Johannesburg, 18 August 2020. Gold producers AngloGold Ashanti, Gold Fields, Harmony and Sibanye-Stillwater are commemorating Women’s Month in recognition of the important role women play in the mining industry and our society, and are calling for an end to gender-based violence and discrimination.

This forms part of the This is Gold awareness campaign, aimed at informing and empowering mining employees on issues related to COVID-19 and against a backdrop of a surge in gender-based violence during the lockdown period.

Putting an end to the abuse of women in South Africa is both an industry and national imperative. According to South African Police Service Crime Statistics, South Africa has amongst the highest rates of gender-based violence and harassment in the world. In 2019, the number of sexual assault offences increase by 10%, a woman was murdered every three hours, 84 rape cases were reported every day and South Africa’s femicide rate was five times higher than the global average.

Despite the significant progress made to transform and increase the participation of women in mining over the past 15 years, the increase in female participation has not necessarily translated into a significant improvement in the behaviour and attitude towards female miners. Women continue to face a range of challenges which include abuse, discrimination, harassment and intimidation by their male colleagues at work and at home.

The gold producers recognise their responsibility to ensure that women are treated equally, fairly and with dignity and respect and aim to advance diversity in the workplace by:
• Promoting gender diversity and inclusion at all levels.
• Debunking the perception that mining is an industry suited exclusively to men.
• Helping women to attain their full potential and closing the gender pay gap.
• Developing and implementing policies and programmes that advance and protect women.
• Adapting workplaces to accommodate women.
• Recognising and adjusting for the different capacities of women.

Progress has been made. The gold producers have the following initiatives in place:

At AngloGold, the Board and Executive Committee aims to ensure that female employees reach their full potential. The Global Diversity Framework and Global Women’s Forum provide guidance and a platform to foster diversity in the workplace.

Gold Fields recognises the positive impact of a diverse and inclusive workforce and is committed to advancing gender diversity through various initiatives aimed at ensuring leadership accountability; setting clear representation targets; providing opportunities to talented women; addressing systemic and cultural barriers; and addressing harassment.

Harmony advances the appointment of women at all levels of the organisation, including management. Each operation has established a Women in Mining Forum which is managed centrally. As a result, the representation of women in the workforce continues to grow.

Sibanye-Stillwater believes that women should have the same opportunities as men. The company is committed to enhancing diversity and inclusion in the workplace and has set up a working group to establish strategies to increase female participation in mining. CEO Neal Froneman (Vice President of the Minerals Council South Africa) is a patron of the Minerals Council initiative to promote women in mining.

In addition to the company-specific initiatives in place, the gold producers actively participate in the Women in Mining initiatives outlined by the Minerals Council.

Women are the bedrock of our society and communities, and their contribution to mining brings a new set of skills, approaches and problem-solving ability. The gold producers encourage all stakeholders, including employees, residents of communities and all South Africans, to take action against gender-based violence and abuse in the workplace and in communities by reporting all incidents.
Department of Social Development gender-based Violence emergency number:
Tel: 0800 428 428

Call to local and national radio stations:
Please contact memory@rasc.co.za should you wish to interview a company representative on the topics listed above.

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