



SOCIO-ECONOMIC SCOPING ASSESSMENT

VYGENHOEK PROJECT, MPUMALANAGA

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1 INTRODUCTION

Nomamix (Pty) Ltd (Nomamix) is applying for a mining right for an open cast platinum mine on the farm Vygenhoek 10JT, in north-west Mpumalanga (proposed project). As part of the application process, Nomamix is required to undertake a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, as per the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998) and the EIA regulations (2014, as amended).

This report constitutes the socio-economic scoping assessment, which will be included into the scoping report to be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources by Environmental Management Assistance (Pty) Ltd as part of the EIA process.

2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

2.1 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The proposed project site is located within the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, which forms part of Ehlanzeni District Municipality in Mpumalanga Province. Mpumalanga is located in the northeast of South Africa, on the border of Mozambique (to the east) and eSwatini (to the south). The Ehlanzeni is one of three district municipalities in Mpumalanga, and comprises four local municipalities namely: Thaba Chweu, City of Mbombela, Nkomazi, and Bushbuckridge.

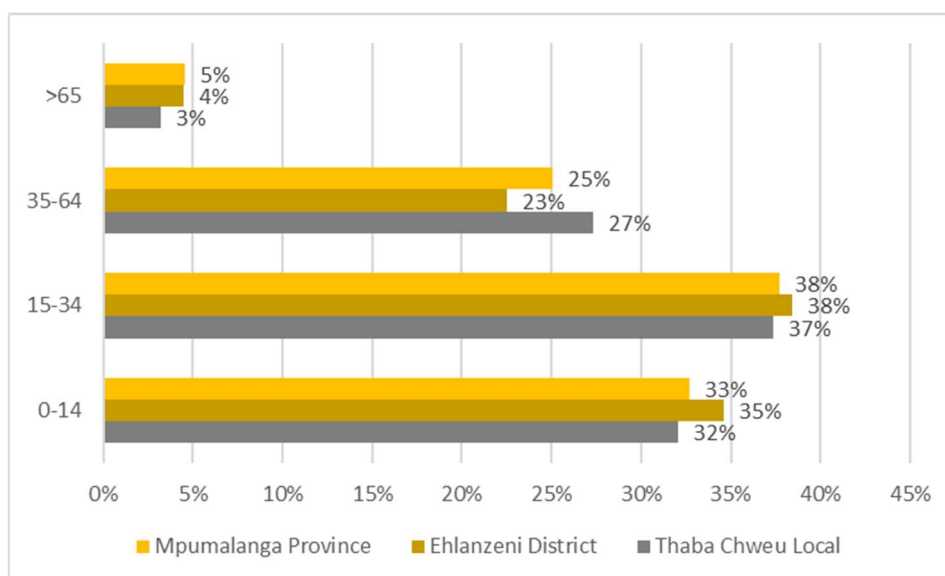
The total population of the Ehlanzeni is approximately 1.8 million, with a population density of 63 people per square kilometre (Statistics SA, 2016 in Ehlanzeni, 2020). The bulk (40%) of the Ehlanzeni's population is located in Mbombela Local Municipality, while Thaba Chweu Local Municipality has the lowest population with only 5% (Statistics SA, 2016 in Ehlanzeni, 2020).

The main urban areas in the Ehlanzeni are: Mbombela, Hazyview, Malelane, Mashishing (Lydenburg), Barberton, Sabie, and Komatipoort. The capital city of the province, Mbombela (formerly Nelspruit), is the economic hub of the province and is located in the south of the Ehlanzeni. The City of Mbombela has the highest population growth rate compared to other other local municipalities, as immigrants from other municipalities and from outside the province and country are attracted to this area for employment (Ehlanzeni, 2020).

Land use and settlement patterns within Ehlanzeni are influenced by a range of factors, including topography, climate, and availability of natural resources (including water, soil types, minerals, and biodiversity). The subtropical climate and varied and dramatic topography gives Ehlanzeni an aesthetically beautiful environment that is well suited to agricultural and tourism. The majority of the land use within Ehlanzeni is rural and considered either natural (83%) or agricultural (16%), with only 1% under urban or mining use (Laduma Tapp, 2010).

