, like those before you. You soon find yourself on a train to Egoli, Johannesburg, and place of gold. You are immediately shocked. You pass the gruel heat and rigorous training with ease. Then, underground. Fear and anticipation. You push through the gates. Swipe your work card. Hundreds of men around you. Packed like sardines. Waiting for the cage to arrive. The whine of the motors as the night shift men are pulled up out of the earth. That dark hole calls. You wince as the gate slams shut behind you. For an endless time the caged drops back into the earth. The rock face is more brutal than imagined. The dust, the noise, the shouting of the Bass Boys, "Work Faster". You will remember the training.

9. TRIBAL VIOLENCE IN THE GOLD FIELDS MINE IN 1996/7

I witnessed strikes but never witnessed tribal wars. I recall Zulus whom lost lives matching to the Shell House which was the ANC Headquarters at that time. They were shot at with live bullets. While in the mines we were all staying in the hostels on tribal lines and Block B was for Swazis. Block A was for Batswana and Zulus were staying at Block F and Xhosa were in Block D. In Leeudoorn Gold Mine had been NUM for a long time but the Zulus introduced a new union called United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA). This drew attention to NUM. Zulus demanded to have a stake with management in recognizing their union. While in negotiating with Management with regards to integrating all employees in the hostel UWUSA did not want. This brought tensions and standoff of the unions. NUM called a mass meeting on update in wages negotiations. On return from NUM mass meeting came singing a song about the incident which occurred at Shell House. Zulus became angry. Later at 20h00 we heard that about four people were killed at the gymnasium by Zulus. All killed were Xhosas. There after a number of miners were killed in Leeudoorn Gold Mine. So the Xhosas and other tribes joined the fight against Zulus. It affected and spilled to other sister mines including Leeudoorn Gold Mine, Libanon Gold Mine, East Driefontein Gold Mine, Northam Platinum Mine and others. Zulus were transported back home in number of buses and mine management tried to stop this but it was impossible.

After this incident the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa called for a commission inquiry to the violence in the mines. It was chaired by Judge John Myburgh. The commission made recommendations to integrate miners in the hostel and overhaul the administration of mine hostels. During this time I was already a shop steward and member of the Branch Committee. I was an elected Health and Safety Chairperson. I negotiated the First Full time Health and Safety Agreement in Leeudoorn Gold Mine. I had an opportunity to serve in many structures of the NUM including the Branch Educator. While as Branch Educator I served at the Mining Qualification Authority (MQA), Employment Equity Forum, Officials wage negotiations with Gold Fields Head Office and others.

10. MEETING HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III, KING OF THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND AND GOVERNMENT

Although the Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association established in 1991 and registered in 1993 it never done anything significant than cross border transport issue. Being involved in the work of human rights earned me an opportunity to be elected to the Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association in October 1997. This was the beginning of great work as I was inspired to bring change even though being in leadership your rights are the last one. It was taken as quality leadership since we were all new into the position since we served at the Regional and Mine level. We had big dreams which were sometimes blown away by new challenges demanding to be addressed.

I never ever believe that one day will shake the Swaziland King until 1998. We were thrilled when we heard that His Majesty King Mswati III would like to meet our association. I did have a suit and I decided to buy a navy jacket and a neck tie. We were informed by the Labour Attaché John T Ndlangamandla who later in his life changed his name to John T Malinga. He gave us some protocol procedures on meeting the King. We were to meet His Majesty King Mswati III at the residence of the Swaziland Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. His Excellency E Hlope's resident was in Pretoria, South Africa.

We were trilled and amazed that today we will meet the King very close never think we will sit together. Our minds were anxious on how will it be. Meeting or shaking hands with his majesty is a privilege enjoyed by a few. But this was our time. Black envoy led by a BMW escorts came flashing blue lights and everyone was on attention. That was arrival of His Majesty King Mswati III. He took few minutes inside the car before coming out and greeted the High Commissioner and Deputy Prime Minister Dr Sishayi Nxumalo. Dr Sishayi Nxumalo introduced us to the King and we were invited to the holding room. During our short stay the King addressed that he would like to know more about us. We introduced ourselves from name, to community in Swaziland, to Chief's name. Amazing the King knew some of our family members as they serve in certain regiments.

