

Recording Women's Voices in Mining Activism

A case study of grassroots movements in South Africa



Women activists in Phola, Mpumalanga (10/03/2020)

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Abstract

Mining is widely considered a masculine industry, with women mostly excluded from mining benefits and bearing the brunt of the negative socio-economic and environmental impacts of mining. In South Africa, rampant racial and gendered inequalities inherited from apartheid continue to infuse extractivist activities. As grassroots movements challenge mining companies and the government, women's roles in these struggles are usually downplayed. Despite available research on the gendered impacts of mining, there is a research gap on the gendered agency. Spaces of activism themselves tend to reproduce gender biases, while women's experiences with these receive little attention. As such, this research aims at recovering women's agency in grassroots movements set in mining-environments, while uncovering the gendered dynamics that permeate activist spaces and to shed light on women's ways of dealing with them. It explores women's tools to navigate different action-levels by using qualitative methods, including focus group discussions and participant observation, to grasp the reality at the grassroots level and give room for women to express themselves. The study finds that they establish or join grassroots movements to make their voices heard, both as women and as members of mining communities. Women's experiences within the movements vary greatly, and while most consider them safe spaces, they resort to different formal and informal strategies to deal with potential challenges. Besides, they link with different stakeholders horizontally or vertically to reach (political) objectives. Activism is thus conceived as a place to express themselves and to negotiate their identity. The study also concludes that this negotiated identity plays out in different manners in horizontal and vertical settings other than the grassroots movement. It thus contributes to expanding the understanding of mining activism and makes visible the experiences of women, for policymakers and activist spaces to include meaningfully women and their demands.

Keywords:

Women activism, grassroots movements, mining communities, gender, South Africa

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	1
Abstract	2
List of figures	6
List of acronyms.....	7
1. Introduction	8
Research questions	9
2. Theoretical framework and conceptual scheme	11
2.1. Large-scale mining as a (masculine) terrain for grassroots activism	11
2.2. Grassroots movements	12
2.2.1. Defining grassroots movements	12
2.2.2. Analysing grassroots movements	13
2.2.3. Looking at women in grassroots movements	14
2.2.4. Scaling grassroots movements strategies	16
2.2.5. Contextualising grassroots movements in South Africa.....	17
2.3. Women activists	18
2.4. Intersectionality: gender, (race) and class	19
2.5. Conceptual scheme.....	20
3. Context chapter.....	21
3.1. Research location	21
3.1.1. South Africa	21
3.1.2. Gauteng province.....	23
3.1.3. Mpumalanga province	24
3.2. Mining in South Africa.....	24
3.3. Gender in South Africa.....	26
4. Methodology	27
4.1. Unit of analysis.....	27
4.2. Methods.....	27
4.2.1. Case study.....	27

4.2.2.	Data collection.....	28
4.3.	Methodological reflection	30
4.4.	Ethical reflection	32
4.5.	Data analysis.....	33
5.	Grassroots movements as spaces of (inter)action for women	34
5.1.	Women entering grassroots movements and organisations.....	34
5.1.1.	Women's motivations to join or to establish movements and organisations.....	34
5.1.2.	Women facing and raising issues	38
5.2.	Women experiencing movement's spaces and their internal processes	44
5.2.1.	Grassroots movements and organisations' spaces design	44
5.2.2.	Women's participating in internal processes experiences	46
5.2.3.	Women's strategies	48
5.3.	Concluding remarks	50
6.	Grassroots movements as intersections	51
6.1.	Women activists linking horizontally.....	51
6.1.1.	Activism as capacity-building: navigating across levels	52
6.1.2.	Activism at home.....	54
6.1.3.	Activism in the community	55
6.2.	Women activists scaling vertically.....	56
6.2.1.	The grassroots level.....	58
6.2.2.	The provincial level.....	58
6.2.3.	The national level	58
6.3.	Concluding remarks	60
7.	Conclusion chapter	61
7.1.	Answers to the research questions.....	61
7.1.1.	What are the motivations of women establishing or joining grassroots movements and what are the issues they raise?.....	61
7.1.2.	How do women in grassroots movements participate in, negotiate and shape the internal processes of the movements?	63

7.1.3.	How and with what objectives do women from grassroots movements establish horizontal and vertical links with different stakeholders?	65
7.1.4.	How, and with what objectives, do women involved in and impacted by large-scale mining in South Africa, participate in and navigate grassroots movements and other activist spaces at different scale-levels?	66
7.2.	Theoretical (and methodological) reflections	68
7.2.1.	Theoretical reflection	68
7.2.2.	Methodological reflection	68
7.3.	Recommendations	69
8.	Bibliography	71
Annexe 1	79
Annexe 2	82

List of figures

Figure 1. Framework to analyse the inclusion of women in mining environments diverse experiences in grassroots movements

Figure 2. Conceptual scheme

Map 1. Research locations in South Africa

Map 2. Research locations in Gauteng and Mpumalanga

Figure 3. Photograph of the charters at the end of the participatory activity. FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02

Figure 4. Women's motivations and the associated roles

Figure 5. Women facing and raising issues

Figure 6. The context-specific issues

Figure 7. The different aspects of women's difficulties to express themselves. All the quotes are from FDG4, drawn from the participatory activity, PA1, Ekurhuleni, 28/02.

