

Confronting HEALTH, MINING & ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES:



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The Interconnected Realities of Miners and Ex-miners in Botswana

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Introduction



Objectives: - This abstract provides an overview of the findings from a Tuberculosis (TB) Communities Rights and Gender Assessment conducted in Botswana, focusing on the complex interplay between occupational health risks, social determinants of health, disease prevalence, migration patterns, and the broader environmental and climate impacts associated with mining activities.

Methodology



The assessment was conducted in 2022, targeting mining districts in Botswana and utilized a participatory process based on the normative right to health framework's seven dimensions, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods. A mixed-method approach involved a comprehensive review of documents at various levels and client engagement processes, providing a triangulated perspective to determine assessment outcomes and recommendations.

Results & Discussions



Miners, including both current and ex-miners, confront elevated risks of TB and silicosis due to exposure to silica dust underground, while above-ground conditions present potential hotspots for infectious diseases

- Despite improvements in occupational health services, the lack of specific TB data amidst rising temperatures and climate change emphasizes a critical gap.
- Urgent need for targeted research to understand and tackle health challenges in mining communities.
- Mining activities contribute to negative health outcomes, environmental degradation, deforestation, and greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change.

Conclusions

- Integration of sustainable mining practices offers a dual solution, addressing climate concerns and improving health outcomes.
- Addressing social determinants of health is crucial to improving Healthcare services.
- Considering broader environmental and climate implications is vital.
- Reducing reliance on fossil fuels presents potential benefits, aligning with environmental and occupational health objectives.
- A comprehensive and integrated approach, requiring collaborative efforts from governments, healthcare providers, mining companies, and communities in Botswana and similar contexts, is imperative.



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REFERENCES



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