Firstly he asked about our work in the mines and our social welfare. He was pleased with our submissions. He commanded us to work on two things on miners returned

suffering from TB and other lung diseases and secondly the issue of loss of livelihoods and unable to get employment with the skills got from mining.

We were aware of the issue of mine dust inhaled during working underground. I recalled that on Saturday's miners in their numbers would go out the hostel to do "kuhlanta". It was waking up early and take warm water and drink about five litres. That water will be added some traditional medicine or sea water or alarm stone. Miners believed that doing so was to reducing underground dust inside the lungs. It never worked much. At that period if a miner start coughing severely it was believed that he had been witched by someone at home.

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It took that long to date to expel that belief from miners. Many of them died out of stigma instead of mine dust from underground and other impurities caused by blasting fumes. Silica dust have contributed to the weakening of lungs in miners and without being understood. His Majesty from our discussion came to understand how we need to improve our service to miners and their families.

We left with eager to make change in addressing the health of miners and lack of livelihoods. We struggled for many months as SWAMMIWA did not have funds and dependent on membership fees amounting to R25 per person. We had meetings at different mines conducting dialogues in sensitizing miners about the association and how it will change lives of us and our families. Sometime would travel to meet the government of Swaziland on matter within their departments without any tangible success. His Majesty King Mswati III commanded a highest political commitment in miners' issues in Swaziland from signing the SADC Declaration of TB in the Mining Sector in August 2012.

Further the then Minister of Labour, Hon Lutfo Dlamini with the Swaziland Parliament commission a commission of inquiry into the funds for ex-miners. This was from 1999 when many ex-miners were swindled on pretenses' of receiving death benefit. They hired buses and cars to travel to Welkom. Claims of people being paid were made but none ever met who received money. Widows and ex-miners were meeting under trees discussing this Welkom issue. It pulled a lot of interests to many. A Commission of Inquiry was gazetted by Parliament in 2000. The Commission of Inquiry was chaired by Titus Mlangeni and Khabonina Dlamini was a Secretary. It rounded hearing in major towns in Swaziland. More 1000 ex-miners recorded their views to the commission. Then the commission went to South Africa to meet other key stakeholders like Teba, Chamber of Mines and others. In South Africa the commission was not able to meet the stakeholders except Teba. Finally came with E7 million which was with Swazi Bank and Swaziland Building Society. The money was managed by Voluntary Deferred Pay Special Fund Board. It was made of government department officials and regulated by the Finance Act under the Ministry of Finance. They came with concrete recommendations which call on transferring the fund to be managed under the Ministry of Labour, devising means of utilization of the funds and incorporating ex-miners representative into the fund board. The Ministry of Labour & Social Security engaged SWAMMIWA, Sandla Senkhosi

Organization and SNEMCU on implementing the recommendations. I represented SWAMMIWA, in the Board.

11. A JOURNEY PASSING HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION

Being a shop steward earned me a fulltime bursary to study Human Resources Management. I did very well on my full-time study and really appreciated advice from Gwede Mantashe by then was the NUM General Secretary. He was responsible for the bursary I got.

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Completion in 2003 was much an appreciation and managed to finally graduate in National Diploma on Human Resources Management and Practices from the Institute of People Management. I was assigned to work at HR Dept as Trainee HR Officer from 2003.

This study was an eye opener since I was engaged in Human Resources Department. Luckily that my internship was done at the Human Resources Department under the HR Superintendent, Pieter Brits. He was a Blue Bulls Rugby Fan and liked rugby a lot. Pieter was so good to me even though he faced struggles since I was from the union further shop steward. I signed my career pathing at HR which makes me to move into all departments in the gold mine. I had an opportunity to go underground in a section, had time at the Time Office, Gold Plant and other department.

I recruited number General Miners, Panel Miners, Production Supervisors, Mine Overseer and Unit Managers. I was exposed to most of the HR Function in the mine shaft and other mine shafts like Kloof No.4 shaft, Kloof No.3 Shaft and Kloof Main Shaft. I knew most work in the mine and understand how they operate in each and every department or section underground nor surface departments.

