



FEATURE

MALI

Mine Construction to Operations Transition

Raising the Bar on Prioritizing Local Employment



When Ninette Kröhnert, Global HR Business Manager, was asked, how we managed to retain over 80% of our local (Malian) mine construction team and retrain them for mine operations roles, she said, "We agreed as a management team that we wanted to keep as many of the people who have worked with us throughout construction, we wanted to find roles for them when we move to operations. Once that goal was set, the process to make it happen was natural. Each department head championed the idea."

BACKGROUND

It is common for major projects to lay off many people from the mine construction phase, while hiring a new set of people for the mine operations phase. The reason is often attributed to the difference in skills required. Role requirements are unique, and the logistics of winding down one team while ramping up another don't often facilitate transitioning people into new roles. It is also common, unfortunately, that major construction projects face delays and run over budget. The construction of the Fekola Mine did not fit into this norm. The mine was built on budget and was completed months ahead of schedule. Usually any attempt to train existing people for new roles would just add to delays – this did not happen with Fekola, and why is this?