Figure 8. Participatory activity 1, Ekurhuleni (28/02/2020)

Figure 9. Horizontal linkages by women in grassroots movements

Figure 10. Vertical scaling by women in grassroots movements

Figure 11. Conceptual scheme

List of acronyms

DMR: Department of Mineral Resources

FGD: focus group discussions

GBV: gender-based violence

IDP: Integrated Development Plan

LSM: Large-scale mining

MACUA-WAMUA: Mining Affected Communities United in Action and Women Affected by Mining United in Action

MLG: multi-level governance

MPRDA: Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act

SLP: Social and Labour Plan

1. Introduction

Even though women have been present and active in mining around the world for centuries, mining has always been considered a masculine industry due to the domination of men in the workforce and the physicality of the work associated with virile imageries (Botha and Cronjé, 2015). Women's work has either been rendered invisible or low-valued (Jenkins, 2014), which also means that women do not benefit from mining activities in the same way as their male counterparts. Further, the negative impacts of mining in the surrounding areas and communities – whether social, economic or environmental – affect women disproportionately as a result of the gender division of labour and roles (ibid).

This is specifically the case in South Africa, where the mining industry is also heavily marked by the racial system of apartheid (Crush, 1994). The multidimensional impacts of the extractives sector operate in a background of structural inequalities, whereby black mineworkers were systematically dispossessed and impoverished to sustain the profitable and productive system (ibid). Among this population kept spatially and essentially at the margins, women were legally prohibited from working underground until the democratic transition of 1994 and the subsequent political and social reforms (Botha and Cronjé, 2015). New mining legislation – namely the 2002 Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act and the Mining Charter – have since then attempted at including women in core mining activities (ibid). And yet, rampant inequalities continue to infuse the mining industry, with women bearing the brunt of them at the intersection of class, gender, and race. In reaction, women turn to different forms of activism, such as becoming involved in grassroots movements. This phenomenon fits the broader picture of growing pressure from society on the South African government to address the flaws of the extractives sector and to include in it the persons affected by mining (Benya, 2013). These initiatives appear of high relevance in light of the historical role of civil society and grassroots movements in the democratic transition (Barchiesi, 2004). 2012 has been a landmark year for the mining industry and the broader social and political environment: important strikes in the major Lonmin platinum houses have violently ended in the 'Marikana massacre' where 34 people, mainly workers demanding higher wages and better working conditions, were killed in police confrontations (Benya, 2013; Bond and Mottiar, 2013). The Marikana massacre has been described as the worst case of police violence since the end of apartheid (Mutasa, 2017).

A solid body of research has been conducted on the impacts of mining, and a growing one is focusing on the gendered impacts. Other engaged research has analysed the contestations of extractivism in the Latin American context, relying on concepts of resistance and post-extractivism (Acosta, 2013; Hall *et al.*, 2015; Muñoz and Villarreal, 2019) to make the experiences and practices of mining-affected people in the Global South visible (Muñoz and Villarreal, 2019).

Research has tended to focus on the gendered impacts of mining, not on the gendered agency (Hall *et al.*, 2015). As Benya (2013) worked on recovering the roles of women during the 2012 strikes in South Africa, she demonstrated that spaces of activism themselves tend to reproduce gender biases. Lahiri-Dutt (2015), who labelled the growing presence of women in mining environments ‘the feminisation of mining’, emphasised the lack of knowledge on women’s active roles as political agents in mining struggles. A perspective focusing specifically on the agency of women activists in grassroots movements in mining environments is still missing.

To fill this gap, this research aims at capturing the voices of these women, and at tracing their trajectories in the journey of resistance and activism in order to create a better understanding of women’s agency. Distancing from the ‘women as victims’ perspective, it aims at shedding light on how women negotiate gender relations in what is commonly conceived as a male-dominated environment and how they take action. In doing so, spaces of activism and mining environments are analysed as linked spaces that influence one another, rather than separate spheres. This research thus contributes to the analysis of activist spaces in relation to their community context. Moreover, as movements and organisations integrate a gender dimension when addressing the negative impacts of the extractives sector in South Africa (see: MACUA-WAMUA, WoMin),¹ and the little research that has yet addressed this phenomenon (Fakier and Cock, 2018), this project aims at contributing to the body of knowledge by analysing the roles and actions of women in shaping activism. These actions take place in various spaces at different levels – the grassroots level, the provincial level, and the national level – and engage with various actors. To make sense of these levels and the strategies of grassroots movements within each level and across levels, the external actions of women are analysed through the lens of scales.

Therefore, this research expands the understanding of women activism and uncovers the experiences of a deemed marginalised group in both the impacts they suffer and the actions they take. In addition to contributing to the knowledge gaps on women’s (multi-level) agency in mining environments, this research may inform policymaking and development initiatives in mining environments to better integrate women’s specific demands and include them as proper political agents, and simultaneously inform grassroots organisations on the inclusiveness of their spaces for women. It does so by answering the research question outlined below.

Research questions

¹ MACUA-WAMUA is a mining communities alliance launched in South Africa in 2012. The branch WAMUA is dedicated to women.