While acting HR Officer I participated in the union structures and management was concern about my participation as I was in management level now. I did not see anything wrong until later was charged for inciting ABET Facilitators after meeting them and raised a concern about their union membership. They belonged to a union which was never involved on the demand for having full-time ABET classes. Eleven charges were preferred and the case was chaired by white lady who was a head of department. I tried sourcing a shop steward since was in the Branch Committee by then. I got a shop steward called Skop (head) from Lesotho. He represented me pretty well. We won the case and was found not guilty with any charge.

I went back to the HR Department but my presence was under strict scrutiny as my landline phone was bugged by the security of the company meaning they listen to my calls. I was always a suspect. This case was made in 2003 and I had been followed in different ways. One time I pulled to the Gold Fields Security Department for questioning regarding Musa Dlamini. Musa came from my home town Hlatikhulu. He was medically repatriated on medical grounds. Then he was seen around Kloof Gold Mine and they

suspected that he was back at Kloof Gold Mine using fraudulent means. But Musa was not working for Kloof Gold Mine instead Kusasaletu which is former Elandsrand Gold Mine. I was treated badly and inhumane by the Gold Fields Security. I never took action against them.

In 2004 I was charged again for contravening a Gold Fields Ethics Code in that a colleague sent an email to Driefontein Gold Mine Vice President and other Senior Management. This email content was about "two Afrikaners who went into a police station seeing a picture of two blacks wanted for rape. Koos said this kaffers are getting lekker jobs". This charges shook the Branch Committee and NUM head office wished to intervene but because of the union hierarchy they couldn't. Jerome Dlamini represented me at day one but could not continue with the case. I ended up left alone. I fought the case to CCMA and lost. My union betrayed me. With my experience I was not alone who once betrayed by the union representatives at branch level. Sometime your union may support management to get rid of you. I was then found guilty and fired in February 2005.

Leaving mining was painful as I was about to be in the management and earning a better salary. Did not have a choice and left mining. During this time my father was seriously sick. I looked after him and committed my car to transport him wherever he needed to go. He ultimately passed on and we buried him.

Moises Uamusse from Mozambique called me. I wondered where he got my mobile number. He said been looking for me and I was also looking for someone we can talk with, regards issues of mining. Moises asked to meet me and SWAMMIWA in Johannesburg. I agreed and we finally met in Johannesburg. Our discussions were about the health of miners and their families. We agreed to convene a seminar on HIV with technical support from Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO). The seminar was convened at Eduardo Mondlane University and was officially opened by the then Minister of Health of the Republic of Mozambique Dr Ivo Carrido. His speech clearly told all delegates that in addressing HIV needs to be addressed not in silo. He congratulated the miners association for coming together from countries in addressing HIV. From his speech confirmed the regional association. Most speakers called for regional efforts in addressing HIV in Mineworkers and their families. This meeting was successful and attended by delegates from Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa. When we broke into group discussions regional association was established.

We came with an action plan from this meeting on building up the regional association. Never had we spoken about TB in miners, unclaimed benefits and compensation. We continued with many meetings to writing up regional association. Our meetings were in South Africa and we did some consultations with Lesotho. We came up with a name of Southern Africa Miners Association (SAMA). Registering the association was pretty hard in South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique and Botswana until it was successful

registered in Lesotho.

Our consultative meeting with our Ministers of Health in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland that ignited the demand for action to addressing TB in the Mining Sector. The TB in Mines was started by South Africa Minister of Health Hon Aaron Motsoaledi, Swaziland Minister of Health Hon Benedict Xaba and Lesotho Minister of Health. The World Bank consulted us around 2009 and a study on Consultative study on TB in the Mining Sector. The study was an eye opener on learning. We found that many miners been killed by TB than mine accidents.

12. THE FORSAKEN EX-MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND CHANGES

Marikana Violence and representation of Betty Gadlela

As I watched SABC 1 News on the 11th October 2017, hearing that Dumisa Ntsebeza represents the Marikana Victims on behalf of 20 families, I was shocked from this news when the list of the families represented left out Ms Betty Gadlela. From the past I learnt about the Kinross Disaster where miners were killed by fire and as well as the Vaal Reefs Disaster killed in the shaft. They were Swazis there for sure but the families never benefited from the Trusts that were established for those victims' families. Again when hearing about the 20 families without Ms Betty Gadlela I felt that I must do something for her.

