

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

The history of the mining industry in Mberengwa 1890-2014

By

Gumbo Nyashadzashe

R111940J

Supervisor: Mr. G Tarugarira

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of
Arts in History Honours Degree in the Department of History**

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Approval form

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to Midlands State University for acceptance, a research project entitled: **The History of the Mining Industry in Mberengwa 1890-2014** Submitted by **Gumbo Nyashadzashe** in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in History Honors Degree.

SUPERVISOR

DATE

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

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Release form

NAME OF STUDENT: GUMBO NYASHADZASHE

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SIGNED.....

Permanent Address: Mavorovondo Secondary School. P Bag 227 Mberengwa

Declaration form

I declare that **The history of the mining industry in Mberengwa 1890-2014** is my own work and it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. I declare that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

GUMBO NYASHADZASHE

Signature.....

Date.....

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Dedication

This piece of work is dedicated to the Almighty God who is my source of excellence and competence. Psalm 8 verse 9: How excellent is thy name in all the earth!

List of acronyms

AMCL	-	African Metals Corporations Limited
BIMCO	-	Belingwe Mining Investment Company
BSAC	-	British South Africa Company
DA	-	District Administrator
EMA	-	Environmental Management Agency
Ltd	-	Limited
NAD	-	Native Affairs Department
NC	-	Native Commissioner
Pvt	-	Private
RISCO	-	Rhodesian Iron Steel Company
RTZ	-	Rio Tinto Zimbabwe
ZANLA	-	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZIPRA	-	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZISCO	-	Zimbabwe Iron Steel Company
ZMDC	-	Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation
ZRP	-	Zimbabwe Republic Police

Glossary of terms

Danida-*A term used in Mberengwa referring to informal gold mining*

Chikorokoza-*artisanal mining usually done by inexperienced people and against the law*

Abstract

The study wishes to explore the history of the mining industry in Zimbabwe from the period of its establishment prior to 2014. It looks at the changes brought to the Mberengwa communities by the establishment of the mining companies. Mining evicted local communities and were robbed their ancestral land. It affected agriculture in many ways in the mining communities. The study also explores the subsequent fall of the multinational mining companies in Mberengwa that left local people exposed to poverty and unemployed. Closure of the multinational companies led to the rise and establishment of small scale mining in Mberengwa. It also looks at the impact of the mining industry since 1980 in Mberengwa. Mining was affected by the liberation war so after 1980 there was now black empowerment. Mining as a whole had both positive and negative connotations to the communities. The Mberengwa authorities in particular and the government in general have put various measures in order to boost development through the mining sector. Mberengwa communities also have campaigned for proper mining that can bring development as the district is lagging behind when it comes to development. Archival sources and reports were used to come out with this detailed research. Some Interviews with former mine workers, old people, chiefs, schools, mine workers and police officers were carried out to come with this project.

Introduction to the study

The research focuses on the history of the mining industry in Mberengwa district. The district of Mberengwa is prone to droughts but is richly blessed with numerous minerals such as gold, chrome, tantalite, platinum and emerald. As the area is affected by severe droughts, mining plays a very significant role in solving such a natural disaster. The origins of the mining industry in Mberengwa affected local communities in a negative way. About five mines were established from 1890 to 1950s. Sandawana, Inyala, Vanguard and Buchwa were established in Mberengwa. The establishment of these mining industries had adverse effects upon the local communities. Local people were robbed their ancestral land by settler miners thus agriculture was disturbed. Forced evictions also had negative impacts to the Karanga people. Agriculture production was reduced at the same time cattle were killed.

Closure of multinational companies in Mberengwa had negative connotations to the communities. All the multinational mining companies closed and the study also examines factors that led to the closure of these mining companies. The liberation war affected the mining industries such as Sandawana, Vanguard and Inyala. The closure of these mining industries was also due to exhaustion and economic crisis that ravaged the country. Vanguard also was affected by the liberation war movements as the guerrillas attacked the mine. Sandawana emeralds were mostly smuggled out by local communities during the war, Inyala used to house guerrillas, operations stopped, and thus affecting production of chrome. Sandawana also closed as the emeralds lost their value. The growth and establishment of Mashava and Shabanie mine affected Vanguard asbestos. Inyala chrome

was also closed as chrome was discovered in the Mapanzure and Shurugwi areas which had a tarred road to Gweru's ZIMALLOYS. Inyala shut owing to the absence of working capital and increasing of chrome mineral as the effects of the government enacted prohibition on trades of crude ore.

The closure of these big mining companies left the Karanga people desperate. Unemployment was rife, poverty increased and children dropped out from schools. The coming of the fast trek land reform programme in the early 2000s resettled people on areas rich of gold. The resettlement areas such as Great Mberengwa, Vanguard, Yorks, Pick mine and Neta facilitated gold mining while Sovelele was close to the Mweza mountain range which were abundant in tantalite. Mining began on a small scale basis. It was carried out as a means of poverty alleviation, to curb unemployment and people could not afford mining on a larger basis following the closure of multinational companies.

Mining had caused a lot of conflicts in the district, deforestation, erosion, siltation and disturbed agriculture. Mining companies did not bring development as what people expected. Infrastructure such as gravel roads were constructed, clinics were built though not all of the mines did this and employment was created. Mberengwa as a result of this lagged behind in terms of development thus Mberengwa authorities in particular, youths and the government in general have put various measures as a means of promoting more development from the mining industry. All these measures are going to facilitate development at the same time benefiting the local communities.

Research problem

The mining industry in Mberengwa did not do much as people expected to benefit local communities. Mberengwa is blessed with numerous minerals, mining companies were supposed to plough back more but they did only a few things. This has left Mberengwa the least developed district but is richly blessed with minerals. This must be solved and Mberengwa communities must benefit from these minerals.

Research objectives

To assess the establishment of the mining companies in Mberengwa and the changes they brought to the community

To assess the reasons behind the closure of multinational companies in Mberengwa

To assess the impact of the mining industry in Mberengwa since independence

To assess the measures taken by the government in general and Mberengwa authorities in particular to promote development through the mining industry

Research questions

1 What changes were brought by the origins and establishment of the mining industry in Mberengwa?

2 What factors led to the closure of multinational mining companies in Mberengwa?

3 What were the impacts of the mining industry in Mberengwa since independence?

4 What measures were taken by the authorities in Mberengwa in particular and the government in general to facilitate development through the Mberengwa mining industry?

Background of the study

Mberengwa became a victim of white penetration in the 1890s. The hope by the whites to find the Second Rand in Zimbabwe did not leave Mberengwa. Prospecting was done in Mberengwa and a number of mines were established. A number of mines were established in Mberengwa and these include; small scale gold mines like C mine in 1895, Vanguard asbestos 1914, Buchwa iron ore 1952, Inyala chrome 1957 and Sandawana Emeralds in 1956. The establishment of these mines brought a number of social and economic changes to the communities. In the precolonial era, Africans had their agricultural practices such as shifting cultivation. Most Shona groups were pushed out of their traditional land into the reserves such as Mposi, Mapiravana under inelastic colonial administration. They were overcrowded in the reserves and production was affected as they did not have enough space to farm. Deforestation also was a disaster that took place because of overcrowdings.

Multinational companies subsequently closed due to a numerous number of factors. The liberation war that broke out in Zimbabwe from 1966 to 1979 affected the mining industry negatively. Several mines such as Vanguard, Inyala Sandawana were directly and directly affected by the liberation war movements. Exhaustion of mining reserves also led to the closure of most mining companies in the district. Lack of capital, poor roads, corruption and economic crisis in the country can be blamed for the closure of big mining companies.

The closure of multinational companies in Mberengwa soon after independence that is companies such as Inyala which closed in 1980 and Vanguard in 1982 caused a lot of hardships to the locals. People were left unemployed and poverty-stricken. The closure of Buchwa in the late 1990s and the official closure of Sandawana in 2012 exacerbated the

rate of unemployment and poverty in the district. All these factors led to the rise of small scale mining as a means of poverty alleviation and poverty reduction. People could not afford mining on a larger scale and thus they resorted to small scale mining. This small scale mining involved foreign people who come from as far as Harare, Kadoma, Kwekwe, Mutare and Gokwe. Small scale mining however has been helping the local communities though a number of challenges were observed in this study. Conflicts, deaths, HIV and AIDS and school drop outs arose as a result of small scale mining in Mberengwa.

Mining is supposed to plough back more to the local communities not to exacerbate underdevelopment in societies. Most mining companies had a tendency of not ploughing back more profits to the local communities but only brought a little development of infrastructures and schools. The government has put measures that could promote development in the mining areas. Acts such as the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Programme have called for the benefit of locals from the exploitation of the natural resources in their areas. EMA has also intervened on the issue of environment preservation while ZRP also enforces the issue of mining permits. Mberengwa authorities have put measures that could promote development through the mining industry. Informal sector mining was prohibited to encourage mining that would bring incentives to the community.

Literature review

There is not much written about the mining industry in Mberengwa. The origins of the mining industry in Mberengwa have been dated back to the early years of colonial rule. Zhou in his thesis, **Environmental Impact of the mining industry in Zimbabwe. A case study of Mberengwa district** postulates that the hope by the settlers to find the Second Rand made Mberengwa to be a victim of white penetration. He is of the view that the coming of Europeans in Mberengwa to establish gold mines in the area opened up the area as they had to own vast tracks of land to monopolise their mining rights.¹The thesis also speaks of the establishment of several gold mines in Mberengwa from 1980 such as C mine² and other small scale mines in the late 1990s.

He reveals the silences that was there from the 1890s to 1920s where he blames the colonial government for its silence on the negative effects of mining in Mberengwa. The thesis makes it clear that it is important to note that notwithstanding the failure of the Second Rand to materialise in Southern Rhodesia (colonial Zimbabwe) and the subsequent shift to agriculture from 1908, the mining industry continued to receive infinite political and financial support from the government and very limited restrictions – a situation that led to extensive environmental degradation.²This is relevant to the mining industry in Mberengwa which had led to a lot of speculations especially in the Sandawana emerald mining areas, Inyala chrome mining areas and Vanguard asbestos mining areas. These speculations also led to forced evictions where Africans living in these areas were removed from these areas to leave space for the white prospectors. Zhou's thesis however was silent on the issue of post mining development in the post independent era. He did not address

the issue of mines closure especially soon after Zimbabwe attained independence which is an issue my dissertation addresses.

