



# MINE TOURS

## An Open Door to Responsible Mining

**“IT IS AN EYE OPENER FOR ME BECAUSE WHEN I THOUGHT OF MINING, WHAT I THOUGHT OF IS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. I AM NOW AWARE, BECAUSE OF THIS TOUR, THAT MINING, IF SCIENTIFICALLY DONE AND THE MINING COMPANY IS RESPONSIBLE, IS NOT BAD AND DESTRUCTIVE.”**

These were the observations of Maria Flora Pandes, Department of Education Schools Division Office, Camarines Norte. Maria was one of the participants of the half-day mine tours at Masbate. The mine tours are part of an “open day” campaign that has welcomed over 2,500 visitors to the Masbate Mine – including two Secretaries from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The mine tours have also been extended to B2Gold employees and contractors – in particular those who have only limited insight into our full operations.

The “open day” mine tours was conceived after B2Gold completed a school facility project in 2016. In conversations with B2Gold staff, teachers from the Province of Masbate expressed their desire to visit the mine to learn about how B2Gold operates in Masbate.

B2Gold saw this as an opportunity to educate stakeholders about responsible mining, as it was clear that many were uninformed of how a responsibly-run mine operates. It was a fortuitous opportunity, as teachers are well-respected within communities

and would be credible ambassadors to share what they’ve witnessed.

The mine tour is a half-day activity. It includes a presentation on the history of the Masbate Gold Project and an overview of the phases of mining covering exploration, construction, operation, and mine closure and rehabilitation. It also covers socio-economic development programs and environmental protection and management.

Visitors receive a safety orientation (as do all visitors to site) which exposes them to our safety culture and performance expectations. Visitors are able to view most principal areas of operation including pits, waste rock facilities and tailings storage facilities. Before concluding the tour, a discussion session is held with B2Gold representatives to answer questions and ensure visitors go home with a better understanding of responsible mining.

Prior to this experience, many participants were apprehensive about the Masbate Mine and the rumoured danger it could pose to the surrounding communities.

Perceptions changed and were reflected in the formal feedback mechanism where visitors have an opportunity to discuss the experience. Perceptions changed from negative to positive, and participants acknowledge the Company’s stringent safety procedures, responsible mining techniques, and the social and economic benefits that neighbouring communities receive in the process. Some visitors ask whether “the Masbate Mine would consider operating in our town [sic].”