She had been up and down to TEBA Offices and Ministry of Labour & Social Security Offices for assistance without success as both institutions were reliant to the Lonmin Mine Management South African Government respectively. She had been sent up and down without knowledge and blink prospect of success. She was on mourning gowns and again in Swaziland, woman on mourning gowns has little space in public up until she is allowed to come out. She was in extreme pains on losing the loved one, the only bread winner, her other half and it was like being paralyzed on the half of your body.

Betty was going through a difficult time after the burial of her husband who died so cruel at the hands of the South Africa Police Service. He was short at, from order of National Commissioner of Police and her Assistants. This killing reminds us from the past during the apartheid where man had no value such that if you were killed by falls of ground, it was considered the act of God. Some widows were compensated with a mere R12 000.00 when your husband is killed by fall of ground in the gold mine. Come to our community to hear this cases.

Other widows husbands' were killed in the mine during miners' strike without compensation and without attention drawn to the incident of the strike even if it was but little could have been done. One widow came to our office recently October 2017 sharing to us how her husband was killed by fumes underground without compensation and again in order to replacing with a son cost her R50 000.00. This is a case how poor,

rural uneducated and lack rights to information resulted in being cheated by a union steward colluding with other miner. She paid R20 000 from the death benefit and further paid the outstanding R30 000 after receiving the provident fund (social security fund). This widow knew nothing about the mines, never been there before same as Betty. When telling her stories she was in tears and kept on sobbing in order to tell us to the end. She said, "the mine, Teba and husband are cruel, they never shared anything with us only that Teba slogan, Teba Cares".

Betty has been hoping for better treatment as her husband burial was attended by government officials and others to mention a few. Less information is shared to the families in regards to rights to the family and future expectations families may raise. A deceased miner is brought home by what we call in the mine a burial party which consist of 6 miners some might be from same neighborhood or have knowledge of the homestead of the deceased.

The burial party is within a requirement from Chamber codes for the job grade the miners' fall which was Cat 3-8 (or unskilled labour). These were miners who resided in the Mine Hostels who later given an option to cash out housing allowances and sort accommodation outside the mine hostels. They are given paid leave to travel and bury the deceased at his home and come back. Most of these miners are again have no clue of the post-employment rights for the family except that they will advise the family to approach Teba to launch claim for provident fund.

Mining corporations have been not accountable to any loss of life ever since mining began to date. Little we learnt that when Mine Management Representative travel to bury a deceased might have been due to mine accident. Again his/her traveling will include residing in a hotel and even charter a plane to report the accident to the family. But let a miner killed by pulmonary TB, Pneumoconiosis, silicosis or Obstructive Airway Disease the mining corporations don't care. Make things worse surgeons will also complete death cause notification as natural causes. Why is it like that, tell me why, I have been there I know it too.

No one ever thought that Betty will be tossed from left to right by the Ministry of Labour & Social Security and the TEBA. But it happened to her as it happened to others. The Ministry of Labour & Social Security may not much be blamed as it relied to South Africa government which was directly involved from the decision of the commission of inquiry, you can say.

I wrote an email to Dumisa Ntsebenza on October 2012 to assist and include Betty Gadlela in the list of the families they represented. He referred us to Osmond Mngomezulu who registered Betty and finally made arrangement for her to attend the commission of inquiry and I am advised that all the widows represented are now working at Lonmin. This is a once of many incidents we daily work on in our association's office.

ACHEIVEMENT BY OUR OFFICE SINCE FEBRUARY 2013

Dealing with the past legacy of past with more than 100 years of rich painful history and law in conflict with the constitutional rights. Our challenge was to change the lives and address the human rights violations, denial rights to access social security benefits, compensation and services and right to health to miners.

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Our programmes are to address Health, Labour migration and Social protection for migrant miners, their families and communities. About more than 48 000 ex-miners may be found in Swaziland while 4000 remained in employment in South African mines. About R41 billion remained unclaimed, R50 billion unclaimed for occupational injuries with insurances and unattended mandatory medical services that have not been done by Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases (MBOD).