The other attempt to examine the environmental effects of mining in colonial Zimbabwe was made from the mid-1970s by Hill whose M Phil thesis in 1975 focused on the stabilisation of Rhodesian mining wastes with vegetation. His works were merely to stabilising mining wastes. All the same are relevant as indicators of environment pollution emanating from mining wastes by the late 1970s were extensive.³ In the Buchwa areas where iron ore was mined, cattle died because of dust on grazing areas. Most important of such literature was done in the report '**Environmental effects of mining in the SADC region.**' The report gives useful information on the effects of mining in independent Zimbabwe. This report however suffers from heavy dependence on mining officials in the collection of data, has a lot of generalisations and has no any sense of historical development. Also, the report did not touch anything about the Mberengwa mining industry.

J. McCulloch in his book **Asbestos Mining and Occupational Disease in Southern Rhodesia 1915-1998** focuses on asbestos mining in Southern Rhodesia. The book traces the history of asbestos mining in South Africa from the mid-19th century to the early 21st century. McCulloch managed to expose the weaknesses and failure by the British companies who were mining asbestos that asbestos mining had negative connotations to the African environment. He exposed the dangers of asbestos such as the dust and even the abandoned pits they left during the speculative period.⁴The book also speaks of the calls to

examine the environmental effects of mining in Southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The silence and the weakness of McCulloch is that he only looked at asbestos mining only yet my research is centred on the mining industry paying particular attention to every mineral found in Mberengwa.

G M Clarke's book **Zimbabwe's Industrial minerals-optimism for the future** speaks about Vanguard mine. It talks about the ownership that is was owned by Turner a Newall, the same company that owned Shabanie mine. Clarke dwelled much on the challenges the company faced for example, the issue of market after the liberation struggle that took place in Zimbabwe. He says that the re-emergence of Zimbabwe in the world economic scene after some 15years in the wilderness attracted much comment from the world press and years of the liberation war besieged foreign trade.⁵Such were the factors that led to the closure of Vanguard mine in 1982. Clarke's book however is silent as it did not touch anything about competition from Shabanie and Mashava. Turner and Newall abandoned Vanguard in favour of Mashava and Shabanie that had huge deposits of asbestos. Clarke only blamed the liberation war movement neglecting other crucial factors that led to the closure of Vanguard.

Per Zachrison's book, **An African area in change 1894-1946**, addressed the issue of mining in Mberengwa from 1945, African responses to it and how it changed their way of living. Zachrison also looked at the changes in agricultural production mainly because of the establishment of the mining industry in Mberengwa for example the creation of reserves led to low agricultural production.

Dreschler's report, **Small scale mining and sustainable development within the SADC region**, defines small scale mining in Southern Africa looking at the various that can explained for the development of small scale mining in developing countries. He pointed out that small scale mining is a deficiency oriented type of mining mainly to curb the seasonal or perennial problems in different communities. This applies to the mining industry in Mberengwa where small scale mining developed as a result of unemployment and droughts. This type of mining is done to curb such problems. The report also tackles the problems associated with this type of mining such as deforestation, mercury pollution and erosion. All these problems are relevant to the Mberengwa small scale mining that caused a lot of problems to the mining community. The same work was done in the report by Addler and Rustler J in **A Strategy for the management of acid mine drainage from gold mines in Gauteng**. The report speaks about the pollution caused by mining on environment such as mercury and acids that is how it disturbs agriculture and how pollutes drinking water for livestock.

In this research there is need to fill the gap especially through writing specifically about Mberengwa as a little has been done concerning the mining industry. There is need to fill the gap on the major causes of the collapse of various mining companies in Mberengwa and how it affected the local citizens.

Sources and methodology

To come out with this detailed study, various sources and methods were applied. Archival materials such as reports, secondary sources, other scholars' sources, newspapers, journals and oral interviews were used to carry out this research.

Archival sources such as miners' reports, Native Commissioners' reports and annual reports on mining were useful in writing this dissertation. These disclosed some of the experiences the miners had and leaving the local people's response to the mining industry. The reports also helped to come out with the successes and challenges faced with the mining companies as these reports give names of specific mines.

I also used secondary sources such as newspapers, pamphlets, textbooks and encyclopaedias to supplement the primary sources. These were useful in writing out this research as they provided dates unlike oral interviews which didn't provide actual dates. Secondary sources also provided clear information about the names of people and geographical locations. Other scholars' sources such as published and unpublished thesis were also useful in carrying out this research as they also helped when it comes to the issue of dates and names and also geographical locations.

Interviews were carried out with different people. Interviews with former mine workers in multinational companies. These helped to come out with the challenges they faced by the time they were working. Some of the former workers were in a position to provide

information on the origins of the companies and the challenges faced with these at the same time making it clear how the companies closed.

Interviews with local headmen in the mining areas also were carried. I managed to interview local headmen in areas such as Inyala, Great Mberengwa, Sandawana and Buchwa. This was helpful as they managed to disclose the challenges they faced due to the establishment of the mining industries on their land. This helped to explain issues such as forced evictions, deforestation and soil erosion. It also helped to come out with the achievements and failures by the mining companies to benefit local communities. Interviews with local headmen also helped to come out with the challenges associated with small scale mining in their communities for example, the issue of conflicts, deaths and deforestation.

Interviews with the District Administrator, Council chairperson and police inspectors was also useful as it revealed the measures the authorities of Mberengwa have applied in order to promote development through mining. This was helpful as I managed to hear their different views from what miners were saying and also what they have experienced from the mining activities and how they were going to solve the issue of primitive looting by mining companies that have been operating in Mberengwa.

Dissertation layout

My dissertation is structured into four substantive chapters which are:

Introductory chapter

Chapter one. This chapter focuses on the origins of the mining industry in Mberengwa. The chapter also looks at the changes brought by the establishment of the mining industry in Mberengwa from 1900 to 1979

Chapter two. This looks at the collapse of big mining companies in Mberengwa assessing the reasons for their collapse. The chapter also looks at the rise of small scale mining.

Chapter three. This chapter dwells on the impacts of the mining industry in Mberengwa since 1980

Chapter four. This looks at the measures towards promoting development through the mining industry in Mberengwa.

Concluding summary

This summarises my dissertation.

End notes

1 Takavafira Zhou. D.Phil. thesis. Environmental impact of the mining industry in Zimbabwe. A case study of Mberengwa District 1894-1920. University of Zimbabwe, Harare, 2013 Pg. 45

2 Ibid Pg. 46

3 *Environmental Effects of mining in the SADC region.* Pg.15

4 McCulloch, Asbestos Mining and Occupational Disease in Southern Rhodesia 1915-1998,
Pg. 34

5 G.M Clarke, Zimbabwe's Industrial Mineral-Optimism for the future, 1982, Pg.19

Chapter one: The origins of the mining industry in Mberengwa

Introduction

This chapter looks at the origins of the mining industry in Mberengwa. It looks at the period from 1890 that is from the early days of colonialism as Mberengwa was of no exception from colonial rule. The section once more looks at the changes brought by the advent of the mining industry in Mberengwa. Kessler is of the view that the history of mining in Zimbabwe dates back to the 15th century when the people practiced traditional small- scale mining mainly of iron and gold, this point is proven by the existence of iron tools and businesses in gold trade with the Portuguese during the Monomotapa Empire era.¹

Origins of emerald mining

The term emerald originates from the Greek word ‘esmeralde’ meaning ‘green gemstone.’²The mining of emeralds has been dated back more than 3000years, to the period of Earliest Egyptian Empire³. These were the first identified discoveries close to the Red sea. They were mined by Egyptian kings between 3000 and 1500B.c. and later mentioned to as ‘Cleopatra’s mines.’ They had previously been exhausted by the time they were revived in the early 19th century. Ancient emeralds were mined in Egypt and possibly in current time Afghanistan.⁴ Emerald ornaments, emerald jewelleryes and emerald rings have all been worn and sought after since earliest periods.

While emeralds were discovered in the 19th century and early 20th century in the above countries, it is important to note that the Second World War gave impetus to the discovery of emeralds particularly in India and Southern Rhodesia.⁵ Zhou is of the view that beryl at that time became a strategic mineral of great importance and the Geological Survey of

India therefore instituted a massive prospecting programme for beryl. He goes on to say that it was during this programme in an area rich in beryl, that emeralds were located.⁶The case in Southern Rhodesia was no exception to this rule.

In 1868, German geologist Carl Mauch uncovered some of the ancient gold workings to which Arab geographers had referred—in the interior of what is now Zimbabwe, near Hartley (now Chegutu). Subsequently, after Cecil Rhodes's British South Africa Company obtained a charter to promote commerce and colonization in Zimbabwe in 1889, prospecting for gold became a major industry.⁷The simplest surface indicator was an ancient working. The search for gems in Zimbabwe can be dated only from H. R. Moir's 1903 diamond find in the Somabula Forest. Some prospecting and minor mining for diamonds took place between 1905 and 1908, but these efforts faded as the results did not meet the expenses. Subsequently, several workers tried to make their fortunes in small mining operations, but interest waned and activity all but ceased. In 1923, Zimbabwe became a British colony under the name Southern Rhodesia. A sudden change in the fortunes of the nation's gemstone industry arrived in the mid-1950s, as a result of increased demand for beryllium and lithium minerals. On October 7, 1956, the first emerald was found in the Belingwe district (now Mberengwa) by Laurence Contat and Cornelius Oosthuizen, two former liberation servants who had relinquished their posts to take up full-time prospecting.⁸ This first stone was recovered in the Mweza Hills about 5 km west-southwest of the confluence of the Nuaetsi (now Mwenezi) and Mutsime Rivers. Emeralds were first discovered in Rhodesia in October 1956 in the southern part of the Archaen Craton on the south side of the Mweza Greenstone belt, Belingwe district, and 5.2

kilometres west-south-west of the confluence of the Nuaetsi and Sungai rivers. Recognizing the superior quality of these crystals, Contat and Oosthuizen cautiously checked out the potential value through various renowned gemmologists, including Dr Edward Gübelin, before revealing the discovery to government officials and seeking security protection.⁹ Late in 1957, Contat and Oosthuizen sent the first parcel of rough emeralds to the United States. By February 1958, suitable regulations to control the mining and marketing had been promulgated; shortly afterwards, production formally began. The earliest processing consisted of simply washing wheelbarrow loads of soil.

When these rich-green stones came on the world market, Zimbabwe quickly established itself as a source of fine emeralds. By late 1959, after washing a mere 70 m³ of soil, Contat and Oosthuizen made their fortune by selling out to a subsidiary of the large mining company RTZ (Rio Tinto Zinc) that was owned jointly by RTZ (53%) and the Zimbabwean public (47%).¹⁰ The name Sandawana, which refers to the mine (Pvt.) Ltd., of which the Zimbabwean government was a minor shareholder.