WoMin is an “African gender and extractives alliance”, launched in 2013. The organisation researches the impacts of mining on women and support and mobilise women.

How, and with what objectives, do women involved in and impacted by large-scale mining in South Africa, participate in and navigate grassroots movements and other activist spaces at different scale-levels?

Sub-questions:

- What are the **motivations** of women establishing or joining grassroots movements and what are the issues they raise?
- How do women in grassroots movements participate in, negotiate, and shape the internal processes of the movements?
- How and with what **objectives** do women from grassroots movements establish horizontal and vertical links with different stakeholders?

Here, a distinction is made between motivations and objectives. Motivations embrace a personal dimension – they are reasons for behaving in a certain way, while objectives are more rational and practical – they are substantial aims and goals to attain.

To answer the research question, the thesis first sets out the theoretical framework of the research, exploring the literature on large-scale mining, grassroots movements, women activists, and intersectionality (2). It then situates the research in South Africa (3) and outlines the methodology used (4). The empirical chapters explore women's experiences within the movements (5) and outside the movements (6). The final chapter answers the research question based on the empirical findings and the theoretical frame (7).

2. Theoretical framework and conceptual scheme

This chapter presents the theoretical foundations of the research. The first section sets the context of large-scale mining for women in grassroots movements. The second section reviews the literature and discusses the main concepts and theories associated with grassroots movements, participation, and scales. The third section considers the framing of women activist and the fourth section sets out the contributions of an intersectional lens to the research. This chapter ends with the conceptual scheme, which connects the different concepts drawn from the theories to apply them to the research.

2.1. Large-scale mining as a (masculine) terrain for grassroots activism

A significant number of grassroots movements emerge in mining contexts and focus specifically on women's issues. This research is set in the environment of large-scale mining (LSM), an industry embedded in global markets (Kemp and Owen, 2019) and able to generate 'super-profits' (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2017). Governments and development institutions have identified LSM as a potential way of reducing poverty: for instance, the World Bank recommendations emphasise the creation of jobs by the mining sector and the increase in governments revenue, while international standards protect people and environments from mining impacts. Further, emerging corporate social responsibility principles advocate accountability and fairness in the culture and practices of mining companies (Hamann and Kapelus, 2004). In addition, the sector pays increasing attention to gender in the ambition of creating a gender-inclusive sustainable development (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015).

However, the negative impacts of large-scale mining are still numerous and are not yet addressed efficiently (Mtero, 2017). In terms of socioeconomic impacts, the mining industry distorts the structure of the economy at the expense of the least favoured people (Acosta, 2013); poverty and inequalities may be exacerbated (Mtero, 2017). The gigantic scale of LSM entails vast and long-lasting environmental impacts (Acosta, 2013). The variety of damages is illustrated by the history of conflicts over the impacts of mining on water, agriculture and livestock in South Africa (Adler *et al.*, 2007). These social and environmental costs are transferred to society and surrounding communities that absorb them (Adler *et al.*, 2007; Acosta, 2013).

Furthermore, mining has been largely conceptualised and analysed as an essentially gendered terrain. Authors have even qualified it as a site of 'supernormal patriarchy' (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2017) where the potential 'supernormal profits' encourage the development of 'supernormal patriarchy,' infused with exaggerated masculinity in a dangerous and risky environment (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015; Bradshaw *et al.*, 2017). Patriarchy is a concept to use with caution: in an open and critical approach, patriarchy is a dynamic reality, rather than as a static one. Patriarchal power is not felt equally by all women and men, nor is it merely a fatality imposed on women-as-victims: Bradshaw *et al.* (2017) have demonstrated the

fluidity of women's identities as mine workers, sex workers and wives. Thus, critical research needs to render the range of gender roles adopted and the patriarchal relations affecting these roles to promote gender equality and natural resource justice. This research adopts feminist approaches to uncover women's agency in their (re)productive roles in mines and at home and in their political role of protesting against the exploitations of mining (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012). To do so, it looks at the realities of these roles in mining environments. Women face obstacles and suffer from inequalities both in the mines and in the mining environment. Jenkins (2014) identified four key intersecting areas in the impacts of the expansion of extractive industries on women:

- Women as mineworkers,
- Gendered impacts of mining,
- Women's changing roles and identities in communities affected by mining,
- Gendered inequalities in relation to the benefits of mining.

Tensions and negative externalities of each aspect trickle down and reinforce one another. These dimensions inform women's variety of experiences in mining communities. Altogether, they are useful as a frame to make sense of women's perceptions and their subsequent strategies and actions within grassroots movements.

