



Through implementing responsible closure practices, AngloGold Ashanti seeks to respect Malian legislation, and aims to close the mine in a way which satisfies stakeholder expectations as well as AngloGold Ashanti's values and standards.

Closure planning commenced in earnest in 2007 and, following many technical and specialist inputs, culminated in the production of a draft closure plan in 2012. Following shareholder review, the plan was submitted to the Yatela National Closure Committee (NCC) in May 2013 and approved in June 2014. It is currently pending final ratification by the Malian Council of Ministers.

The most critical success factors for the mine closure project were identified as being the technical integrity of the plan, stakeholder acceptance (key stakeholders are shareholders, government, affected communities and employees) and effective project execution.

The execution plan has been broken down into three main areas - infrastructure and environment, socio-economic and human resources.

- **Infrastructure and environment**

The main objective of the infrastructural and environmental aspects of the plan are to leave all sites in a condition which is safe and stable, minimises adverse human and environmental impacts and maximises post-mining land use. Activities include decommissioning, demolition and decontamination of infrastructure and rehabilitation of mine waste residues and disturbed land.

- **Continued socio-economic development**

A joint integrated development action plan (IDAP) for the communities around Sadiola and Yatela mines has been the key social development vehicle since 2004. This is run by an independent board and supported by a vibrant multi-stakeholder forum. The social exit strategy is based on a proposal to intensify the IDAP programme and commercialise certain projects in the medium- to long-term. In the short-term, the community is expected to be supported in adjusting to immediate closure impacts through the funding of priority investments in infrastructure, for example roads, water and agriculture.

Other components of the social closure plan include handing over the mine village and related infrastructure to government. A suitably qualified and experienced partner is also being sought to take over the highly successful malaria control programme which has been operated by the mine for the last ten years.

• Human resources closure plan

The key components of the human resources closure plan include negotiations with union structures, implementation of a phased retrenchment programme, training and re-skilling of workers to participate in economic activity after the mine as well as archiving employment and occupational health information as required by law.

Before September 2013 just over 1,000 people worked at Yatela – 625 contractors and 381 mine employees. After the demobilisation of the mining contractor, 408 contractors were released and, by the end of 2014, 144 of the mines' employees had also left the operation. The departure of the mine's employees was through the combination of a Voluntary Early Retirement Programme (VERP), a Voluntary Separation Programme (VSP) and natural attrition. Early in the exercise, employees staged a five-day strike related to requests for additional benefits exceeding those stipulated by law. However negotiations averted a second strike and agreements were signed with the employees concerned.

Courses have been offered for life skills training for retrenched employees. These have included cattle breeding, vegetable farming and small business management. Currently employees are also eligible to participate in life skills training and as a result a total of 262 current and former employees have been successfully trained.

One of the most significant challenges faced in closing Yatela mine was shifting the perceptions of key stakeholders (primarily government, employees and communities) to understand and accept that closure was imminent. The mine was originally scheduled to close in 2007, but with mine life extension, the original planned life of mine was almost doubled. The Malian government has been highly supportive of the process, and the policy certainty provided by the National Closure Committee has facilitated what might otherwise have been a much more difficult transition.