Origins of chrome mining

The Natural Resources Board outlined that chrome mining in Zimbabwe started as early as 1906 and it was not until the 1920s that chrome mining began in Mberengwa District.¹¹ Zhou is of the view that mining in this period was situated in the Bannock burg farms in the northern part of Mberengwa that is after Zvishavane, along the road to Shurugwi.¹² The Rhodesian Chrome Mines Limited carried out most of the mining activity. Chrome became one of the major contributors to the Metal Industry of Southern Rhodesia. However, it was not until the mid-1950s that chrome was discovered in the southern part of Mberengwa,

south of Mweza schist, in the Mberengwa Native Reserve. Local peasants discovered some deposits and they brought them to the prospectors who were operating in the area and immediately a narrow belt was pegged which consisted of quartz-magnetite and ultramafic rocks,¹³ on either side of the Mundi River where it cuts across the river about a mile south of the Msume Mission. According to Worst, ‘Rhonda mine was later situated on this belt’

Large mining companies also acquired the right to investigate the claims and prospect in the area between the Mundi and Nuaetsi Rivers. In June 1957, Anglo Val Rhodesia Exploration Company Private Limited acquired the right to prospect the area along, and west of the Mundi River to the point where Nuaetsi River leaves the Mweza schist.¹⁴ The period 1957 to 1960 witnessed several companies prospecting for chrome most prominent of which was the African Metals Corporation limited (AMCL) which investigated the area between the confluence of the Nuaetsi and the Sovelele Rivers.

The speculative period up to 1960 saw the area under the AMCL being mapped and prospected. Chrome float was found at a few isolated localities¹⁵ (main in what was termed native lands, and after 1962, Tribal Trust Land) in the area. The Anglo Val Rhodesia Exploration Company investigated several large occurrences of ultramafic rock by trenching, pitting, magneto metric and gravimetric plotting, but satisfactory results were only obtained in the area then known as Spinel claims (later Inyala).¹⁶ Mining which began in the southern portion of Mberengwa towards the end of 1956, had by the end of 1960 produced a total of 55, 104 tons of chrome from several mines. The low total production from the area during this period is attributed to the fact that chrome was at a low ebb and

recovered only at a very slow rate.¹⁶It was difficult for the producers to obtain contracts during this period and up to the early 1960s production was sporadic.

It is however apparent from the early 1960s that a production of not less than 20000 tons per annum, of hard lumpy and friable chrome ore averaging 48 % was maintained. Chrome production was comparatively cheap in relation to other chrome areas in the colony owing to the fact that mining operations were confined to shallow depths and the ore bodies were large when compared with the thin seams of the Great Dyke.¹⁷ The Chromite industry of Mberengwa was also favourably situated with the thin regard to Lorenzo Marques (Maputo) as a port of export, and a railway line linking it to the port was only 38 kilometres away. The chrome industry was 152 kilometres nearer to the port than any other chrome production area along this line.

The 1960s saw the consolidation of Chrome mining companies in Mberengwa District and the steady recovery of chrome market as well as increase in production. Many small scale chrome mines combined so as to improve mining activity. Individual producers also transferred their claims to established chrome mining companies such as Inyala.¹⁸The 1970s witnessed great expansion of chrome mines in Mberengwa basically because of the government's concerted effort in encouraging chrome mining as well as favourable chrome markets epitomized by the Byrd Amendment in the USA, which permitted trade in Chrome from Rhodesia. The expansion can also be understood within the context of the escalation of war in colonial Zimbabwe with the Rhodesian government hard pressed to produce large quantities of chrome for trade so as to sustain the war.

Origins of asbestos mining in Mberengwa

The history of asbestos mining in colonial Zimbabwe dates back to 1906 when it was discovered in Masvingo at Mashava. 1914 saw the discovery of asbestos in Mberengwa district near the township of Zvishavane (Shabanie), 100 kilometres south west of Masvingo, by a geologist, Maurice Kerr, who was prospecting for chrome for the Rhodesian Chrome Mines.¹⁹ It was not until 1915 that real interest in Shabanie deposits was aroused. At this time, in the war years 1915-1916 saw the emergence of other asbestos mines in Mberengwa district such as Vanguard, Slip, Regal, Peak and Bend,²⁰ located 40 to 50 kilometres south west of Shabanie and near the Belingwe administrative centre

The Vanguard mines, initially known as serpentine mines, changed ownership not less than six times before the South African Asbestos Company acquired them for a small sum early in 1920. Results of work proved the existence of valuable deposits of high-grade slip asbestos. By the end of 1920, 600 Africans were employed. So Vanguard mine was therefore a big asbestos mine in Mberengwa located in the Archaen schist belt, east of the Great Dyke in the Southern half of the country.²¹

Origins of Gold Mining in Mberengwa

The discovery of gold in colonial Zimbabwe can be dated back to the issue of the Second Rand by white settlers. Their hope of finding a Second Rand in Rhodesia can explain their endeavours to find gold. Mberengwa therefore was of no exception as it was also blessed with gold deposits. In 1894 Mberengwa was brought under European administration as part of Matabeleland, following the 1893-94 war of dispossession. Miners opened up the area

as they had to own vast tracks of land to monopolize their mining rights. This together with the climatological factor came to hamper the development of European farming in the area.

By the end of 1895 over 600 gold claims had been pegged out in Bulawayo (to which Mberengwa belonged) and Gwelo mining districts. During the rising of 1896-97 most of the mines closed down as mining was rendered impossible and everybody was too busy with the defence. By the time when the rising ended, a large number of miners and prospectors had resumed work in Mberengwa district.

The mining industry was further extended in the period 1898-99 after extensive prospecting had been carried out. By early 1898, 15480 gold claims had been registered in the district. By 1900 Mberengwa district had become a large mining centre and a considerable number of mines had been developed with satisfactory results.²³ Between 1901 and 1904 the gold mining industry suffered, as did the rest of the mining industry in Rhodesia, from a depression caused by an overvaluation of the country's mineral resources leading to overcapitalization and unprofitability. The depression was very acute in Bulawayo district and sub-districts, of which Mberengwa was one. The Bulawayo commissioner reported in 1904 that the year 'was one of unusual and...unprecedented stagnation in mining and other industries.'

Early in 1904 the speculative period that had ended with the depression gave way to a reconstruction period within the mining industry. The emphasis was now laid on increased production coupled with cost minimisation attained by the emergence of a new group of

small producers and the reduction of labour costs, especially African wages. By early 1906 the mining industry in Matabeleland in general and Mberengwa in particular was in a good condition. The Mining Commissioner's reports revealed, '...the towns have gone down while the country has risen in the financial scale-a very healthy sign indeed. The simple industry, and the one on which the country must hang for a good many years to come, has never before so prosperous.'²³ This was because of a number of newly developed mines which commenced crushing within the year, increased number of small workers and tributaries and more economic management and a consequent decrease in production costs.

The new trend in the mining industry became fundamental for its continued survival considering the location of the mineral in smaller, quartered quartz reefs, which meant that the industry could not profit from economies of scale. Phimister is of the view that it is against this background of the geological limitations and specific cost-structure with high rail tariffs and transport charges of the Rhodesian mining industry that the further development of small scale gold mines in Mberengwa (especially after 1908) must be comprehended.²⁴ The Annual Reports of the Mining Commissioner outlined that up to the First World War an average of eight to ten gold mines were worked in the area besides smaller properties, which were worked from time to time. The reports further outlined that asbestos discoveries during the First World War gave a stimulus to gold prospecting and created hope for the discovery of new finds of more importance than in the past. The years 1915-21 witnessed the expansion of the gold industry in Mberengwa

The gold industry in Mberengwa suffered from the 1921-23 and 1929-33 depressions leading to the consequent closure of some mines. However in both cases the gold mining industry was quick to recover and even to flourish. While the depression of 1929 and early 1930s caused a serious setback to gold mining, by 1938 gold industry had fully recovered.²⁵ So gold mines have been opened at various sites such as ‘C’ Mine, Dobie and Great Belingwe.

The Origins of Iron Ore mining

Iron ore deposits were located in Buchwa area. Buchwa is situated in the Mberengwa communal area. Oral traditions revealed that the news of the existence of iron ore in the Buchwa Mountain can be dated back to the pre-colonial era when Africans mined the ore to make iron tools such as spears, hoes, axes, knives and other iron tools which were needed during that time. Chinyere remarked, *‘Our ancestors mined the ore at Buchwa and they made iron implements such as hoes, knives, axes and arrows.’*²⁶ This therefore is an indication that the ancestors of the Buchwa community used the iron ore too. So the origins can be traced back to the precolonial era.

Goldberg is of the view that for the Europeans the existence of iron ore in the Buchwa Mountain in the Belingwe Native Reserve filtered to Europeans in the early years of colonial rule. He further goes on to say that, ‘However the absence of rail communication in the early days, ruled out any suggestions that the deposit might one day be developed to the extent of placing Southern Rhodesia in world class iron ore producer.’²⁷ The Chamber of Mines revealed out that in 1926 the Shabanie Railway Company, with a share capital of

50000 pounds laid a 63mile railway line from Somabula to Shabanie. Buchwa though was still considered to be too far away and bad roads ruled out the possibility of it being an economic proposition. The Buchwa mining reports outlined that before 1952 any mining activity at Buchwa was probably hand cobbling or any other manual methods. The opening of the Bannockburn –Lorenco Marques (Maputo) line in the 1950s made Buchwa to warrant further investigations concerning its status.²⁸

The year 1952 marked the beginning of large commercial interests and participation in the exploitation of the Buchwa iron ore deposits with the formation of the Buchwa syndicate which comprised of J.Vivers, H.M.B Vivers and W. Nelson Gregory. The Buchwa syndicate pegged 73 blocks in the area. The period 1952-1980 witnessed a number of different companies or commercial groups with the full or partial interest in the mining of the Buchwa iron ore deposits at one time or another.²⁹There was the Messina (Transvaal) Development Limited, which in 1955 purchased the original 73 claims in addition to its own claims acquired earlier in the area. It was around this time too that the Government-owned company, the Rhodesian Iron and Steel Company (RISCO). RISCO was formed in 1956 to acquire the steel works at Kwekwe from the Rhodesian government together with the Buchwa mining ore deposits from the Messina Development Company who became a shareholder in the company.

RISCO agreed to pay loyalty to the Messina Company for a part of 99. In 1960 another 31 blocks of claims were pegged by Smith Bros and Vivers, registered as the Norie claims, on the north side of the Buchwa range. These were in turn sold to Nicol and Company who

formed the Belingwe Mining Investment Company Private Limited (BIMCO private ltd) and started exporting to Japan. Another Company which was actively involved was the Buchwa Iron Mining Company (Pvt.) ltd. Around 1960 other groups and individuals were still pegging the areas around Buchwa, and at the request of RISCO, the area was reserved against further pegging.