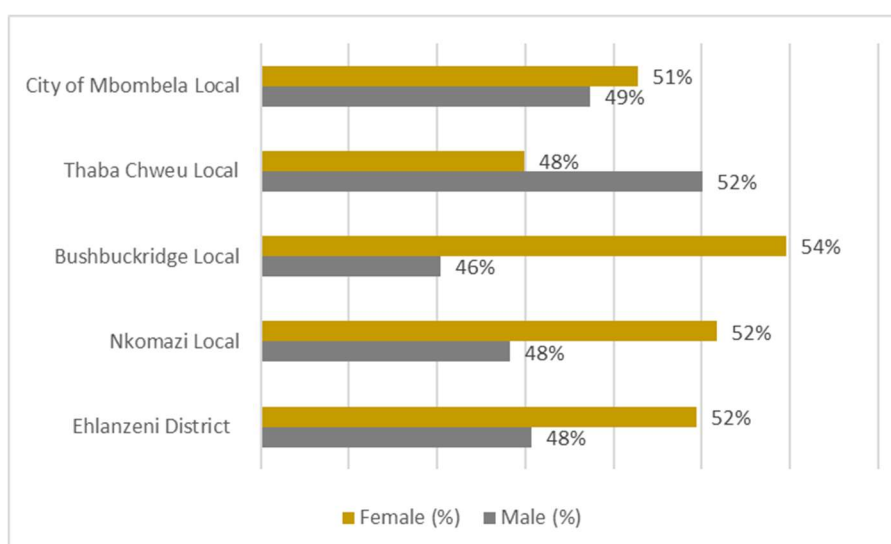
DEMOGRAPHICS

The age profile of Ehlanzeni is slightly younger than the provincial and national profiles (**Figure 1**), with 35% considered children (0-14 years) and 38% considered youth (15 – 34 years) (Statistics SA, 2012). There is generally a higher number of women to men throughout Ehlanzeni (**Figure 2**), which could be a result of out-migration of men in search of employment. Thaba Chweu Local Municipality is the exception, as the number of men is higher. This is likely to be due to the many mining operations located in and around Thaba Chweu. The most spoken language in Ehlanzeni is SiSwati (54%), followed by Xitonga (22%) and Sepedi (10%) (Statistics SA, 2012) (**Figure 3**).



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

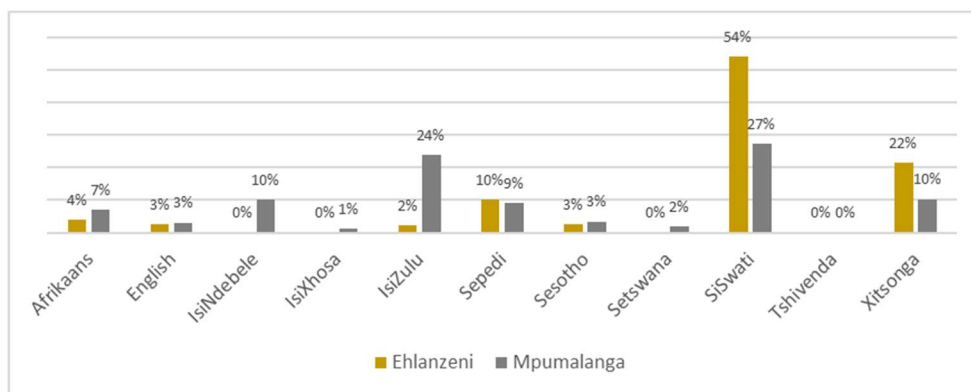
Figure 1 Age profile comparing district, province and national



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

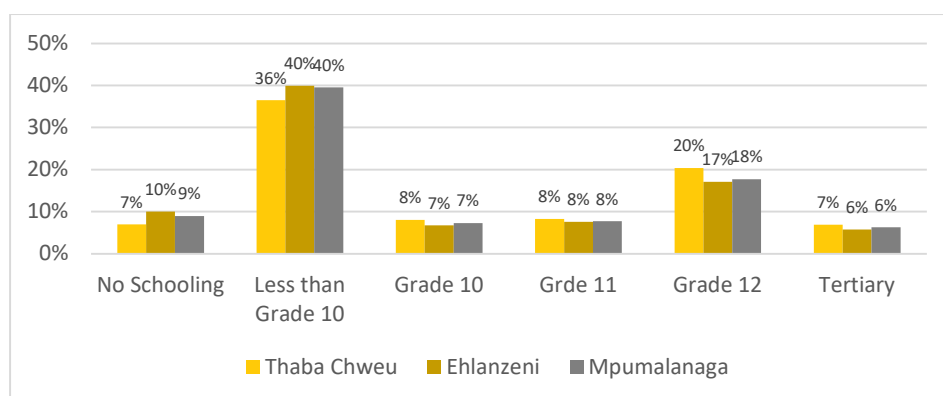
Figure 2 Gender profile comparing district and local municipalities

The education levels within the District are low, but similar to Mpumalanga, with 10% having no formal schooling, 40% having less than Grade 10 and only 6% having tertiary education (**Figure 4**). In 2011 the Ehlanzeni District had an unemployment of 30%, with Bushbuck Ridge Local Municipality having the highest unemployment at 52% and Thaba Chweu Local Municipality the lowest (20%) (Statistics SA, 2012).



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

Figure 3 Languages spoken in Ehlanzeni District Municipality



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

Figure 4 Highest Education for Thaba Chweu, Ehlanzeni and Mpumalanga

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW

Mpumalanga relies on the diverse natural resources found within the province to support the local economy, including mineral and ecological. Mpumalanga is not a major economic centre within South Africa but contributes considerably to the country's tourism, agricultural and mining.

