

Mining partnerships benefit communities

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In Phokeng, North West, the recently opened R13,3m Maithufi Road bridge is a powerful example of how partnerships between communities, indigenous people and mining companies can drive real change.

These multi-stakeholder partnerships are enabled at government policy level, creating a sustainable mode that can be replicated across the Platinum Belt and the broader North-West province.

The bridge formed part of a roadshow for the forthcoming Investing In African Mining Indaba 2026, which shows how partnerships between mining companies, government and communities can ensure equitable growth and long-term prosperity for all stakeholders.

Mining Indaba's head of public affairs South Africa, Collen Dlamini, says the MI roadshow was about highlighting the powerful mining stakeholder partnerships being built in South Africa's platinum belt.

"The Maithufi Road bridge shows how mining companies can partner with small businesses to drive impact for communities and indigenous people," says Dlamini.



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Economic trajectory

Impala Rustenburg commissioned the Maithufi Road bridge project to connect three villages that would

previously become cut off from the outside world during heavy rains, leaving communities isolated, and children unable to attend school.

The initiative involved upgrading 660m of road and building a bridge to improve access for 9,286 households in the district, creating 20 jobs.

Speaking during the roadshow, Lesego Semenya, CEO of Badiri Construction, the black-owned business commissioned by Impala Platinum to complete the project, says the opportunity has changed the economic trajectory of his company.

“The Maithufi project meant we could employ many young people from the area, where there are few jobs available.

“It also allowed us to demonstrate that we can handle civil-engineering work of this scale, and grew our profile in the industry.”

Semenya adds he will attend next year’s Mining Indaba to learn about mining partnerships and networking to identify future opportunities.



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True wealth of mining

“Impala Platinum is involved in numerous community-development partnerships, and Mining Indaba is proud to showcase these through our roadshow, underscoring the impact mining companies can have when working with communities,” says Dlamini.

Other recent community projects driven by Impala Rustenburg partnerships in the region have included the Bobuanja Community Centre, the Tsitsing water pipeline, and the upgrading of the Retlakgona Primary School.

“The true wealth of mining lies in the communities it uplifts. SLPs, driven by partnerships, ensure that sustainability becomes more than a goal – it becomes a living reality.”- Bashi Makgale, director of operations - office of Kgosi - Royal Bafokeng.

Confirming the value of a sincere partnership approach, Impala Rustenburg executive: head of stakeholder relations Tina Malau told the roadshow that relationships had to include all role-players.

She said community-focused social and labour plans had strong business benefits while also securing a mining company's social licence to operate.

“Everyone in the ecosystem has to be involved – all the way from community members to traditional leadership like the Royal Bafokeng nation, to provincial and national government,” she says.

“There is a strong business case for deep, equity-based community involvement, which drives long-term stability and shared prosperity.”



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Corporate level partnerships

The roadshow also learned how partnerships at corporate level can enable progress.

Impala Platinum Holdings recently acquired Royal Bafokeng Platinum, in a broad-based empowerment transaction.

“The transaction is unique in the SA mining industry,” says Malau.

“The community is a shareholder in the new entity, and an active partner. That inclusive dynamic has already changed strategic planning for the better.

“This is a long-term partnership, and we believe it can be a replicable blueprint for the industry at large.”

The roadshow saw Mining Indaba executives engaging with mining stakeholders, leading the conversation on the value of partnerships in the industry – critical to ensuring long-term progress for the sector, through infrastructure, education and social impact.

The Investing In African Mining Indaba roadshow continues to visit mining communities to unpack the value of collaboration in line with the event theme – Stronger Together: Progress Through Partnerships. Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026 takes place from 9–12 February 2026 at the CTICC, Cape Town.

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