Further exploratory work on the ore deposits in the Whikwe area and also on the Whikwe primary deposits were undertaken in the latter part of 1965 by RISCO with a view to raise a processing plant on the slope of Whikwe and a railway to RISCO.³¹ Trial shipments of ore were made in 1967 and the ore was purchased from the Belingwe Investment Company. The deposits from Whikwe North was, by agreement, treated through the crushing and screening plant owned by BIMCO private limited. Towards the later part of 1967, a further agreement between BIMCO private limited and RISCO was reached where RISCO purchased the entire interest of Buchwa Iron Mining Company. On Jan, 1, 1968, raling to RISCO commenced at the rate of +- 30000 tons coarse ore per month. Christie Brothers private who did most of the transportation for Belingwe Mining Company were given the contract to hand the ore to the processing plants.

By 1970, it was obvious that the ore deposits alone could not cope with the capability required by RISCO and Whikwe primary deposits was opened up to supplement the ore deposits. In 1972 when RISCO decided to erect another blast furnace in an expansion programme, an exploration programme was laid out at Buchwa with the main emphasis on the west primary ore body and by the end of 1974 production of Buchwa west primary was

underway. Initially RISCO company policy was that contractors should carry out mining and accordingly tenders were called for.³²The contract for the mining of Buchwa West was awarded to the African Strip Mining Company which was formed specifically for the Buchwa west project and called for specified quantities of ore to be delivered to a RISCO operated primary crusher. Technical control remained the responsibility of RISCO.

The first three years of operations were for a variety of reasons, not entirely satisfactory and production targets were not met. It was therefore decided that the contractors should withdraw and that RISCO would carry out the mining itself and that was the situation up 1980. From the middle of 1979, Anglo American Corporation became involved in the technical aspect of mining at Buchwa and in April 1981 won a management contract that was to last for a year. In 1981 RISCO became Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (ZISCO).³³In 1982, responsibility for all aspects of mining in Buchwa and also for the Redcliff mines at Kwekwe reverted to Buchwa mine management.

Changes brought by the establishment of the mining industry in Mberengwa 1900-1979

Africans were evicted from their land and this undermined African agriculture and contributed to soil erosion and land degradation in the period 1915-1979. Before the coming of white settlers, that is in the pre-colonial times, Africans could move to other areas of Mberengwa in times of drought or exhaustion of land. This opportunity was hindered when the Karanga people of Mberengwa were pushed into reserves and subjected to a rigid colonial administration. Shoko, who is a head man, outlined, 'We belonged to

the Great Mberengwa area where that white man we call Ngoko is living and we were pushed to this infertile reserve,³⁴ (Mapiravana area in what was during the colonial era Belingwe number 3 Reserve/ Tribal Trust Land), ‘we were put in a straight line like maize and no longer had the opportunity to our traditional methods of farming.’ This was a very big change to African agriculture brought by the mining industry. He expressed that low agricultural production have been witnessed since they were pushed from the Great Mberengwa areas which are now paddocks of the white men.

As the people of Mberengwa continued to capitalize on markets offered by the mines with the Native Commissioner (NC) stating in 1929 that, ‘Owing to the mines there is an exceeding good market open to the natives who had not failed to take advantage of it.’³⁵This kind of trade was sensitive to fluctuations in the mining industry. Accordingly, at the onset of the Great Depression in 1930 the Belingwe NC reported that there were no longer the same demand for grain as during the 1920s. After the introduction of the Maize Control Act of 1930 there was also a diversification of agricultural products traded by the Africans at the mines.³⁶The increase in the rearing of pigs was striking after 1934. According to Zachrison from less than 1000 in 1934 the number increased to about 2500 by 1938. In 1946 the Belingwe NC reported a big demand for pigs amongst alien African workers at the mines. The mining authorities were not against this kind of trade as evidenced by the sale of milk by the Karanga people living in the reserves near the mines.

There was also a disaster in cattle trade. Cattle were sold at low prices after the 1921-22 depression. In 1924 only 500 cattle were sold or traded in Mberengwa area, a number which

rose to 900 in 1925 and 950 in 1926. However gradually the development of the mining industry increased the demand of cattle so that in 1927, 1700 heads were sold, in 1929, 5004 and in 1930, 5043.³⁷ This is according to NC Reports. At the beginning of the Great Depression in 1931 this number had fallen to 3882 but with the decreased activity in gold mining the demand rose and in 1932 and 1933 5619 and 5561 cattle respectively were sold or traded. In 1932-1933 prices were very low as the NC reported that the prices were 7 to 6 pounds for a cow.³⁷ The officials of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) and the government saw the declining markets in African maize and cattle as a positive development as it could slow down the growth of cattle in the reserves and improve the local labour. By this it is crystal clear that mining crippled African trade in an attempt to attain cheap African labour.

More so, the eviction of Africans from their traditional land into the rural areas undermined African agriculture. While land in the reserves lacked quality, in areas such as Lundi it lacked both adequacy and quality. This apart from the fact the former was well wooded and not as hilly as the latter, accounted for serious soil erosion as early as the 1920s in the latter in contrast to the former where this was experienced in the 1940s. The Chief NC reported that it was also important to note that the average yield per acre declined between 1924 and 1938 to an average of 2.3 bags per acre linked with 2.9 bags between 1901 and 1923.³⁸ These figures illuminate the change after the mid-1920s in the ability of African agriculture to supply the growing population with foodstuffs and cash by sale of agricultural products.

Local colonial officials in Mberengwa had as early as 1910 encouraged the use of ploughs with the hope of increasing the labour supply to the mines, by relieving the Africans of a considerable amount of work in their fields as Zachrison points out. However, the increase in ploughs had no visible effect on labour supply, but rather contributed to soil erosion and the yields declined. The Belingwe NCs complained in the 1940s that good cultivation was sacrificed for the sake of a larger area cultivated and gave examples to prove that ‘lands ploughed down slopes which were now wastes of sand were not hard to find.’³⁸ As such gold mining also contributed to the environmental damage of the rural areas with the consequent increase of soil erosion and low yields.

Gold mining and the consequent evictions of Africans in Mberengwa changed the division of labour within the African agricultural system, in that women, old people and children had to labour in the fields to an increasing extent, due to absence of males. This phenomenon was prevalent in Southern Africa region. Mberengwa was of no exception to such an issue. Once evicted from their traditional lands, many men were to seek employment in the 1940s and 1950s particularly in South Africa so as to supplement their undermined agriculture. The absence of men, who historically had played a critical role in clearing the fields and harvesting the crops, led to a decline in agricultural production in many areas of Mberengwa. Matanga revealed that there were drastic effects caused by mining. He stated, ‘In the 1940s the yield became less with the plough and oxen than with the women and the hoe.’³⁹ By this it is a very big indication that mechanization introduced to the African way of farming was detrimental.

By the 1940s, the mining industry and the consequent evictions of Africans into reserves had not only caused the decline of agricultural production but also pressure on the land by the increasing number of cattle and small stock. African cattle rapidly increased from 1145 in 1898 to 49500 in 1923, reaching a top of 152000 in 1932 and standing 873000 in 1946.⁴⁰ Increased numbers of cattle coupled with the use of ploughs led to increased soil erosion in the reserves. A pattern of thickly scattered areas scratched with cheap ploughs and untilled areas of worn-out land, which gave poor grazing to the cattle, began to develop in the reserves. The soil erosion can also be linked to the evictions and inadequate land allocations. There was also deforestation emanating from the evictions, establishment of mines.

In Mberengwa the speculative period 1956-62 saw over-ambitious small scale mining companies and individuals prospecting for emerald that is for the case of Sandawana emerald mining. Labour intensive methods involving soil and stream sampling were the most common prospecting methods applied. According to Anderson, 'While several deposits of emerald were located in the Mweza Schist Belt, the total discovered production from these... amounted to a few grains.'⁴¹ On the contrary the environmental damage was extensive. Although the physical damage of small scale mining was limited in comparison to large scale mining at Sandawana, it was to antagonize the local peasants. An 83 year old head man, Jenjere remarked,

I found six strangers under a man without knees digging in my field. I asked them whom they were and what they had lost that they were looking for in my field. They said they came from Sandawana and had permission from mudzviti (NC) to dig, as they liked. We

*had heard that hills were being dug at Sandawana but I had never thought that in my life that of my family would one day become less important than that of stones.*⁴²

Manduku revealed, ‘They dug everywhere, our fields, our grazing land and even our ancestors’ graves were not spared. They were happy to see us starve than give up their diggings.’⁴³The whole Mweza Green was lacerated with prospecting pits and trenches during the speculative period. Abandoned prospecting pits and trenches were a serious danger to animals and people. A local peasant farmer, Tangawamira stressed;

*The white man said we were going to benefit from the pits, but all we saw was damage to our grazing land. Many of the pits were very deep. Our children were put in danger and our cattle, goats and sheep were injured and some even died after falling into these pits. I lost seven cattle between 1974 and 1976. All because of a pig pit near Janasi hill, left by those digging for stones in the early years. These people have killed me.*⁴⁴

Therefore, the safety of both human beings and animals was sacrificed by mining.

Conclusion

All in all the establishment of the mining industry brought more harm than good to the people of Mberengwa as the miners did not consider the negative effects it brought to the Karanga people of Mberengwa. Mining therefore was just a disaster as it brought more suffering and disorder. The environment was a sorry state of affairs from this mining industry from 1900 up to 1979 before Zimbabwe attained self-rule.

End notes

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Chapter two: The collapse of multinational companies and the rise of small scale mining

Introduction

This chapter dwells on the Multinational companies or big mining companies that operated in Mberengwa from the period of colonial rule up to the independence era. It largely focuses on the reasons for their collapse and the consequences to the Mberengwa community. Most multinational companies subsequently collapsed due to innumerable reasons such as exhaustion of mining reserves, economic hardships, political factors and corruption. The closure of these big mining companies or multinational companies led to the rise of artisan or small scale mining from around 2000 up to the present. This was for the reason that people were desperate hence they resorted to artisan gold, tantalite and chrome mining in Mberengwa. There were two types of artisan mining that is formal and informal artisan gold mining. These were fostered by policies such as the Fast Trek Land Reform Programme which resettled people on areas such as Neta, Vanguard area and York that were rich in gold deposits that is for the artisan gold mining. As for tantalite people started mining it around 2000 after Sandawana mine retrenched workers.