The major contributors to the Mpumalanga economy are mining (25.2%) and manufacturing (19.3%), however the main economic contributors within Ehlanzeni are community, social and personal services (45.2%), wholesale and retail trade (47%), construction (42.8%), finance (34.6%), transport (39.7%) and agriculture (33%) (Ehlanzeni, 2020). According to the Ehlanzeni Integrated Development Plan (IDP), there are indications that the local economy has been shifting from primary sector towards tertiary sector activities over the past two decades, however limited direct investment and low skills levels in the region means economic growth has been restricted and unemployment remains high (Ehlanzeni, 2020). Ehlanzeni therefore continues to rely on agriculture, construction, mining, and tourism to provide employment for unskilled labourers (Ehlanzeni, 2020). Tourism is a key source of local and foreign revenue for Ehlanzeni, with internationally recognised attractions such as the Motlatse (Blyde River) Canyon Game Reserve and the Kruger National Park within its borders. In addition, there are numerous smaller reserves, sites of natural beauty and cultural attractions which contribute to the tourism development in the district (Laduma Tapp, 2010).

Agriculture within the district is dominated by the cultivation of subtropical, citrus, and deciduous fruits, as well as other crops, such as nuts, tobacco, wheat, sugarcane, and vegetables (Ehlanzeni, 2020). Forestry competes with crop cultivation for land and other resources and is one of the dominant land uses in Ehlanzeni (Ehlanzeni, 2020).

Ehlanzeni also has access to one of the key transport and logistics corridors in the region, namely the Maputo Development Corridor. This inter-country economic development corridor connects the industrial, agricultural, and mining areas of Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and eSwatini with the ports in Mozambique. The spinoffs from this corridor development include direct investment in economic

activities and infrastructure in the area, allowing for easier access to ports for raw materials and products from the region.

MINING

Mining has contributed between 17 and 26% of the provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past decade (Ehlanzeni, 2020). Most of the benefits, however, are only recognised outside of the region, such as through export. Opportunities within the regional mining sector include (Ehlanzeni, 2020):

- ▶ Growing demand on the global market for commodities (including platinum);
- ▶ Beneficiation of minerals (e.g. jewellery making);
- ▶ Platinum Group Metals mining along the eastern limb of the Bushveld Complex;
- ▶ New entrants to mainstream industry for Black Economic Empowerment (Mpumalanga Mining Energy Preferential Procurement Initiative);
- ▶ Small Scale mining; and
- ▶ Strategic alliances for share acquisition through Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment.

Key opportunities for local economic development through mining initiatives include local investment, skills development, infrastructure, and technology development and broadening of the supplier base (Ehlanzeni, 2020). The proposed project is likely to contribute towards the regional economy through direct investment and developing the mining sector.

2.2 LOCAL MUNICIPALITY OVERVIEW

The proposed project site is located in Ward 5 of the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, approximately 30 km west northwest of Mashishing (formerly Lydenburg) (the closest urban centre) and almost 100 km northwest of Mbombela.

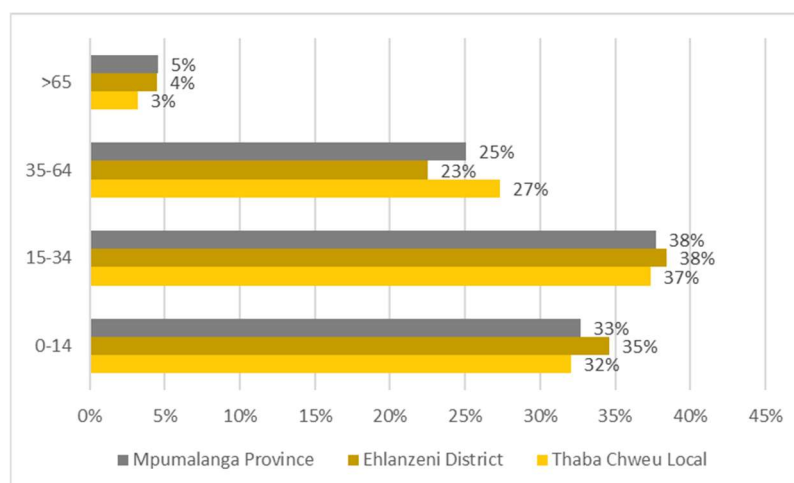
The main economic sectors in Thaba Chweu are forestry, agriculture, mining, business services and tourism (Thaba Chweu, 2017). The landscape is dominated by commercial agriculture and forestry, with the western portion (near Mashishing) dominated by agriculture and scatter mining activities, and the eastern side (near Sabie), dominated by forestry (Thaba Chweu, 2017). Employment within Thaba Chweu comes primarily from the mining sector, followed by community services and then agriculture (Thaba Chweu, 2017).

Many of the large towns within Thaba Chweu depend mainly on tourism as their main economic driver, with the exception of Mashishing, which has received a boost from mining activities in the western parts (Thaba Chweu, 2017). The proposed project is, therefore, likely to contribute towards local economic development through employment, local investment and procurement, and skills development.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of Ward 5 is 12 406, with a population density of 9.9 people per square kilometre (Statistics SA, 2012). This is 13% of the total population of Thaba Chweu Local Municipality and only 0.8% of Ehlanzeni District Municipality.