To date we have achieved many through our advocacy at national level, regional level and international level. Issues of mining are very complex in nature and demands multi-disciplinary approach meaning Ministries of Health, Labour, Minerals to count a few, community leadership, unions, CSOs, and communities. These is what we have achieved from 2013 - 2016 in our work in Swaziland with governments, Private Sector (Mining Corporations, Chamber of Mines, funds) partners and role players with support From Global Fund valued \$30 million for TB in the Mining Sector coordinated by Wits Health Consortium and additional funding from World Bank and DFID through Health Focus for tracking and tracing.

a). Policies on Health which contributed to lives of Miners ad families

Two policies with accompanying action plans were achieved, which are SADC Declaration of TB in the Mining Sector, SADC Code of Conduct of TB in the Mining Sector and Framework of Harmonized TB Management in the Mining Sector.

South Africa has embarked on reforming the fragmented compensations since heart/Lungs compensated at Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Disease (CCOD) under the Occupational Diseases and Mines Work Act (ODMWA) and while Limps/hearing compensated administered by Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA). Reforming compensation in the Mining Sector will integrate compensation systems for better social security to the miners and their families.

b). These policies have delivered change on health of miners up to a level but more still need to be done so far. It has increased political commitment from leadership on addressing TB in the Mining Sector, improved the knowledge, epidemiology, attitude and practices, mapping of miners, legislative review focusing on occupational health and hygiene from the research done so far and as well as support from communities. In Swaziland two Occupational Health Service Centre (OHSC) constructed and conducts medical evaluation called biannual benefit medical examinations and done more than 2626 ex-miners and their families.

At regional level about 286 532, miners, ex-miners and their families screened for TB in between Nov 2016 - 15 Oct 2017 (300 000 target) in the region South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe and others SADC States.

In 2016 we conducted Tracking and tracing with Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Disease and reached about 7 065 Ex-miners with occupational diseases and paid valued R217 970 492 while outside South Africa a share of 2899 - R91 687 156 which included Swaziland from the total. Further we were able to map about 700 000 ex-miners in the region and captured into the database

c). Portability of social security benefits and compensation

We have achieved to have SADC Portability of Accrued Social Security Benefits in the Region which facilitate the access of unclaimed social security benefits and compensation across borders. We are working with governments, relevant funds, miners association's support by the Southern Africa Trust

About R41 billion remained unclaimed in South Africa from social security funds which includes Provident funds and pension funds under the FSB but from 2014 to date we have unlocked the money resulting in more than R474 million paid to Swaziland ex-miners and their families from Mineworkers Provident Fund. While more than R1,4 million was paid to local miners worked at Havelock Asbestos Mine. They were paid by Leigh Day & Co from London out of the liquidation of the asbestos mine.

d). Litigation and human rights denial

We have signed most of our miners for the TB and Silicosis, about 3300 claimants were registered in Swaziland. Case heard in October 2015, judgement set down in favour of Miners in May 2016 and companies appealed but on the other side discussing settlement with law firms representing the miners in the class action. Recently lawyers have announced some development in the TB and Silicosis litigation on settlement valued R9 billion. As SWAMMIWA we are anxious to be part of the process to the end and be represented in the TRUST that may be set by the TB and Silicosis settlement.

e). Economic empowerment for widows and ex-miners

Some families are so vulnerable out of extractive industries such that they do not have anything from the unclaimed benefits, compensation and services. As an organization we received supported from the Embassy of Netherlands through IOM and VSO in implementing income generating activities which included small dairy farming, goat rearing, broiler production, groceries, indigenous chicken farming further these projects have graduated into individual projects but at the same time growing the group ones.

13. EXISTING LIVING CHALLENGES AND ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

People are dying while the TB and Silicosis class case drag so long to be concluded while the statutory compensation is bureaucratic with excessive paperwork, cumbersome process which have to go via the mining time office. They all take too long and is very expensive to the poorest and vulnerable ex-miners and their families. Some ex-miners and their families applied for the compensation in 2016 to date have not been paid. Instead they are to open a bank account which will be closed before even the payment comes leading them to open it again. Widow and Orphans are the others who are highly affected as they are not even aware what documentation necessary for the compensation.