Political factors

Mberengwa mines were affected by the armed struggle that took place from 1966-1979. Oral history tells that ZIPRA and ZANLA forces attacked the mining companies and thus disturbing the mining activities.¹ Most of the guerrillas sought refuge from these mines which disturbed the activities of the mining companies. Hove revealed that guerrillas would stay in the compound at Inyala and mine owners were compelled not to disclose these

movements and they also caused disturbance to the mine owners.² Inyala was closed in 1978 as guerrillas from different parts of the country resided at Inyala. Guerrillas ended up forcing the owners of the mine to close and thus the liberation struggle was a disaster.

Vanguard was of no exception according to Hove. He revealed that the mines were the only safe places for the guerrillas to stay as the war was intensifying.³ Chauke revealed that by 1978 Vanguard housed about 200 guerrillas at the mine compound. Vanguard stopped operating in 1979 but resumed in 1980. Chauke stated that the guerrillas went to an extent of killing mine managers at Vanguard and he revealed that in December 1978 a manager was killed after he revealed that guerrillas were forcing the administration to offer them accommodation.⁴ Sandawana also faced the same scandal as guerrillas also sought refuge in the mine compound. All these moves disturbed the activities of the mining companies so much so that their closure can be linked to the ravages of the liberation war.

Marketing was a major problem faced by the mining company. The African review outlined that asbestos was heavily oriented towards exports to South Africa which provided its own problems for the newly formed republic of Zimbabwe.⁵ So asbestos at Vanguard was challenged with the issue of marketing as the mineral was exported. Chauke is of the view that outside countries avoided trade with Zimbabwe because of the war. Rhodesia was also sanctioned and thus marketing of its minerals was limited.⁶

Sandawana mine was affected by the armed struggle when marketing was disturbed by theft. Theft was rampant so much so that the emeralds lost their value. Even before and

after the war, theft was a widespread. Local communities and workers stole emeralds from the mine so as to survive in the economic hardships of Zimbabwe. Zhou is of the view that many peasants made sufficient incomes in the war from the emerald through stealing as to be able to survive.⁷ He also says that others made some fortunes as to move into transport and retail business. Indeed some enterprising peasants changed and assumed a modern outlook as a result of the stolen nuggets. Anderson is of the view that the factor which limited the amount of emerald reaching the world market was the serious effect that theft attributed.⁹The problem was considered as a persistent problem to the corporation and also a solemn income cost to the country. In Europe traders and merchants were venturing on a different emerald mine as a result of the illicit markets which circulated in Europe. The emeralds lost their importance owing to theft and thus the company began to see reverses on its profits.

The mines were closed because of political uncertainty. Mamenda stated that the owners of the mines closed as they were not certain about the political situation that was going to come especially after the liberation war that devastated a lot of things in the mines.¹⁰ The political atmosphere of a newly-formed republic was suspected and not trusted especially for Vanguard which was located in a remote area of Mberengwa. Clarke is of the view that the re-emergence of Zimbabwe in the world economic scene after some Fifteen years of wilderness had attracted much comment from the world press, but little mention was made with regard to the country's non-metallic mineral industry.¹¹This explains why Inyala chrome closed in 1978and Vanguard in 1982. The owners were not certain of the political atmosphere that was to come.

Economic Factors

The mines also collapsed due to depletion and exhaustion of mineral reserves. The reserves of the minerals had become too depleted and only emeralds of less value were left. The mines have been exploited to an extent that nothing precious was left. Most of these mines were established during the early days of colonial rule and it can be noted that by independence they have been exploited and depleted. Gold mines such as C Mine which was established in the 1890s thus according to Zhou and by the 1980s it was had been exhausted.¹³ Buchwa Iron Ore was mined from the 1950s and by the late 1990s it has been exhausted to an extent that ore deposits were few and were now underground. Radio VOP detected that the mine collapsed due to excessive exploitation of the mineral reserves. Masimirembwa outlined that ZMDC abandoned the mine because the emeralds found at Sandawana were no longer of commercial value.¹⁴ This is just an indication that the minerals were looted as before the mine was pregnant with minerals of precious value.

Lack of funds also led to the fall of different mines in Mberengwa. Mines such as Inyala chrome lacked funding thus according to Hove. He outlined that the mine is located in an area full of water.¹⁵ He stated that the mining shaft quickly get engulfed with water if it is abandoned for even two days.⁴ He outlined that even by the time they went on strike, the mine owners would be troubled on how to pump out water from the mining shaft. Having been abandoned in 1978, its purchase by ZIMALLOYS was costly. It needed a lot of financial muscles to do the renovations. A point to note is that the mine has been abandoned during the time of the armed struggle, so local people together with the freedom fighters demolished the mining site taking with them equipment such as mining tools, fences and

even destroying buildings. The Bureau of mines outlined that ZIMALLOYS required an estimated \$6 million to \$8 million in excavating repairs at Inyala. This was a major constraint that the mining operations were futile.¹⁶It meant that workers would be paid while the renovations were expensive. Even to this day the mines are not in a position to be revived just because of lack of funding. Vanguard mine is still rich in asbestos, Sandawana has iron ore and tantalite and even Buchwa iron ore is still there but funds are nowhere to be seen.

Competition from other mining companies also affected the companies that operated in Mberengwa. The discovery of chrome in Mapanzure and Shurugwi area was also a major blow to the Mberengwa mine (Inyala). These mines were along the tarred road unlike Inyala which was in the rudimentary roads of Mberengwa. More so, the Mapanzure and Shurugwi mines were near Kwekwe, where ZIMALLOYS was, so it was cheaper to manage these mining sites than Inyala which was located in a remote area of Mberengwa.¹⁷For Vanguard, Turner and Newall favoured Shabanie mine which had abundant reserves of asbestos ore. Rusike stated that Turner and Newall preferred Shabanie which had plentiful ores so Vanguard did not compete with Shabanie thus it was abandoned. For Sandawana, Chauke is of the view that the discovery of diamonds in 2006 in the Chiyadzwa area meant that emeralds suffered stiff competition.¹⁸ Diamonds were preferred more than emeralds and thus in 2006 British Islands sold the company to ZMDC.

The rise of artisan and small scale mining 2000 – 2014

Introduction

Following the closure of the big mining companies, unemployment was rampant in Mberengwa as many people who used to work for the mining companies lost their jobs. Food was nowhere to be seen on the tables. Desperation was the only chorus. The land resettlement was introduced in 2000 and many were resettled in areas such as York, Vanguard, Neta and Great Mberengwa. These areas were richly blessed with gold deposits and thus when the advent of gold panning was realized. Due to economic hardship people had no option but to extract the minerals illegally and some did it formally.

For tantalite mining in the Mweza mountain range, people began to mine this type of mineral in 2000 after Sandawana began to retrench workers. Tantalite was discovered in the Mweza mountain range. Manoga outlined that people from Mahlebadza, Mudavanhu, Mutevaidzi, Mposi and Chingoma used to go to Mweza to mine this tantalite in order to supplement family needs. Same applies to the Inyala area, artisanal chrome mining was done following the closure of the big mine. Chrome mining was not done with many people as marketing was low and also chrome needs mechanization. Peasants could not afford that and only those with equipment would hire locals to do the mining on a small scale. However, people of Chingoma would also go to areas such as Vanguard, Neta, York and Great Mberengwa to mine gold. They would also go the Mweza mountain range to mine tantalite. The Buchwa people were also of no exception as Buchwa closed. They embarked on the artisan type of mining as employment was no more.

Artisanal mining is defined by Amankwah and Sackey as mining by persons, clusters, relatives or associations with slight or no automation.¹⁹ Prasetyo et al defines small-scale mining as any solitary component mining process having a yearly production of unrefined material of 50,000 tons or less as measured at the entrance of the mine whereas artisanal mining is defined as a casual and free organisation of small-scale mining which is typically done by societies.²⁰

For many centuries, the small-scale mining of valued natural assets has made an outstanding impression on the socio-economic lives of the people and cultures involved directly or indirectly in the sector²¹ thus according to Amankwah and Sackey. They postulate that an evaluated 13 – 20 million men, ladies, and youngsters from over 50 developing countries were directly involved in the artisanal mining sector.²² The local people of Mberengwa were directly involved in artisanal mining in Mberengwa which comprised of women, men and children. These people were mostly involved in the extraction of gold, tantalite and chrome. Prasetyo et al also postulates that artisanal mining customarily services very modest skills, and there is no preparation for reintegration if the operation stops.²³ It is mostly done as a results of both pull and push factors. Push factors involve poverty, drought and unemployment not leaving low production in the district. Pull factors include factors such as desires by locals to start businesses, drive cars and to develop their homes. Zimbabwe participated in small scale mining of gold in the 1990s, mainly because of a worsening agrarian subdivision and unemployment subsequent to the enactment of economic structural adjustment programs²⁴ thus according to Dreschler. The mining arrangements applied in the area were low-tech, labour-intensive and feature

manual processes using homemade tools such as hoes, shovels, picks, chisels and panning dishes. The mining in Mberengwa comprises of both legal and illegal operators, mechanical and semi-mechanized miners of varying sizes in terms of output, employment and capitalization.

Many of the local people of Mberengwa on the other hand could not obtain administrative, financial and technical assistance from the government so that they could sell their minerals through the Reserve Bank or Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe.²⁵ As a result of this the 'Chikorokoza' type of mining developed. They were forced to sell their minerals on the black market where they were underpaid and even swindled thus for the informal scale miners. There were two types of small scale mining that developed in Mberengwa that is formal and informal artisan mining. The Global report on artisanal mining reported that many people remain informal artisan miners due to the following factors:

Absence of understanding of the allowable demands;

Indigenous customary and social actions;

Petite incentives of the government to operate legally;

Great levy problem;

Challenging administrative measures to gain and continue being official operators;

The potentials to evade the imposition of the law by corruption;

Indeed this is applicable to the Mberengwa situation as the local peasants could not afford the high taxes following the fact that employment was no more and also the country was encircled with economic hardships. Formal small scale mining was therefore done with those who had financial muscles especially outsiders. People came from as far as Harare,

Kwekwe, Mutare, Chegutu, Kadoma, and Gokwe to mine gold, chrome and tantalite of Mberengwa on a small scale basis. Some of these people resorted to formal and informal type of mining. They were involved in the mining of gold in the Great Mberengwa, Vanguard, Yorks and Pick mine areas, chrome at Inyala and Dolo areas and tantalite in the Mweza schist area.