The population of Ward 5 is fairly young, with 69% being below the age of 35, and 41 % below the age of 15 (**Figure 5**) (Statistics SA, 2012). The dependency ratio is 54%, which is relatively low compared to Mpumalanga (59%) and the national ratio of 56% (Statistics SA, 2012). The majority (90%) of the population is Black African, followed by Coloured (6%) and White (4%) (Statistics SA, 2012). The most spoken language is Sepedi (47%), followed by SiSwati (13%), and isiZulu and Afrikaans (each 9%) (Statistics SA, 2012).



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

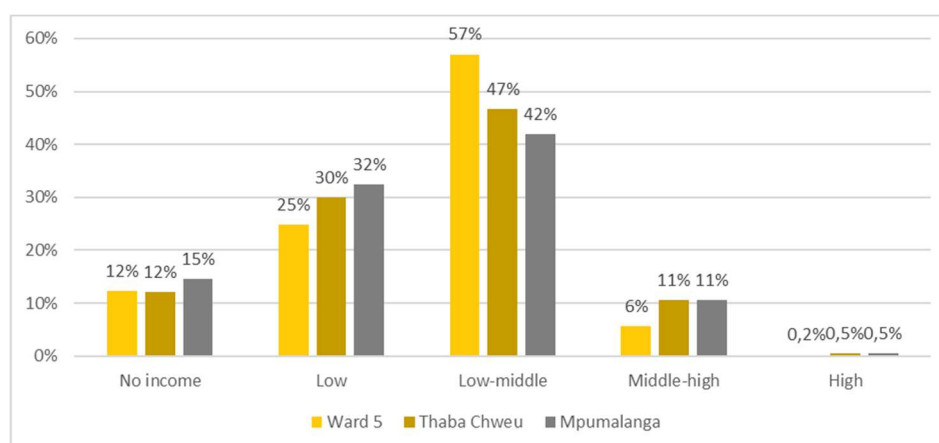
Figure 5 Age profile for Ward 5, Thaba Chweu Local Municipality and Ehlanzeni Local Municipality

The highest level of education attained by individuals 18 and over in Ward 5 is relatively low with 10% having no schooling, 45% less than Grade 10, 13% have a grade 12 and only 2% having tertiary education (Statistics SA, 2012). This is similar to the local and district municipality (**Figure 4**).

The poverty rate in Thaba Chweu in 2015 was 21.5% and the unemployment rate was 20.5% in 2011 (Thaba Chweu, 2017). Both of these aspects are low compared with other local municipalities within the Ehlanzeni District Municipality (25% - 52%) and the national average (27%) (Statistics SA, 2012). Employment within Ward 5 is relatively high at 70% of the working-age population being employed and 25% unemployed in 2011 (5% discouraged work seekers), compared to 58% and 30% for Ehlanzeni District and 62% and 29% for Mpumalanga respectively (Statistics SA, 2012).

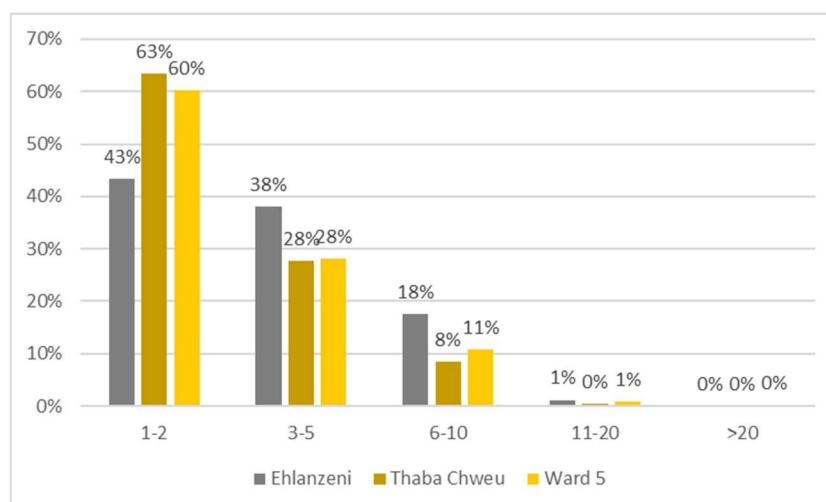
Approximately 17% of the Thaba Chweu population relies on social grants, with 51% of these individuals (8059 people) receiving child grants, 15% (2409 people) receiving disability grants and 29% (4626) receiving old age grants (Stats SA, 2012 in Thaba Chweu, 2017).

There are total of 4 208 households within Ward 5. Household income within Ward 5 is predominantly low, with 12% having no income, and 25% considered low income (Statistics SA, 2012) (**Figure 6**). The majority (67%) of houses within Ward 5 are formal, 2% informal and 32% farm dwellings (Statistics SA, 2012). Household size varies but is characteristic of rural household sizes, with the majority having one or two people, (**Figure 7**) (Statistics SA, 2012). Land tenure security is limited, with 50% of households being rented, 17% occupied rent-free (likely to be on farm tenants), and only 20% being owned and fully paid off (Statistics SA, 2012).