Occupational injuries had been very high in the Mining sector, such that left miners in wheelchairs and amputated legs/arms. These miners are sent home without knowing the value of their compensation for the injuries resulting that when the injured die, the family loose the little they were getting while he was alive. Mostly are requested to submit doctor's note which links the injury to the death of which families are not aware of. Many have lost the right to support from this practice.

Miners and their families never ever thought of the issue of documents and lack of understanding of the rules applicable to claim rights for instance some might have a claim but documents are nowhere to be found. Again mining companies never shared their documents which denied them to be able to raise and advocate for their rights.

Lastly even though there are family disputes but it is entrenched within the lack of knowledge on the rights and beneficiation while on the other side migration placed a challenge too which is not clear to family left behind and the person migrating to work their rights and other relevant information about the work.

To conclude these issues demand regional harmonization in many level from policy to law, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Model law on mining may be a call but meaningful involvement of all affected stakeholders is mostly important in Africa. Countries needs to improve their social protection systems for the benefit of the workers and their families. While empowering miners and their families with knowledge on their rights beyond employment is also imperative while they are having a representative unions at work.

14. CAPTURED LIVED EXPERIENCES FROM MINERS AND MINERS DEPENDENTS SAY:

Clement Shongwe a former miner from Swaziland said, *“Johannesburg was built on pains, sweat, tears and hard work of migrant miners from labour sending countries and South African. It was not going to be possible without sleeping on the streets in Johannesburg three times in winter. And without encouragement from Moises Uamusse it was not going to be possible. It took three to do this with Moises from Mozambique,*

Rantso Mantsi from Lesotho and Vama Jele from Swaziland. Today we can see a light at the end of the tunnel and we have confidence in them.”

Miner, *“You’ve made a friend who works next to you. You share a shack in the squatter camp near the mine. Your friend has a cold that does not seem to get better. You are promoted to drive the big drill. At first the air in your cubicle is cooled and fresh. But the aircon breaks down, is repaired, breaks again, and again. You worry that if you continue to report the breakdowns you will lose your job. You work without full protection. You do not know about the invisible dust...”*

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The miner will bring the film into the present where protection and safety for miners has improved. But the monitoring and control of dust levels is still not adequate nor effectively policed. Compliance is a slippery slope of avoidance and denial. The miner takes us into the contemporary experience on the gold mines. His story leads us to ask, “What has changed?”

“At least you can send them some money now and then to keep starvation at the door. Then after 20 years of working you get ill, retrenched, return home where your wife will nurse you. The pain of every breath reminding you of your sacrifice.”

The ex-miner’s story also brings us into the life of his wife and children who care for him in a small house in a village in the Eastern Cape. He is also one of the class representatives in the legal case against the mining companies. As an activist he educates his colleagues about their disease and their right to just compensation. His hope is that compensation for his illness will provide for his family when he is no longer alive.

The widow’s story is the story of many women who have lived the life of a miner’s wife. She said, “We have carried their families with dignity and courage under the most difficult conditions. He is a person who will take us on the well-travelled journeys between the rural and urban areas and back again. “There you will find him reduced to small items on a ledger, name, date of employment, age, wage, date of dismissal, comments. Your quest to get compensation is undermined at every turn, no medical records, languages you do not understand, people with little time for someone who no longer exists. You return to your home, discouraged. You can’t pay your children’s school fees, your children will remain uneducated. You hear about people being part of a legal case which promises compensation for your loss. But is it real, or just one of those touts who have fleeced people with promises of compensation?”

“You have just buried your husband. You nursed him while trying to grow food. Taking small jobs to earn a little money to take him to the clinic. He died of silicosis, an incurable disease contracted on the mine. He also had TB, left untreated, and now your

daughter has it too. You hardly knew him, only seeing him for 2 months after every 12 month contract”.

“You’re trying to sleep, restless. The children. The school fees. Winter is coming. Your daughter rushes in. Excited. The goat has given birth. She shocks you out of your reverie. The pain. The loss of your husband returns. You smile at her. Life must go on. You undertake the long journey to his last place of work, a Johannesburg gold mine”.