Conclusion

All in all, the closure of the multinational companies or big mining companies in Mberengwa had adverse effects to the local people of Mberengwa. It left many people with no option. There were lines of survival. Following the land resettlement programme, artisan gold mining developed in the district in order to sustain the peasants. It was done formally and informally as a result of some of the discussed reasons above.

End notes

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Chapter three: The Impact of the mining industry in Mberengwa 1980-2014

Introduction

This chapter dwells on the impact of the mining industry in Mberengwa. It addresses the extent to which Mberengwa benefited from the mining industry since independence. In the colonial period that is from the 1890s to 1979 mining companies did not consider local people and there were no any government measure to ensure that the local communities were benefiting. Local people of Mberengwa suffered in the midst of plenty when taking into consideration the mineral wealth generated from emeralds, gold, iron ore and chrome. The mines remained islands of development in a sea of rural backwardness. Mining companies did not plough back more part of the profit from the minerals into the development of the local community. The benefits by the local communities were not much than what is expected. Most of the minerals were exported and could not benefit the local communities. Mining operations by these companies had solemn effects such as environmental degradation, crime rates, and spread of diseases, poverty, landscape destruction, caused conflicts, school drop-outs, deaths, siltation of dams, deforestation, erosion and destruction of natural habits.

The mining industry in Mberengwa saw a number of road networks being constructed in Mberengwa. Sandawana constructed a road network which linked Mahlebadza and Mudavanhu communal areas. The Mweza mountain range was opened and a good road was constructed which is now linking the resettlement areas and the communal areas.¹ Such was also done by Inyala Mining Company which managed to construct roads such as the road from Inyala to Rhonda, Inyala to Makinya and Ngungumbane to Mataga. Bridges

were also constructed at Inyala. Vanguard mine was also of no exception in the 1980s as the tarred road which it constructed is now linking the Mberengwa main road and the Vanguard rural areas. Buchwa mining company managed to construct the tarred road from Ziruvi to Zvishavane. Such can be viewed as development from the mining sector though being to a lesser extent.

Employment was created through the establishment of big mining companies such as Buchwa, Sandawana, Vanguard and Inyala from 1980 till their closure. In the 1990s these mining companies were functioning and there were employment opportunities for the local communities. According to Matutu local people at Inyala were formally and informally employed.² Sandawana and Buchwa were of no exception as local people were working at Sandawana and some were also working at Buchwa. Mr. Chinyere expressed the issue of employment in the area generated from Buchwa mine as most of the able-bodied people could not migrate to towns but just sought employment nearby at the Buchwa mining company.³ Jobs were available without any gender discrimination such that most of the vulnerable people in the society were in a position to get employment thus the widows were in a position to look after families.⁴ Children were attending schools as a result of their parents who were working at these mines.

The mining industry in Mberengwa benefited the communities through building schools. Vanguard Primary School was built by the Vanguard Mining Company in order to help the local communities in the areas such as Great Mberengwa and now the peasants in the resettles areas of Vanguard were still sending their children to this primary school. Buchwa

built Marian Ivora Primary School and this school is one of the best schools in Mberengwa. The people of Mwembe and Buchwa were sending their children to this school and thus easing the long distances which people used to walk before the intervention of Buchwa mining company through the construction of such a school. Sandawana Mining Company also built Sandawana Primary School.⁵The local communities who lived in the Mweza area faced problems of walking long distances both to primary and secondary school. Sandawana mine solved such a big problem by building this school. Sandawana Primary has a record of attaining superb pass rates at national level. It is famous of producing admirable results and even now people in in the resettled areas of Sovelele and Vokwe were still sending their children to this school. So it must be noted that the mining industry did something even though it closed. The schools were no longer perfectly maintained as they used to do by the time when the mines were operating.

Health facilities were brought by the mining companies. Sandawana mine managed to build a clinic at Sandawana which catered for the health of workers in particular and the local community in general. Ngwenya stated, 'The remote area of Mweza benefited a lot from Sandawana through the construction of a health centre. These people used to walk to Jeka which is far away from Mweza.'⁶Infant health was catered as diseases such as the six killer diseases could be cured at the nearest health centre at Sandawana unlike travelling to Jeka. The establishment of Sandawana clinic benefited locals also as they can get information on good health. Nowadays the clinic provides ARVs for those with HIV and AIDS. People from Seven, Vokwe, Sovelele, Chamakudo and Dombodema go to this.⁶

The above benefits came from the big mining companies or multinational companies.

Artisan or small scale mining also impacted in a positive way. The small scale mining benefited the locals through poverty alleviation. Mberengwa is a poverty-stricken area and prone to droughts. This cause a lot of problems to the local communities. Food is scarce but with the advent of Chikorokoza type of mining people of Mberengwa were in a position to manage this natural disaster.⁷ During the dry season most people would go to the mining areas either at Mweza for tantalite, Inyala for chrome or Mberengwa areas for gold. Most of the local communities benefited as reflected by Janasi who stated,

*We benefited though the process is laborious. With my family we used to go to **Danida** for gold and we managed to buy a lot of cattle. We even managed to buy food in 2005 when things were not right. It is indeed a blessing but the way it is done is painful and risky.*⁸

This type of mining was referred to as ‘Danida’ by most of Mberengwa people. Family were raised because of this ‘**Danida**’ thing.

Keta a local businessman at Mavorovondo, who managed to benefit **Danida** from this type of farming bragged,

*I think you know my history and some of the things you have to explain on your own. I had nothing as you know but now I am somebody in this community. Look at my KB 200, lorry, shop, beer hall, grinding mill and even my home. Thanks to chikorokoza!*⁹

Most of the local people rose to retail businesses from this type of mining. Better homes were built and some were even electrified. Those who were daring managed to gain a lot. Children were sent to school and at the same time raising living standards of local people.

Many families benefited around 2006 as they embarked on the Danida issue and they managed to buy cattle and farming equipment. A lot of families were raised. Some children were sent to boarding schools such as Chegato, Masase, Munene and Msume. Thus it is undoubtedly that people benefited from Chikorokoza though to lesser extent.

The closure of the big mining companies in the district was disastrous. There was loss of employment which led to economic and social problems. The mines were helpful to the locals. As a result of employment creation, many children could go to school and food was there on the table. Employees' families could also access services such as health and homes could be developed but the closure of these big mining companies disturbed all these. Many children stopped going to school as their parents lost their jobs. Life became so hard for most of the local people. Poverty was the only climate in the area due to the closure of these big mines. Buchwa closed in the late 1990s and about 300 local people were left with no lines of survival. Same applies to Vanguard mine which had closed in 1982. Most locals who were working there were left desperate. Sandawana started witnessing hardships in 2006 when the company was sold to ZMDC. Most people faced retrenchment and it officially closed in 2012 thereby leaving the locals facing economic and social hardships. School drop outs were witnessed.⁹This explains why people resorted to small scale mining as they were desperate.

Mining companies from their establishment that is during the colonial period coincidentally did a little to the Mberengwa communities. Big mining companies did not do much but only constructed few things. The colonial governments were not concerned more about the

affairs of the African people but were just concerned about making big profits. Small scale mining partially benefited the community however the way it is done, problems were realised that would curb development. Instead of being a blessing mining proved to be a curse. More harm than good was the only result from mining. The big mining companies that operated in Mberengwa failed to benefit the local communities. They only siphoned resources not considering the local communities. In fact they siphoned resources at the expense of the Karanga people of Mberengwa. Companies such as Sandawana only managed to build a clinic not a hospital. This was for their benefit as indicated by a former worker, Matanga, who said,

*The mine did not bring anything to us. The road was only for their workers or their business partners who visited them by road and also the clinic was for the workers by the time when the mine was operating.*¹⁰

Mberengwa roads are rudimentary but the district's minerals are looted on daily basis. The road from the big mining companies such as Sandawana and Inyala are all gravel

Compulsory replacements have disturbed the communal material of societies. Relatives have remained degenerated and it takes time for relocated people to cope with the new locations. A lot of people were displaced for example the Mupanesure families were displaced from Sandawana to Gaha areas. Mr. Mupanesure stated,

*There was no option and still there is no option but we feel being destroyed as we were forced to leave our Mweza area where we received reliable rainfalls and the land was fertile unlike this sandy soil which is exposing us to hunger. It's hard to cope with this area.*¹²

He showed that he still prefers his ancestral land for some of the reasons he didn't tell. People were robbed of their ancestral lands to live in overcrowded and infertile soils because of mining.

Most of the methods applied in the extraction of minerals such as chrome at Inyala were deep mining and surface methods such drift, open cast and strip mining had adverse effects to the environment and the landscape. Open pits were left by the miners and were still being left especially at Inyala in Chief Chingoma's area. The Inyala mine landscape covered a large area stretching for more than a kilometre from the southern end to the northern end. Most of this area is now given over to a dumpsites of mine waste and overburden. Rhonda also is of no exemption as the environment was destructed together with the landscape. Zhou is of the view that, 'The large scale and fairly highly mechanized operations with long-hole bench blasting front-end loaders and crowd shovels with dumper or lorry haulage was very destructive to the landscape.'¹³ Indeed, deep trenches, holes and large pits were now permanent features of the landscape thereby damaging its aesthetic value. This is also undoubtedly that the mining of big companies was disastrous.

Also, newcomers carried with them living charms and customs which were unfamiliar to confined societies practice and values. In the Sandawana foreigners were employed at the mine some of which brought different norms which affected the local communities. Madhume stated,

Some of the foreign employed young brought disaster in the compound. They brought illicit drugs and brews which they wanted us to abuse in the mines. Most mine workers joined

*them and their behaviours changed. The growing of marijuana was done outside the compound and these were brought by the foreigners.*¹⁴

By this it is an indication that the mining operations destroyed the local social norms as it employed foreign people. Most local people ended up growing marijuana in Mberengwa which was unheard of before.

Dams in the area were silting as a result of the haphazard action of alluvial tantalite and gold mining in the area. Many rivers and dams were being polluted and silted by the actions of the excavating firms it be small scale firms or big mining firms. During the rainy season gold panning is done in rivers and mostly that is under the informal sector-‘chikorokoza.’ Rivers such as Ngezi, Mchingwe, Dove, Mundi and Mwanezi (Nuaetsi) were panned during the rainy season and chemicals such mercury. Most of the local people and also foreign people from areas such as Harwere, Mutwere and Gokwe come visit Mberengwa in the month of December to indulge in the gold panning in the above mentioned rivers. Mundi River is one of a very good example which is being panned in the Vanguard areas where it begins. Mr. Mthethwa stated that Mundi Mataga dam silted to an extent that for the next 10 years the dam will be full of sand.¹⁵ The District Administrator was also complaining about the matter saying that people were only concerned about making money not considering the environmental effects. By this it means that the irrigation scheme in the area will close and even the tap water in the local area will stop running. This proved that this mining industry is a solemn calamity to the communities and will disturb development instead of bringing development.