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

Figure 6 Household Income for Ward 5, Thaba Chweu and Mpumalanga



Source: Statistics SA, 2012

Figure 7 Household Size for Ward 5, Thaba Chweu and Ehlanzeni

Formal basic services within Ward 5 are similar to that of Thaba Chweu, but slightly lower than Mpumalanga (**Table 1**). This is likely to be due to the rural nature of the area. Only 67% receive water through a regional water scheme, and 10% obtain water from boreholes and 10% from rivers and streams (Statistics SA, 2012). Only 65% of households have access to water-borne sewage, 17% have access to pit latrines, and 8% do not have access to formal sanitation (Statistics SA, 2012). Refuse collection is received by 63% of households, and 25% have their own refuse dumps, while 7% have no means of formal refuse disposal (Statistics SA, 2012). 68% of households have access to electricity, but just 63% use it for cooking, and 59% for heating (Statistics SA, 2012). There is a heavy reliance on wood for heating and cooking (approximately 25%), and paraffin (up to 10% of households) (Statistics SA, 2012).

Table 1 Key Basic Household Services – Ward 5, Thaba Chweu and Mpumalanga

Services	Description	Ward 5	Thaba Chweu	Mpumalanga
Water Source	Regional/local water scheme	67%	70%	74%
	Borehole	10%	12%	8%
	River/stream	10%	8%	4%
	Water tanker/vendor	7%	6%	12%
	Other	6%	4%	9%
Sanitation Facilities	None	8%	3%	6%
	Flush toilet (connected to sewerage system)	65%	63%	42%
	Pit latrine	17%	26%	45%
	Other	6%	3%	4%
Refuse	No rubbish disposal	7%	5%	8%
	Removed by local authority	63%	63%	44%
	Own refuse dump	25%	28%	45%
	Other	5%	4%	3%
Energy – Lighting	Electricity	68%	83%	86%
	Paraffin	2%	2%	1%
	Candles	27%	14%	12%
	Other	3%	1%	1%
Energy – Cooking	Electricity	63%	71%	69%
	Paraffin	10%	5%	6%
	Wood	24%	20%	17%
	Other	3%	4%	8%
Energy - Heating	Electricity	59%	61%	57%
	Paraffin	4%	2%	2%
	Wood	26%	21%	15%
	None	8%	13%	14%
	Other	3%	3%	12%

Source: Statistics SA, 2012

2.3 SITE

LAND USE

The area within and surrounding the proposed project site is rural in nature and appears to be characterised by a mix of agricultural and mining activities. Agriculture appears to be a mix of subsistence and commercial farming, including crops and livestock. The site appears to be mostly fallow or used for extensive grazing, with a small area cultivated for subsistence crops. Information from a past study indicates that the site is used for subsistence farming, including stock grazing (Digby Wells, 2012).

There are several mines in the broader area, from as close as two kilometres from the site. This mining is mainly for Platinum Group Metals which are being extracted along the remainder of the eastern limb of the Bushveld Complex, extending both south and north of the site. These activities include extraction pits, waste dams, processing plants, and associated housing.

SETTLEMENTS

There is evidence of informal houses or farm tenants within the property of the proposed project, as well as immediately south of the property on adjoining land. According to a study conducted in 2012 for a similar mine at the same site, this community is comprised of the Pakaneng community (Digby Wells, 2012). The study also indicated that the Pakaneng Choma Community Trust (which were the current residents/land occupants – the Pakaneng/Vygenhoek community – are a part of) had a land claim on the site of the proposed project. It was noted, however, that there were also new in-migrants settling informally in the area who had no relationship or ties to the Pakaneng and Choma Clans. Other settlements in the broader area appear to include formal farming settlements (western style farmhouse and associated buildings), small informal settlements, small traditional rural family settlements, and formal settlements relating to mining activities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

There is little formal public infrastructure, other than roads, within the local area. Most occupants and businesses are likely to rely on private or communal resources for basic services (e.g. boreholes and rivers, generators, and foraged wood). There is little evidence of formal shops or other trading infrastructure in the area, with the exception of the South Africa Police Station at Maartenshoop several kilometres to the northeast of the site, as well as a pharmacy, farm shops and guest lodges south of Maartenshoop and along the secondary road to the east. There is no evidence of clinics or other public health facilities, but a mobile clinic is sometimes available (Digby Wells, 2012). There are also no schools within the immediate area, with the closest primary school over 10 km from the site, and the closest secondary school in Ladenburg (Digby Wells, 2012).

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

There are three tribal areas within the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality (Thaba Chweu, 2012), Mogan, Mashile, and Mohlala Traditional Authority (Digby Wells, 2012). These were part of the former Lebowa government and are situated on the far northern part of the municipality and none of the communities or households near to the proposed project site form part of these traditional authorities (Digby Wells, 2012). The only formal authority in this region is therefore the regulated municipal structure, which means that a Ward Councillor and Ward Committee is responsible for representing and engaging with the local communities.

