

# Working for sustainable development in primary industry

## Introduction

Anglo American is a worldwide mining and natural resource company. It works in 67 countries. It employs over 200,000 people with 9,500 in the UK. It works in the primary sector. This sector is concerned with growing, catching or mining raw materials. In some cases – such as Anglo’s forestry business - these can be renewed. In mining, this is not the case – albeit most metals are highly recyclable. Anglo American tries to make sure that it’s mining is sustainable. Sustainability is about replacing what has been taken out. It means handing on to future generations a stock of ‘capital’ at least as big as we have now.



## 3 year plans

Anglo American operations also have Community Engagement Plans. These are 3-year plans shaped by consultation with local representatives and which seek to address concerns and to improve the developmental impacts which Anglo’s operations have. It has also developed a new Socio-Economic Assessment Toolbox (SEAT). Through a better understanding of local needs, the company can better respond to concerns and stimulate the growth of human and social capital where it operates.

## Social aims

One of the best examples of this is giving anti-AIDS drugs to its workers in South Africa (where a quarter of them are HIV+). Anglo American could have said that this was not their problem. But they believed that it was important both to act to preserve the lives and skills of its employees and to work in partnership with others in tackling a humanitarian disaster.

## Helping poorer countries

As mineral deposits in developed countries are used up, poorer countries supply a higher proportion of resources. The wealth from mining can help these countries to improve health and education. This is called ‘social capital’. Many firms accept that they have a duty to work with other bodies such as charities and governments to help poorer countries to develop.

## Stakeholders

Stakeholders are any group that is affected by or has a stake in a business. Anglo American thinks all groups, not just shareholders, are important. Grouping a long term business it believes that it best serves its shareholders by also showing consideration to other stakeholders. This includes being a good citizen to its neighbours. All parts of the business comply with a framework of ethical, social and environmental principles. These state that all actions will be fair and ethical. Respect will be shown for the rights and cultures of all groups. Labour will be treated fairly, including healthy and safe working.

## Conclusion

Anglo American mines resources that cannot be renewed. It makes this sustainable by adding to social capital in the areas where it works. It also seeks to ensure that its environmental impacts are carefully controlled.