2.2. Grassroots movements

2.2.1. Defining grassroots movements

Grassroots movements addressing mining impacts are emerging all around the world. In this context of global activism, the term 'grassroots' itself is subject to different interpretations. From the designation of the 'basic building blocks of society' – as opposed to the dominant social elites or the urban elites – 'grassroots' now refers to the part of the population that is most (materially) vulnerable to global economic and policy shifts (Batliwala, 2002). Against this ideological conceptualisation, a more technical definition detaches the 'grassroots' from any political affiliation and makes 'grassroots movements' accountable only to their group (Kaplan, 1997). Generally, grassroots movements mobilise individuals to engage in collective action to advocate for a specific cause and to influence a political outcome (Bergan, 2016), thus pursuing a common agenda of change (Batliwala, 2012). Their embeddedness in the 'local' distinguishes their constituency from government actors or foreign donors (Adhikari *et al.*, 2017). They emphasise issues that are shared by people in their daily lives (Kaplan, 1997). Such movements can generate deep and lasting changes at levels that are not always reached by policies or development programmes (Batliwala, 2012; Bhattacharjya *et al.*, 2013).

In practice, movements can formalise in grassroots organisations. As such, the distinction is not always straightforward, and relations between movements and organisations can be complex, especially when organisations are closely linked with them (Batliwala, 2002). In general, organisations pursue the

movements' claims on the long-term while building an organised and permanent support. To that end, they are registered legally and can specify their agenda and mobilise funds for particular actions.

2.2.2. Analysing grassroots movements

Grassroots movements can be analysed in terms of their external work as well as their internal organisation. From an external perspective, it is worth focusing on the ways in which the local context shapes grassroots movements (Molyneux, 1998; Batliwala, 2012) or, the other way around, on their strategies to influence this context by raising specific issues in the wider society (Adhikari *et al.*, 2017) through direct influence on decision-making and indirect influence on a broad audience. This stance assesses movements' relevance and impact. From an internal perspective, since effective transformational action depends on the structure of the movement itself, interactions, and processes within the grassroots movements to set the agenda should be analysed as well. Both external processes and internal processes are studied in this research. To do so, grassroots movements are conceptualised as spaces of participation, drawing on theories from both political philosophy and development literature. Participation enlarges the public space, modifying the existing configuration of relationships; as an ideal, it aims at involving people directly in processes of decision-making (Cornwall, 2002). Since participation expands the notion of agency, it seems prerequisites to empowerment (*ibid*). Participation and empowerment as both concepts and practices are put forward as a democratic way of addressing inequalities (McEwan, 2005). However, different understandings of empowerment coexist: Cornwall (2002) distinguishes 'sites of radical possibility,' where a radical conception of empowerment enables oppressed people to recognise and exercise their agency, from 'domesticated sites of invited participation,' where a more mainstream understanding of empowerment invites the poor to participate in the prevailing order, the status quo. In practice, the line between sites of radical possibility and sites of invited participation is often blurred. Moreover, participation practices are situated in a wider environment: the political, social, cultural, and historical context influences the conception and processes of participation (Cornwall, 2002; McEwan, 2005).

Thus, two dimensions seem important to look at (Cornwall, 2002):

- the assumptions versus the actual practices of participation,
- the nature of these spaces and the interactions within these.

Space-making itself matters, as it both includes and excludes certain people. In the included population, issues of power and difference influence the decision-making and might favour hegemonic positions or maintain status quo (Cornwall, 2002). Lefebvre (1974) highlighted how the specific ways of thinking about society - norms, values, behaviours - are found in how spaces are conceived and perceived, and organised and occupied. Further, the multiple spaces in which people gather and interact are connected (McEwan, 2005): norms and values that operate in one space influence behaviours and beliefs in another. Power relations permeate every space (Cornwall, 2002) and thus perpetuate the exclusion of marginalised groups, even in spaces designed for inclusive participation (McEwan, 2005). To

understand these relations and how people relate to them, it appears necessary to look at people's perceptions of their position in these groups and spaces (McEwan, 2005). Referring to Scott's work on peasant resistance (1985), Cornwall (2002) has emphasised the multiple ways in which the less vocal try to indirectly influence the agenda: by keeping quiet and not voting for instance.

2.2.3. Looking at women in grassroots movements

Since women – as a group – are often marginalised, focusing on women's positions in social movements sheds light on the issues of power and difference that shape their participation. Adopting such a focus necessitates a gender lens to analyse differences in terms of gender. In many cases, women's effective participation is not explicitly included in movements' agendas, even when women are active members (Bhattacharjya *et al.*, 2013). Achieving transformation in society requires movements to integrate women's interests properly and to grant women a sound position within the organisation (ibid) while engaging men in this process.

To reflect critically on women's meaningful participation in grassroots movements, this study draws on a frame derived from the typology of feminist movements conceptualised by Batliwala (2012). This frame adopts a gender lens to analyse power dynamics and inequalities. In this case, the gendered perspective serves to highlight women's roles through the study of the following characteristics:

- Agenda built from a gendered analysis of the situation,
- Women form a critical mass of the movement,
- Feminist values and ideology as (part of) the movement's ideology,
- Women's leadership in the movement,
- Political goals are gendered,
- Gendered strategies and methods,
- The movement is creating more feminist organisations.