3 POTENTIAL RECEPTORS

The potential social and socio-economic receptors are likely to vary depending on the impacts of the proposed project on the local receiving environment. Several aspects will need to be considered, including:

- ▶ Proximity of settlements to the operational site;
- ▶ Vulnerability of households within proximity to the operational site;
- ▶ Biophysical environmental impacts, including air quality, noise, and vibration;

- ▶ Degree to which the proposed project will change the local environment, e.g. traffic, influx of people and aesthetics;
- ▶ Number, value and sourcing of employment and procurement opportunities during all phases; and
- ▶ Value and implementation of local social and economic development initiatives.

3.1 PRIMARY RECEPTORS

There are several houses within two kilometres of the proposed project operational site that may be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project. **Figure 8** provides an overview of identified settlements within two kilometres of the proposed project site. Satellite images indicate that there are at least two houses within the proposed project property boundary, and a group of approximately 25 and 30 houses immediately south of the property boundary (Google Earth Pro, 2020).

These houses appear to be characteristic of farm tenants and are likely to be comprise a mixture of brick houses, as well as more informal corrugated iron and wooden buildings. According to a previous study the in the immediate area of the site is owned either privately or by the state and leased to these residents (details for these agreements are unknown) (Digby Wells, 2012).

The livelihoods of the households closest to the proposed project site, including access to resources such as water and grazing land, may be affected during all phases. The detailed socio-economic assessment will consider the need to relocate any houses or off-set loss of livelihoods as a result of the proposed project.

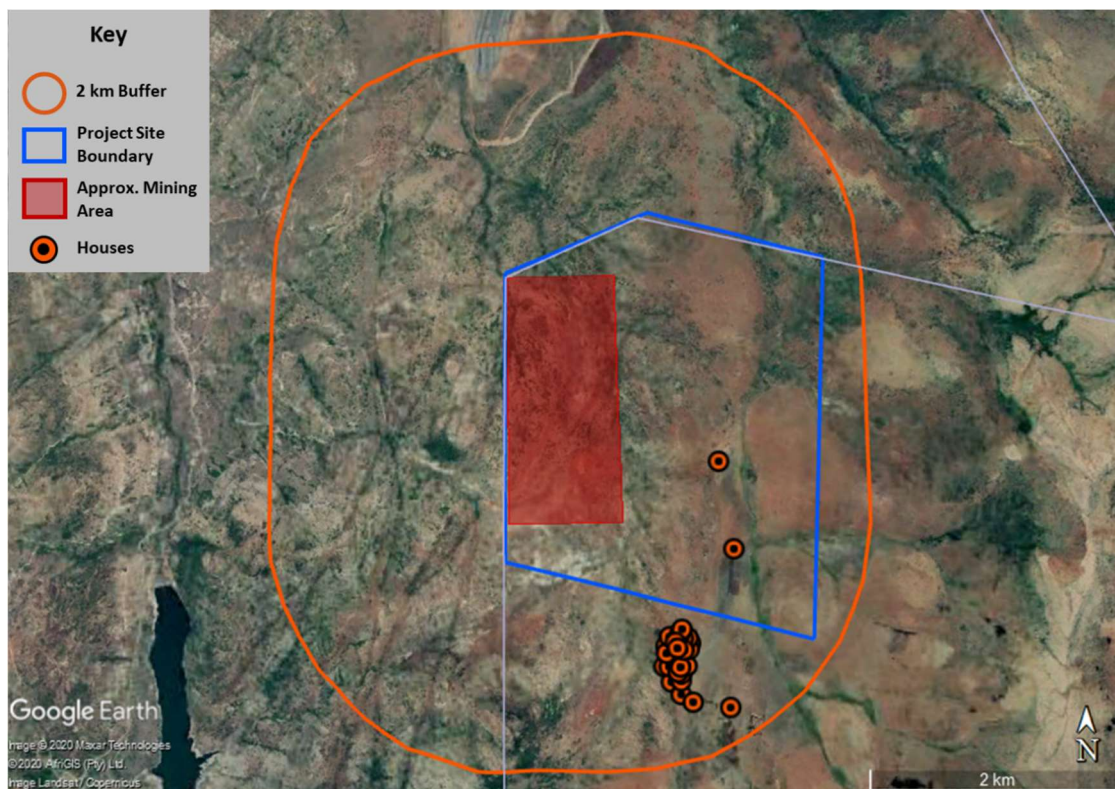


Figure 8 Potential social receptors within 2 km from proposed operational mining area

3.2 SECONDARY RECEPTORS

There are also likely to be a larger population who may be indirectly impacted by the proposed project in the 5 to 10 km radius of the proposed project site. These may include:

- ▶ Commercial farms and associated settlements and activities;
- ▶ Formal farm tenants;
- ▶ Rural traditional settlements;
- ▶ Informal settlements; and
- ▶ Mining settlements.

Figure 9 provides a preliminary overview of the activities and settlements in the broader region of the proposed project, based on satellite imagery.