EEB states that, 'A chief ecological problem linking to mining is the unrestrained release of polluted water usually identified as effluent dumping.'¹⁶ The situation remains extensively accredited that this occurrence is answerable for exorbitant ecological and social and economic impressions. Waste dumping from gold diggings is defined by raised elevations of fatal hefty metals, mainly mercury. Adler and Rustler state, 'their accessibility in waste water is not only related with ground and surface water pollution, but is also accountable for the deprivation of aquatic surroundings, animal types, as well as death and contamination of human beings gold mining is interrelated to farming.'¹⁷ Mberengwa is no exception to this especially during the rainy season when gold panning is done in the rich rivers such as Muchingwe, Mundi and Dove. Water from Mundi is used for various purposes such as irrigation, fishing and drinking. Most of the drinking water in the above rivers was condemned and people were not allowed to drink it because of mercury pollution thus according to a headman at York area. EMA reports stated of fish deaths¹⁸ in Muchingwe River mostly because of mercury pollution and other chemicals used by artisan miners in the river.

Small scale mining caused a lot of conflicts in Mberengwa. Mining and agriculture were two contrasting activities in the district. Most of the miners don't consider that the local people use the land for agriculture but they just embark on mining without consulting them. On the 17th of September 2014 at Mberengwa DA's office there was a case between a local farmer, Mr Magwa and a miner, Mr. Gwengwena, over land. The farmer was complaining that Mr Gwengwena has mined without the farmer's permission hence he demanded compensation. The District Administrator, Mr Mtethwa said that each and every week

many cases over mining and farming where the local farmers and miners fight over land were carried at the district court.¹⁹ All these factors disturb development in the community as enmity among people has emerged as a result of mining.

More so, deaths of people were high in the district. In the year 2006 the Chikorokoza mining killed two brothers from Ndirayo village.²⁰ The two brothers, Peacemaker and Jerald Nkomo died in a mining pit. The reports from a colleague, Mr. Chimedza, reflected that the brothers died after a big stone fell into the mining pit.²¹ By this it is an indication that the informal mining sector isn't safe. At Ngwenya mine that is a registered small scale miner in Great Mberengwa, mining pits were not safe as they measured depths about 15 metres down. Chimedza stated that in 2013 there was a fracas at Trojan mine when 4 brothers died in the mining pit in the Great Mberengwa area. The operations involved the use of ropes and buckets which they referred to as the 'ndirayi' system. These operations were risky and mostly miners were exposed to dust and the pits sometimes flop thereby killing miners underground. This has created hardships as heads of families died leaving young children and wives.

School drop outs have been reported due to the advent of small scale mining. Since 2000 that is by the time when small scale mining started, school drop outs have been increasing. Dzangare revealed that most of the children at the age of 16 mostly drop out from school in search of the precious nuggets in the areas of Zvamagwiro, Bvute, Chingezi, Yorks, Vanguard, Great Mberengwa and any other areas nearby the mining areas.²² This was mainly because these young children were being lured by the outputs of those who have

succeeded in the mining operations. Most people bought cars, built shops and developed their homes and thus what the young boys hoped to do thereby dropping out from school.

The other serious problem related to the small scale operations as indicated by the DA was the spread HIV and AIDS.²³ Prostitution was rampant at Mberengwa, known as Mberengwa turn off. Miners have resided at Mberengwa and mostly they just spent nights in the night clubs which caused prostitution. The DA revealed that the police have caught two trucks ferrying prostitutes from Zvishavane to Mberengwa turn off.²⁴ As a result of this many families were affected as the pandemic spread quickly.

Maidza revealed the issue of cattle that fell into the mining pits left by artisan miners. He yearned,

*My two cattle fell into the pit at Gemgate and I found them already bad and it was a mammoth task to remove them from these pits, it's so terrible. These miners were just digging and destroying our area and we don't get anything.*²⁵

This speaks of the dangers of the mining industry which robbed the Karanga people of Mberengwa as a result of the so called small scale mining. Some people were left with no cattle and it reduced their production level when it comes to agriculture as their cattle they used fell into these pits. Cattle died in Mchingwe areas after waste disposal that flowed in the river from Gemgate mine as revealed by Mr Maidza. Acid and mercury from the mine was harmful as it polluted the river which local cattle relied upon. In other words it must be noted that the mining industry robbed the local people of Mberengwa

Conclusion

In a nutshell, mining just did a little to the people of Mberengwa. In fact the construction of roads such as roads that constructed by Inyala, Buchwa, Sandawana and Vanguard were only meant to help the miners not the local communities. The multinational companies were only concerned with profits but were not aware of the need for development in the mining areas. Health facilities such as that constructed by Sandawana was for the workers as the miners did for quick medication of the miners. Local people took advantage of this and thus the clinic was later possessed by the government. Other local people benefited through stealing especially in the Sandawana area where the emeralds were stolen and a notable number of people established businesses and others developed their homes. Mining companies just did little than what locals expected. The multinational companies also closed leaving people desperate and not knowing where to start. Pensions were not paid to the workers who have served for a long time in the companies. The landscape was damaged, trees were cut and people were robbed of their ancestral lands with the mining industry. Some of the mining companies did not give incentives to the local community and corruption was rampant. Local people though the government have passed the Indigenisation policy, did not afford registering their claims. Some miners did not come as miners but in disguise but eventually they indulged in the mining activities

End notes

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- 4 Interview with Mr. Ngwenya, Mweza village, Mberengwa, 22 June 2014
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- 6 Interview with Mr. Matanga, Dombodema village, Mberengwa, 22 June 2014
- 7 Interview with Mr Mthethwa, District Administrator, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014
- 8 Interview with L.Janas, Chingoma, Mberengwa, 19 June 2014
- 9 Interview with Mr Keta, Mavorovondo Shopping Centre, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014
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- 18 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in Zimbabwe, EMA Pamphlet 2014

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25 Interview with Mr Maidza, Vanguard area, Mberengwa, 21 August 2014

Chapter Four: Measures towards promoting development through the mining industry in Mberengwa

Introduction

This chapter dwells on the measures taken by the local authorities in particular and government policies in general to promote development through the mining industry. Through its policies such as the Indigenisation and Empowerment policy and Environmental Management Agency the government intervened in the mining sector indirectly. Mberengwa authorities such as District Administrator's (DA) office, Rural Council, chiefs, kraal heads and the Zimbabwe Republic police in Mberengwa have intervened in order to encourage development through the mining sector. Members of parliament from Mberengwa also call for the revival of big mining companies that have closed. Mberengwa youths such as university students, teachers and other interested groups have created Facebook pages which discuss mining activities and call development and benefits from the mining industry.

Indigenisation and Empowerment programme

Zimbabwe's indigenisation and economic empowerment plan as implemented by the government was meant to economically empower the formerly underprivileged local communities who were deprived of their resources by foreign owned companies. The policy was introduced in 2008 by the president of Zimbabwe in order to curb foreign looting of economic resources by foreign companies.¹ This policy guaranteed black people possession and control of their natural properties as well as natural economy. The indigenisation programme has fostered programs such as Community Share Ownership

Trust² to be implemented by mining companies in order to develop the areas they were undertaking their operations. In Mberengwa the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board wrote to the Zvishavane community share ownership trust advising that since Mimosa Mine operations were in the two districts of Zvishavane and Mberengwa, the two districts were supposed to benefit equally. The Chronicle outlined that part of Mimosa Mine's claim also falls within Mberengwa district.³ The DA revealed that Mimosa has promised to give Mberengwa community \$25000 as the mine is going to start its operations in Mberengwa.⁴ By such policies Mberengwa is going to benefit from the mining industry and thus development might be realized.

The Indigenisation and Empowerment policy also gave local people rights to own mines though on a small scale. The policy has encouraged ownership of mines and thus in Mberengwa in particular all the local communities who have claims have been allowed to register all these claims. Small scale mining has developed and thus through the Indigenisation policy. A lot of people have benefited as the government has empowered them to own small scale mines in Mberengwa. The DA revealed that,

*'Indigenisation has done a lot for the Karanga of Mberengwa as they now do their mining on a small scale basis which is a thing that expels foreign looting. Now the Karanga people have access to possess the mines a thing which was forbidden during the colonial period.'*⁵

This indicates that the local people have been empowered to own mines and thus the government through the Indigenisation policy has helped local communities to benefit from the mining industry.

Environment Management Agency, Mberengwa Office

The Environment Management Agency (EMA) was passed in 2003 and it also intervenes in the mining sector. The Agency calls for the good conservation of the environment. Although mining involves the destruction of the land and vegetation, EMA therefore regulate, monitor and promote sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of the environment

EMA in Mberengwa therefore enforces environment legislation, teach people that is miners in particular on how to conserve the natural environment.⁶ EMA through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in Mberengwa identifies, predicts and assesses potential impacts (either positive or negative) that may rise from planned projects (mining) and recommended ways of minimizing negative and enhancing the positive ways. Mostly miners did their operations without EMA's intervention but now it forces miners to mine in a better way not just speculate leaving pits which causes harm to both people and livestock. This has helped to promote sustainable development through critical consideration of mining projects impacts on resources and livelihood of Mberengwa communities.

Chisi outlined that as EMA they made arrangements with miners on how they were going to compensate the damage they cause, follow miners and force them to pay fines depending on the environmental offences they have caused.⁷ This measure is useful as all those miners who just indulge in the mining activities compensate the community depending on how they have damaged the environment. Five artisan miners from Gokwe were arrested by

EMA in the Vanguard area after they have been found bulldozing the area without permission from EMA and paid a fine of \$10000.⁸This measure therefore acts as an example to all those miners who just mine without the awareness on the environmental conservation.

EMA again issue orders on mining done against the rule. Miners who operate against the rule are ordered to stop or rehabilitate the damage they have caused.⁹ In Mberengwa EMA only allow registered miners only, it arrests illegal operators, tour the mining areas penalizing those who violate the rules and it issues licenses to miners and millers on the waste they were going to cause. 107 mining projects have been registered and thus no any other operations are supposed to operate besides these.

District Administrator's office

The DA is also doing a lot in the mining sector so that it can bring development to the community. Mtethwa outlined that as the authority of Mberengwa, they have been assisting local miners with implements such as tractors, explosions and they have also applied for loans from the government in order to help the local miners as means of curbing unemployment.¹⁰He revealed that unemployment is rife in Mberengwa following the subsequent closure of big mining companies hence they were curbing such a problem by assisting local people. This also helps in poverty alleviation hence. These moves by the District Administration has been helpful in the sense that some miners who don't afford buying or hiring tractors were offered tractors for free and thus curbing the unemployment problem the district.