These characteristics distinguish feminist movements from other social movements. This model is an ideal type that is contextualised for the analysis of women's positions within grassroots movements. It is useful to identify the potentialities and shortcomings of existing movements, that are not explicitly feminist and claim to include and/or emancipate women. Adaptation to the local context is needed as the label of 'feminism' is not always claimed by activists, notably in Africa, where 'feminism' may be perceived as a Western import (Gouws, 2017). Thus, for this research, only the agenda, the female constituency, women's leadership, the political goals, and the strategies and methods of grassroots movements are retained as essential traits for the work of grassroots movements. As Barchiesi (2004) observed in South Africa, social movement politics not only impact communities in their livelihoods and struggles but reach and shape the political agenda and strategies of the state. Hence the relevance of integrating women and their interests in the movements' structure and actions.

Building on Batliwala (2012) and Jenkins (2014), the research is informed by a theoretical frame that combines a gendered focus on mining impacts and a gendered analysis of grassroots movements. This frame aims at moving from women's experiences in the mining communities to understand how these translate in the spaces of grassroots movements. The characteristics of (feminist) grassroots movements are analysed considering the mining impacts on women identified by Jenkins (2014). It informs both the data collection and data analysis.

Impacts of mining on women	Grassroots movements characteristics
Women as mineworkers	Gendered agenda addressing specifically their issues, and/or specifically targeting them?
	Are female mineworkers part of the grassroots movements (GM)?
	To what extent do they participate in the external processes of the GM?
	Presence of women visible in the political goals, the strategies and methods of the GM?
Gendered impacts of mining	Gendered agenda addressing specifically these impacts?
	Who is pushing for these considerations?
	Do the gendered impacts of mining influence the composition of the leadership?
	Do the gendered impacts inform/impact political goals, strategies, and methods?
Women's changing roles and identities	Gendered agenda reflecting these changing identities and roles? Gendered agenda entailing such changes?
	Who are the women constituent of the GM?
	Are they leaders?
	Do these changes inform/impact political goals, strategies and methods? And conversely?

Figure 1. Framework to analyse the inclusion of women in mining environments diverse experiences in grassroots movements

2.2.4. Scaling grassroots movements strategies

Grassroots movements are located in complex political landscapes, interacting with multiple actors according to their interests and their strategies. These interactions take place at different levels, as grassroots movements dialogue with institutions and individuals at the local, the provincial and the national levels. Thus, the framework of multi-level governance (MLG) seems useful to analyse this complex system. Gupta et al. (2015) define governance as an analytical concept focusing “on the process of ruling and managing territories and populations.” In this political process, multiple actors interact and bargain between their interests across various and interlinked spaces and scales (Gupta *et al.*, 2015). The geographical perspective of MLG focuses on this spatiality: “as the actors and fora of governance change, this is accompanied by shifts in the spatial direction of governance” towards new actors and scales (Gupta *et al.*, 2015). Scales are constructed arenas “where socio-spatial power relations are contested and compromises are negotiated and regulated” (Swyngedouw, 1997; Dupuits, 2018). They organise social interactions (Hoogesteger and Verzijl, 2015).

Dupuits (2018), studying water community networks in Ecuador, assesses the relevance of multi-level governance to analyse the scaled nature of socio-ecological systems. She notes three main criticisms derived from political geography: MLG as a European concept tends to postulate institutional arrangements disregarding local contexts; MLG entails a hierarchy of static levels; and MLG does not render power relations, social inequalities or specific interests (Dupuits, 2018). Noting the creation of (trans)national networks by water community organisations, Dupuits emphasises strategies that go beyond existing scale levels to promote an alternative inclusive model of governance. Thus, analysis in terms of scalar politics makes sense of grassroots movements strategies and experiences within a multi-level governance system. Scalar politics is a concept coined by MacKinnon (2010) drawing from the scale literature. The main focus of scalar politics is not scale itself but the strategic process of tying scale categories and relations to put forward interests. This process of scaling up is twofold: horizontal, by spreading across geographical areas and involving more people, and vertical, by involving different types of institutions from the local to the international levels (Johansson *et al.*, 2013).

Going further, Hoogesteger and Verzijl (2015) posit the concept of grassroots scalar politics in their study of water struggles in Latin America. Grassroots scalar politics focus on the agency of local actors who “create, navigate and play different scales.” They distinguish different strategies of scalar politics. Scalar politics are abundantly found in the analysis of natural resources governance: for instance, Wayland (2019) applied scalar politics to a mining conflict in the Philippines.

Scaling occurs spatially as well as symbolically. Grassroots movements expand their localised agenda to the scale of issues that concern a larger audience (Towers, 2000). For instance, jumping from a local land conflict to the issue of environmental justice extends the grassroots struggle to a global scale (Towers, 2000). Linkage politics are of this process: by creating horizontal and vertical networks, social movements increase their autonomy and influence (Carruthers, 1996; Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009).

Therefore, this study adopts a scalar frame to analyse the scalar politics of grassroots movements at different levels.