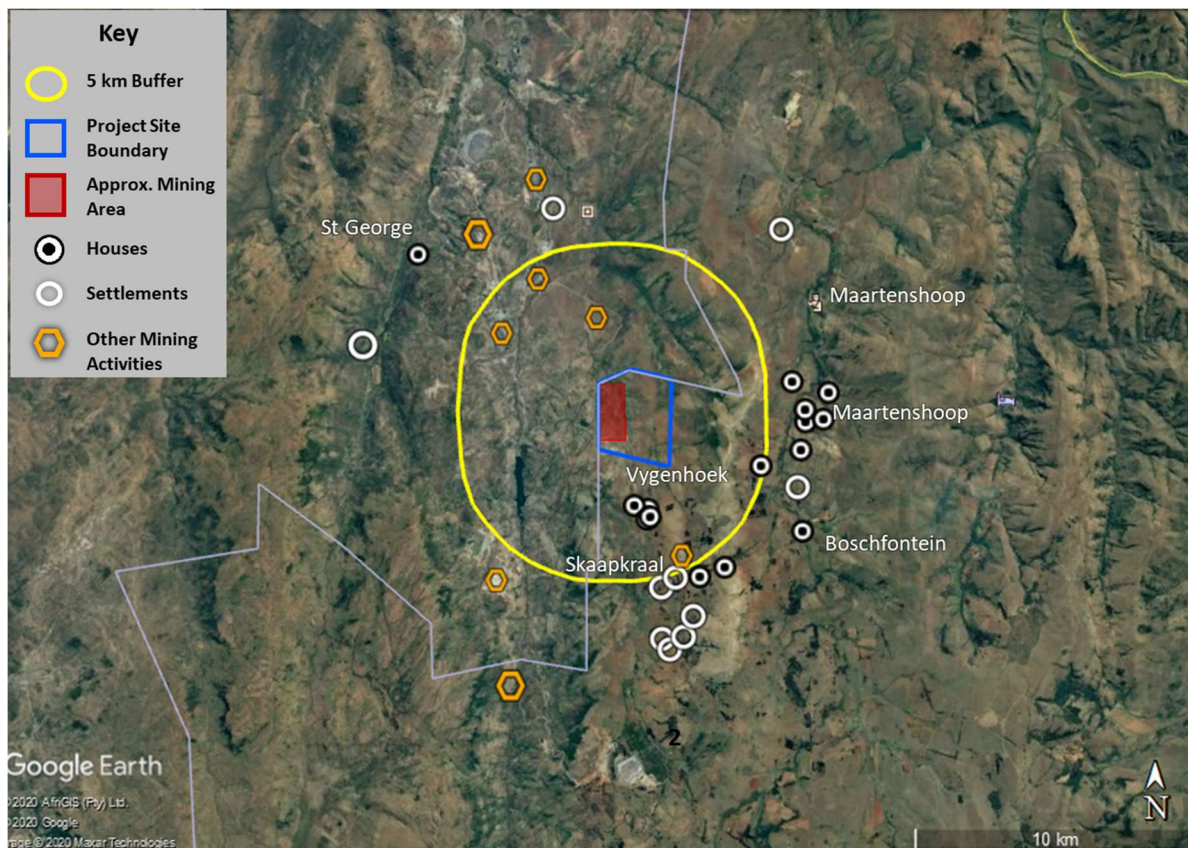


Figure 9 Broader activities, communities and settlements surrounding the site

4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The following potential socio-economic impacts have been provided as a preliminary assessment based on a desktop assessment of the proposed project and socio-economic receiving environment.

4.1 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- 1) **Reduced access to livelihood resources** – Construction activities may require the securing of certain portions of the site, which may be used by local communities to support their subsistence livelihoods, including collection of firewood and herbal medicines, and grazing.

- 2) **Increased temporary local employment opportunities** – A number (unknown) of temporary employment opportunities may be generated during the construction phase, which would benefit local unemployed individuals. The benefits may impact beyond the local area – i.e. to the regional or national level – as many of these opportunities may be skilled or professional and so are unlikely to be sourced locally.
- 3) **Increased local economic development opportunities** – The local procurement of materials and services could benefit local businesses and indirectly provide employment and improved local spending in the short-term. As the types of services required during construction is unlikely to exist locally, these benefits may be realised on a regional or national level, however the procurement of materials and services such as security and cleaning could be sourced locally.
- 4) **Change in sense of place** - Construction activities could change the nature of the local area with increased traffic, influx of people, and presence of machinery and activities in the area.