The DA also outlined the authority do not allow unregistered miners in the district and they do arrest those found operating without licenses.¹¹ There is no more informal sector mining in the district as it has caused a series of problems such as landscape damage and deforestation. Incentives therefore were being obtained from the mining industry as all the projects register first before indulging in the operations. He also stated that the authority is limiting foreigners who operate in the district.¹² These foreign people who come as far as Mutare, Harare, Gokwe and Mutwere pay more incentives than that paid by local miners. The DA emphasized that enforcement on these foreign miners is intensively done in order to get something to the district.

Mberengwa Rural District Council

The council, the same as the DA's office, have allowed the registration of miners in the district. The district enforces on the issue of incentives from the mining industry in order to develop the infrastructure.¹³ Moyo stated that since 2011 the council has been enforcing the collection of incentives from the small scale miners operating in the district. It also arrests unregistered miners in the area. The incentives are the council's revenue to develop infrastructures such as roads and bridges.

Local authorities: chiefs and kraal heads

The local authorities in the district were playing a major role in the mining industry. They have been given the authority by the DA to report miners who violate the rules in the communities. The chiefs and kraal heads also solve matters such as conflicts between miners and farmers over land. According to Manduku, *'We were given the authority to preside over arguments between miners and farmers who were at loggerheads daily over land.'*¹⁴ These local leaders by this solve conflicts that cause enmity among the locals which is a weapon of underdevelopment. Time therefore is not being wasted fighting as the authorities were in a position to give judgement over such issues and address proper mining.

Chief have been given the authority not to allow unregistered miners in their areas. So miners were required to produce permits so that they can do their operations. The DA outlined that they have agreed with the chiefs and kraal heads that no one is allowed to mine in the area without permits and licences.¹⁵ This a good measure as before most of the miners just indulged into the mining projects without permits. This is helpful as it ensures that the mining is done in a formal way that is incentives that were supposed to be paid were paid. These leaders have been given the mandate to act as the eyes of the DA.

Zimbabwe Republic Police, Mberengwa

The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) generally enforces the law and prosecutes those who violate the rules in the country. The DA have agreed with ZRP to intervene in the mining sector as miners mostly violate the rules and orders from local authorities. ZRP in Mberengwa indeed has intervened in the enforcing and arresting of informal miners. Inspector Shoko stated that,

*We have been dealing with informal operators who just indulge in the mining activities without permits and licenses. Every December the cases of informal miners were high and we deal with them accordingly. What we were yearning for is that this mining must bring something to the community as it is behind in terms of development.*¹⁶

This speech was done at a gathering by artisan miners on the 25th of September to ensure that mining against the law is a crime. The issue of illegal miners has been curbed by the police and thus the community benefits from that as only registered miners were only operating in the district.

Social network groups: Facebook

The social network has been used by youths, residents and other concerned people from Mberengwa to discuss the development of Mberengwa through the mining industry. These groups discuss the way forwards to bring development and why Mberengwa is the least developed district despite the fact that it is richly blessed with numerous minerals. These groups include the Mberengwa Get Together Forum which discusses the closure of multinational companies and other big mining companies that operated in Mberengwa.

This Facebook page also discusses the issue of foreign miners who dominantly operate in the district at the expense of the local Mberengwa people.

Apart from Mberengwa Get Together Forum, there is Vote Dr Takavafira Zhou which was created Mberengwa North youths. This social group discusses the issues of foreign miners who were looting resources at the expense of the locals together with its consequences. On the 5th of July the group posted,

*Rodger West (Director of the Jewish Voice) and his associates have hit again and this time spreading their machines to an affluent gold mine in the Mweza range (Janasi) near Chegato. Artisanal miners by expedient know-how uncovered affluent traces of gold in the Mwezha range. This is the same case with tantalite mining near Pumula.*¹⁷

The issue was discussed awakening people at the same finding measures to such a move. The miners have been referred to as ‘cronies’ meaning behind them there was only disaster. Such moves by the local people find solutions to the chaotic operations being carried in the area. On the 7th of July it also posted,

*Embryonic raiding toll-free: The Example of Tantalite Mining in Mberengwa, Rodger West of the Jewish Voice. The medicinal scheme has now heated down to embryonic raiding. Rodger West characterizes the raider mining industry that has fundamentally steered to the growth of underdevelopment and expansion of underdevelopment of Mberengwa. The tantalite mining scheme which is a product of intended.....*¹⁸

This was a move to awaken people that resources were being looted hence something must be done. The Jews were disguising as being sent on a medical mission yet they had a hidden agenda-mining. Mposi revealed that Rodgers and his company were expelled in August

2014 after serious intervention and interrogation by the ZRP.¹⁹ Other groups such as Mberengwa My Home, Mberengwa News, Mberengwa Crew and Mberengwa Must Develop Now were created and they discuss issues of mining and development.

Members of Parliament and politicians

Politicians and members of parliaments (MPs) from Mberengwa have been calling for the revival of big mining industries that have collapsed causing a lot of hardships to the local community. The Chronicle posted, ‘Call for revival of ailing Midlands industries.’²⁰ The politicians particularly from Mberengwa were calling for the revival of mining industries such as Sandawana, Buchwa, Inyala and Vanguard. The government was implored to revive ailing industries in the Midlands province so as to create employment and reduce poverty.²¹ Shirichena called for the revival of Buchwa, Shabanie and Sandawana order to develop the area through employment creation.

Other MPs have been calling for the development through the mining sector in Mberengwa. MPs like Zhou calls calling for the development of Mberengwa through mining. Zhou posted on his Facebook page,

‘Mining is an important pillar of development in Mberengwa bearing in mind that it has multitudes of minerals but it is a fact that all these minerals have been sabotaged, raided, plundered and advanced other regions at the cost of Mberengwa. It is nevertheless a point that Mberengwa still have many minor scale gold and tantalite mines in the area and abundant iron ore and tantalite along the Mwezha range, let alone emeralds and chrome. What basically is necessary is to entice investors to inject capital and boost productivity of

*such mines which in turn would create employment opportunities for the people of Mberengwa. Once the mines were functioning resourcefully it then needs locals to announce a charge to advance the undeveloped infrastructures.*²²

He even addresses these issues at rallies calling for measures that need to be done in order to promote development through mining. Local chiefs and kraal heads have responded by expelling foreign miners and also not allowing unregistered miners in the districts.

Conclusion

It has been realised that without the intervention by the local people, local authorities and the government in general, mining in Mberengwa would not develop the district. Mining companies had and some still have the tendency of looting resources at the expense of the local communities. Development of the mining environment wasn't considered and by the above measures, mining is going to be seen as a useful sector as it is going to benefit local communities. In Mberengwa there is no more informal sector mining as it has been targeted by all different types of authorities in the area. Indigenisation policy has empowered locals to possess small scale operations. Members of parliament and activist groups on the social network have campaigned for development through the mining industry and also the revival of ailing mining companies.

End notes

1 Interview with honourable Tafanana Zhou, Mberengwa North MP, Danga, Mberengwa,

14 July 2014

2 The Chronicle, Saturday 30 August 2014

3 Ibid

4 Interview with the District Administrator, Mr Mthethwa, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014

5 Ibid

6 Environmental Impact Assessment in Zimbabwe, EMA pamphlets 2014

7 Interview with Mr Chisi, EMA Office, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014

8 Ibid

9 Ibid

10 Interview with the District Administrator, Mr Mthethwa, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014

11 Ibid

12 Ibid

13 Interview with Mr Moyo, Mberengwa primary school, 21 August 2014

14 Interview with Mr Manduku, kraal head, Vanguard, Mberengwa 21 August 2014

15 Interview with the District Administrator, Mr Mthethwa, Mberengwa, 22 August 2014

16 Interview with Inspector Shoko, ZRP Mberengwa, Mberengwa, 21 August 2014

17 www.facebook.com Mberengwa Get Together Forum

18 Ibid

19 Interview with Chief Mposi, Pumula, Mberengwa, 27 July 2014

20 The Chronicle, Saturday 30 August 2014

21 Ibid

22 www.facebook.com Vote Dr Takavafira Zhou

General conclusion

This research has shown that Mberengwa has a lot of minerals but the development from these minerals haven't been extensively witnessed and studied. Mining companies only looted minerals at the expense of the Mberengwa local people. Gold mining was done on a small scale basis while iron ore, chrome, asbestos and emerald mining were done on a larger scale basis. It is noteworthy that the various minerals in Mberengwa were located in separate areas besides asbestos which was mined near the gold mines in the areas of Great Mberengwa and tantalite mined in the Mweza schist in the emerald belt. All these minerals were exploited but the benefit was only incidental.

It has also shown that Mberengwa became a victim of white penetration in the 1890s and small scale gold mines were established in the late 1890s. Other mines were established such as Inyala chrome, Sandawana emerald, Vanguard asbestos and Buchwa iron ore. The establishment of these mines had negative impacts to the communities and this explains the creation of reserves such as Mapiravana, Mposi, Neta and Bvute in the areas near Great Mberengwa where small scale gold mines and Vanguard mine were established. In the Mweza area forced evictions were experienced where the original inhabitants of Mweza area were evicted to Gaha areas. The coming of the mining industry brought incidental benefits as most of the impacts were negative.

This research observed that multinational companies failed to carry on with the mining activities due to various factors. All of them closed leaving the people of Mberengwa unemployed and exposed to poverty. The liberation struggle of 1966 to 1979 disturbed the

multinational companies when the guerrillas attacked the companies and some sought refuge in the company houses. Mines such as Vanguard, Inyala and Sandawana were grossly affected by the armed struggle. Vanguard suffered from marketing problems as the war besieged foreign trade, Inyala stopped working in 1978 due to guerrilla attacks. Sandawana emeralds were smuggled during the war and their market decreased and thus the company began to see reverses. There were also challenges such as exhaustion of mineral reserves, competition from other companies and fear of political uncertainty leading to the closure of these mining companies. The closure had negative connotations to those who had relied upon these companies such that poverty and unemployment struck them. The rise of small scale mining in the early 2000s was mainly because multinational companies closed. Locals resorted to small scale mining as a means of solving the problem of unemployment.

The research also found that authorities of Mberengwa have put measures in order to promote development through mining as a means of correcting the previous mistakes. Mining just benefited the locals incidentally not solely. It was realised that local communities were not considered by the mining companies but their resources were just looted at the expense of them hence measures were put to ensure that they would benefit from the mining industry.

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