2.2.5. Contextualising grassroots movements in South Africa

Social movements and protest politics in democratic South Africa are evolving. Marked by the legacy of working-class mobilisation and national liberation politics struggling against apartheid, the new community movements adopt the former ones' tools for their contestations (Barchiesi, 2004). Against political and bureaucrat elites that are deemed insensitive, community members gather in issue-based movements without reference to grand ideologies (ibid). Research focusing on South Africa has identified the phenomenon of 'service delivery protests.' Police statistics demonstrate an important number of community uprisings since the beginning of the 2000s (Alexander, 2010; Nleya *et al.*, 2011; Bond and Mottiar, 2013). This form of social unrest takes place mainly in informal settlements and townships (Alexander, 2010; Bond and Mottiar, 2013) and directly contests the privatisation of basic household services while making broader claims for socioeconomic rights. Research has identified a complex web of factors triggering protests – including deeply rooted social inequality and poverty (Nleya *et al.*, 2011). Protests thus contest neoliberal policies (Bond and Mottiar, 2013) and/or challenge the South African democratisation that does not deliver on social justice (Stokke and Oldfield, 2005). Such community mobilising movements now compete with the tripartite alliance in power since 1994 for the legitimate representation of “the poor.”² Such a vision is echoed in “the rebellion of the poor” identified by Alexander (2010) who imagines a scenario in which the local mobilisations for social justice generalise into a national movement. ‘Service delivery protests’ are, however, distinct from new social movements in terms of shape and impact: they do not always end with conflict resolution nor do they mature in durable social movements (Bond and Mottiar, 2013). As such, they fall under the category of ‘popcorn protests’ that have a “tendency to flare up and settle down immediately” (Bond and Mottiar, 2013) while they do demonstrate dissatisfaction over socioeconomic rights. Altogether, these protests draw a complex and diversified landscape of social unrest, with a whole spectrum of actions and unequal strategies to last and/or have an immediate impact. They act as “moral agents of democracy” (Anciano, 2012) by making visible representing the marginalised in the South African democracy (Bond and Mottiar, 2013). Questions remain as to their potential to link struggles and produce an alternative model to the one they are contesting. The Lonmin strikes started to demonstrate connections between different interests – i.e. labour, environment, gender – that eventually turned out to be fragile (Bond and Mottiar, 2013). These considerations inform the current challenges of grassroots movements in South Africa, especially those under study. As mining community movements (post-Marikana), they call for attention on localised mining impacts. At the same time, they are contributing to a national dialogue among

² The African National Congress (the historical national liberation organisation that evolved in a party), the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the COSATU and the South African Communist Party.

mining communities, and this whole process of ‘scaling up’ distinguishes them from other examples of community protests.

2.3. Women activists

The focus of this research is women affected by mining who participate in grassroots movements. This encompasses a broad range of women activists: there are differences in the ways they are involved in and affected by the mining industry as well as in the ways they are engaged in grassroots movements. Why do women’s positions and voices within grassroots movements matter? Movements provide opportunities for women to convert their claims in a real political force (Batliwala, 2012). In contexts administered by traditional mechanisms where gender inequalities can be deeply entrenched, advocacy by women (for women) within grassroots movements tackle from below the specific barriers to their emancipation (ibid).

Focusing on women’s agency allows us to ‘gender’ the lived experiences of grassroots activists (Jenkins, 2015). Women frame and understand their activism as subjects (ibid). They define their (gendered) interests in relation to the context they are embedded in (Molyneux, 1998). As such, interests are not given, they emerge from women’s subjectivities, that are also informed and negotiated in a socio-political context (ibid). Similarly, male-predominant institutions influence the forms that women’s activism take: women rely on (formal) rules, laws and (informal) discourse politics to further their interests (Katzenstein, 1998). Adapting to the presence or absence of structural provisions that might be used to leverage their influence and power, they can employ language- and cultural-based politics to develop their own space of autonomy.

A growing body of literature focuses on women’s activism in mining environments. A recurrent analysis posits women as passive participants, who play a supportive role because of their exclusion from the workplace and their status of miner’s wives (Benya, 2013). Institutional rules such as union policies can also (indirectly) exclude women from mining struggles or conflict resolution (Beckwith, 2014). Benya (2013) demonstrated how the Lonmin strike (preceding the Marikana massacre) was gendered in a way that excluded women until the massacre encouraged women to become active participants. Against this image of exclusion and invisibility, some authors have worked to recover women’s agency in negotiations (O’Faircheallaigh, 2013) while others have analysed the gendered narratives of indigenous women engaged in anti-mining activism in Latin America (Jenkins, 2015; Deonandan *et al.*, 2017). Jenkins (2015) outlined the gendered discourses of women activists (who referred to land, a narrative linked to women’s role of producing food, and future generations, a narrative linked to women’s role of reproduction, as motivations for their activism) while Deonandan *et al.* (2017) shed light on the gendered strategies of women to maintain collective action (female solidarity; consciousness building; bridge

leaderships between different spaces and scale levels). This research combines the narratives and the strategies approaches in the South African context.

2.4. Intersectionality: gender, (race) and class

Intersectionality as a theoretical framing is part of the feminist lens of this study in its theme and its design. Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) coined the concept of intersectionality in her exploration of the race and gender dimensions of violence against women of colour. Intersectionality posits that different social identities – gender, race, class, sexuality, disability... – intersect and inform each other in unique and various ‘interlocking systems of oppression’ (Meer and Müller, 2017). Debates on intersectionality have warned against the tendency to label for the sake of labelling, thus essentialising or reducing identity (Meer and Müller, 2017). It must remain an open and malleable concept, in line with the fluidity of identities and the interplay of multiple power relationships (Gouws, 2017; Meer and Müller, 2017). Applying intersectionality in this research takes on an ontological and epistemological dimension: this frame potentially highlights the particular applications and meanings of socially constructed identities in various African contexts, that may differ from the social categories conceptualised in the Western focused literature (Meer and Müller, 2017). Intersectionality emphasises the importance of history and the hierarchies inherited from patriarchy and colonialism (Jaga *et al.*, 2018). Thus, using an intersectional feminist framework implies placing the experiences and perspectives of people with less social, economic, and political power at the centre of the research process and the methodology (Morris and Bunjun, 2007).