4.2 OPERATIONAL PHASE

- 1) **Reduced access to livelihood resources** – The operational phase may see the reduced access to livelihood resources (wood, grazing land, water) could be further restricted.
- 2) **Indirect damage to/loss of assets** – The operation of the proposed mine could result in indirect economic impacts on local households, such as damage to buildings through blasting, and increased crime and theft of stock or goods.
- 3) **Direct and indirect employment opportunities** – It is anticipated that the operational phase will see the employment of approximately 44 people for the ten-year duration for the operational phase, creating direct employment for the region. In addition, the sourcing of materials and services could develop indirect employment opportunities.
- 4) **Growth and diversification of local economy** - Local businesses could also see growth and diversification through the provision of services and materials to the operation, thus encouraging diversification within the local economy.
- 5) **Increase in social ills** – As with any large-scale development in a rural area, there is likely to be an influx of people (both employees and jobseekers) that could change the local social dynamic and structure. This could result in increased social ills, such as drug and alcohol abuse, gender-based violence, and increased social conflict.
- 6) **Increased nuisance and changed sense of place** - Mining activities could negatively impact the physical environment, including reduced air quality, noise emissions, and increased traffic. These aspects could cause a nuisance to local residents, and potentially change the sense of place.
- 7) **Increased pressure on resources** – the influx of people to the area could result in the development of informal settlements, and place additional strain on natural and public resources, which are scarce in this area already. This could have a severe impact on existing poor communities and households.
- 8) **Reduced public health and safety** – The influx of employees and jobseekers, the increase in traffic and reduced natural resources (air, water), could impact negatively on existing communities through reduced environmental health (respiratory), spread of communicable diseases, and increased crime and violence (outside people and competition for resources).

4.3 DECOMMISSIONING PHASE

- 1) **Loss of permanent jobs** - The employment during operational phase is likely to be phased out during decommissioning, resulting in a loss employment locally and regionally.
- 2) **Increase temporary employment** – Limited temporary employment opportunities would be generated, which could benefit local communities .
- 3) **Increased local procurement** - The decommissioning phase may see the need for local procurement of goods and services

5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

The socio-economic scoping assessment was based on desktop review of exiting information. Based on this review and a preliminary assessment of potential socio-economic impacts of the proposed project, there are no immediate fatal flaws identified. The following key “red flags” have, however, been identified:

1) Impact on livelihoods

There is the potential for the livelihoods of people living on and near to the proposed project site to be severely affected. Based on previous studies for the site, given the likely nature of the households (i.e. low-income and vulnerable), and information from other specialist studies, the two houses on the project property and the 25 to 30 houses immediately south of the project site are likely to use the proposed project land to support their livelihoods, such as for grazing livestock, and collecting fire wood, water and other natural resources. The use of the land for mining and associated activities (e.g. roads and waste rock stockpiles) could prevent or reduce access to these resources. The degree to which this will affect their livelihoods will need to be assessed further in the EIA phase.

2) Loss of economic and cultural assets

The mining activities could potentially impact the physical assets of the households within close proximity to the proposed project operations. This loss could include damage to houses or other material possessions, as well as social or cultural assets such as loss of access or damage to graves and change in nature of the area (e.g. increased traffic). The degree to which this will affect the socio-economic stability of these households or communities will need to be assessed further in the EIA phase.

The above aspects are not considered fatal flaws, and it is not anticipated that houses will need to be relocated at this stage, as there are no houses within the operational or working area of the mine. However, should the EIA phase determine the impact on the above aspects to be too high, then relocation, compensation or other mitigation may be required.

6 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EIA

6.1 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the socio-economic impact assessment (SIA) will be to determine the potential positive and negative impacts of the proposed Vygenhoek Project and the potential alternatives, including no-go alternative, on the local and regional socio-economic landscape. The study will consider the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project in relation to current and proposed activities within the local area, and the people and activities on and around the proposed projects property.

The objectives of the SIA will be to:

- ▶ Develop a social profile for the proposed project area through the description of the social receiving environment that may be affected by the proposed activity;
- ▶ Undertake the field work to determine the current settlement patterns and activities on and adjacent to the proposed project site;
- ▶ Identify, describe, and assess the potential positive and negative socio-economic impacts associated with the proposed project; and
- ▶ Provide mitigation measures and recommendations to enhance the socio-economic sustainability of the proposed project.

6.2 PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

DESKTOP REVIEW

The socio-economic impact assessment (SIA) will build on the scoping assessment to further develop a baseline of the socio-economic receiving environment associated with the project. This will include a review of existing data and information including geographical, demographic, socio-economic, institutional, and sociocultural. Other key sources of information may include project documentation, studies for similar projects, and relevant policy and planning information. The desktop review will aim to contextualise the proposed development and provide insight into potential impacts.

FIELD WORK

It is anticipated that field work will be required to establish the current settlement patterns and number and type houses, families, and communities on and adjacent to the proposed project site. It is anticipated that the fieldwork will take place over at least five days. During this time, observational data will be obtained, as well as interviews with key stakeholders and community representatives. At this time, it is not anticipated that detailed investigations, such as household surveys will be required, as relocation may not be required, or will be done as part of the resettlement planning process.

REVIEW OF OTHER SPECIALISTS

The SIA process will include a review of the other specialist studies, including ecological, air quality, ground and surface water, blast and vibration, visual, and noise impact assessments. The specialist will engage with each report and specialist to determining the extent and significance to which the biophysical impacts may affect the local social and socio-economic environment.

REPORTING

A SIA report will be compiled in line with the requirements Appendix 6 to the 2014 EIA Regulations (GN R 982). The report will contain a description of the socio-economic receiving environment, potential positive and negative socio-economic impacts, qualitative impact assessment, and recommended management and mitigation measures to be included in the Environmental Management Programme and/or the Environmental Authorisation.

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