

# Working for sustainable development in primary industry

## Introduction

Anglo American is one of the world's largest mining and natural resources companies. It employs over 200,000 people in 67 countries (9,500 in the UK). It operates in the primary sector - a growth sector dealing largely in non-renewable resources like minerals and metals. Mining and quarrying play a key role in the modern world but pose unique problems relating to sustainability.



## Community

Anglo American requires its significant operations to have Community Engagement Plans. These are 3-year plans shaped by local managers. Thus, the company is better placed to understand and respond to community concerns. Anglo American recognises that it can use its core business to contribute to the development of human and social capital. For example, it helps to improve local provision of transport, communications, power, water and other services.

## Investment

A good example of this investment in human capital is the provision of anti-AIDS drugs to employees in South Africa (where a quarter of employees are HIV+). The company could have said that this was not its problem but recognises that it has a social duty. Anglo American also developed a new Socio-Economic Assessment Toolbox (SEAT) to improve the impact of its activities.

## Conclusion

Wherever a natural resource is depleted, Anglo American seeks to balance this by improving human and social capital and minimising any environmental impacts.

## Sustainability

Sustainability is about handing on to the next generation, a stock of resources at least as large as current stock. Demand for metals is growing at 2-4%. Recycling and re-use meets some of this. To redress the balance, Anglo American believes in building social and human capital. As deposits in developed nations are used up, poorer countries supply resources. Mineral deposits can therefore help these countries to improve health and education systems. Summits have been held and targets set by international bodies. Many businesses accept a responsibility to work with other bodies such as charities and governments to use natural capital to build social capital.

## Stakeholders

Stakeholders are any group with an interest in the success of the business. Anglo American thinks all stakeholders, not just shareholders, are important and includes 'future generations' in its list. It is concerned to build relationships with all of its stakeholders. This includes being a good citizen to its neighbours. All of its companies operate within principles which state that it will act fairly, ethically and respect the rights and cultures of the groups with which it works. It will also treat labour fairly and ensure healthy, safe, sustainable working.