In South Africa, the legacy of the racial system of apartheid is evident in the racialised society that subsists nowadays, notably in terms of cultural and social practices (Seekings, 2008). Since the 1994 democratic transition, racial practices have been reshaped (Moolman, 2013): black people enter the middle-class, political and economic elites, and racial social identities are more fragmented; while persisting socioeconomic inequalities still largely disadvantage black people. For Moolman (2013), the state understood as a white male body inherited from colonial ideologies shifted to a black male body in the post-apartheid era. Recently, the literature has highlighted the intersectional feminism put forward by young black women in the student campaigns of 2015 (Gouws, 2017) and by black female artists in women collectives (Mahali, 2017). Other researchers rely on intersectionality to analyse the experiences of black women in the labour force (Groenmeyer, 2011; Jaga *et al.*, 2018). These studies emphasise the need to learn about black South African women’s lived experiences to reveal the disadvantages that they continue to experience in social, political, or economic domains (Groenmeyer, 2011).

This study resorts to intersectionality mainly to posit its focus on the experiences of black working-class women and to acknowledge the racial history of the mining industry. During the research, given that the participants were all black and belonging to the working-class, experiences relating to gender identities

were more prevalent. While class-consciousness and race-consciousness sometimes emerged from participants' responses, the analysis focuses more on power relationships based on gender to answer the research question.

2.5. Conceptual scheme

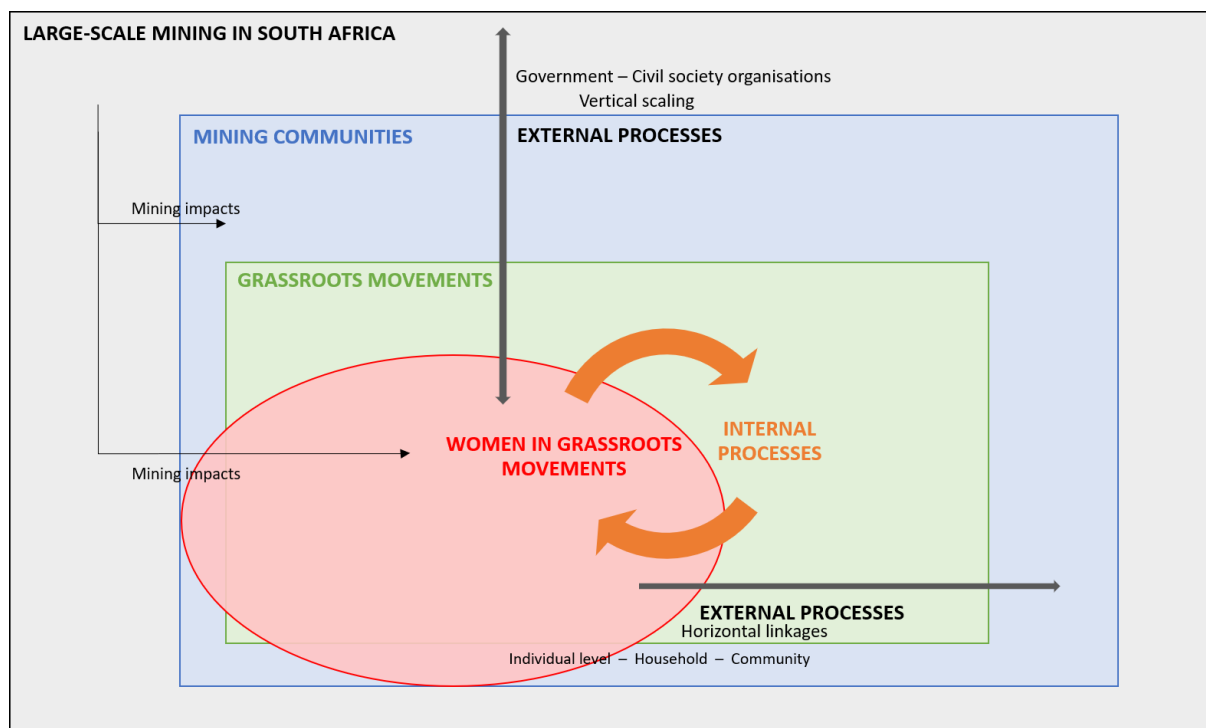


Figure 2. Conceptual scheme

The conceptual scheme illustrates how the key concepts interact with one another in the setting of large-scale mining in South Africa. Large-scale mining activities produce externalities that impact mining communities, and within them, women's roles and identities specifically. Women establish or join grassroots movements in their mining community, and thus take part in both the internal and the external processes of such movements. Grassroots movements are spaces infused with (power) dynamics, and in order to assess women's actual involvement, this research focuses on the experiences of women with the internal processes of these spaces. On the other hand, external processes encompass both vertical scaling (with mining stakeholders at different levels, and the national movement which acts as an umbrella) and horizontal linking, at the individual, the household, and the community levels.

3. Context chapter

This chapter sets out the context of the study. It first outlines the background of South Africa and the research locations, then puts in perspective the realities of mining and gender inequality within these contexts. The latter section gives an idea of the issues that women and mining communities face in general.

3.1. Research location

3.1.1. South Africa

South Africa is the southernmost country on the African continent. In 2019, its population amounted to almost 59 million (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). The “Rainbow Nation” comprises 80.7% of Black Africans, 8.8% of Coloureds, 7.9% of Whites, and 2.6% of Indian/Asians (stats sa, 2019b) and registers 11 official languages. The head of the multiparty republic is President Cyril Ramaphosa, from the majority party African National Congress (ANC). The ANC originates from the national liberation organisation that led the democratic transition and has been reconfirmed at every election. The state prides itself with what is considered one of the most progressive constitutions in the world (Human Rights Council, 2016), which sets in stone the principles of human dignity, nonracialism and non-sexism (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). South Africa is a young democracy that officially put an end to the regime of apartheid established in 1948 by the National Party with the first democratic elections at universal suffrage in 1994.

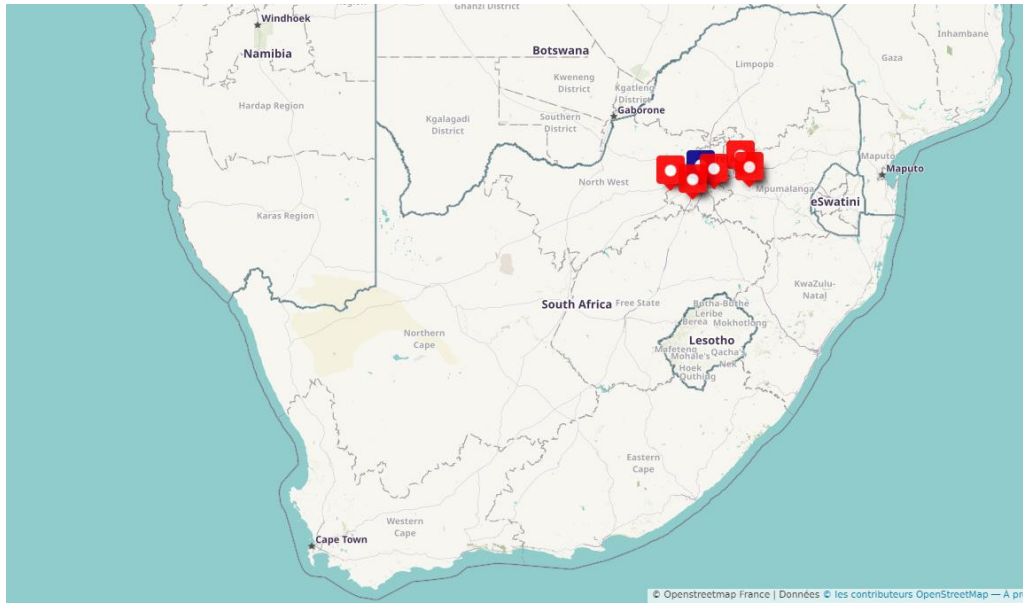
This system of “separateness” distinguished government-defined races: the whites (primarily of British and Dutch ancestry), the blacks (composed of different peoples, indigenous for the majority), the “coloureds” (mixed-race people) and ethnic Asians (Indians, Malays, Filipinos, Chinese) (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). This arbitrary classification imposed segregation in all spheres of life, with ‘Grand’ apartheid drawing geographical lines between the different races and ‘petty apartheid’ pushing these lines down to every social and personal aspect, with separate schools or entrances to buildings (Christopher, 2001). The regime was contested both internally – notably by political and activist movements such as the ANC and popular protests – and externally – the state was subject of much criticism by the international community (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Such pressure led the government to progressively repeal apartheid laws at the end of the 1980s. The transition to democracy was set in motion, which culminated with the election of Nelson Mandela as the president of the Republic of South Africa.

Nowadays, the legacy of apartheid is felt in multiple spheres. It is notably evident in the land distribution and the settlement patterns: in urban areas, racially defined patterns in residence persist in the towns and townships, including from one neighbourhood to another (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Major challenges inherited from apartheid are the high unemployment rate for blacks and the wide disparity between black and

white income levels (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Other deeply rooted issues are poverty, rising crime rates, ethnic tensions, access to health and education opportunities, and the AIDS pandemic (ibid). At the beginning of the 21st century, South Africa ranked near the top of United Nations estimates of proportions of national populations infected with HIV (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Black women are disproportionately affected by HIV, they make up 62,67% of the adults living with the virus (UNAIDS, 2018). In mining environments, where prostitution and movements of population are important, HIV is a main concern.

The South African economy was revolutionised in the late 19th century with the successive discovery of diamonds and gold. Mining has boosted the country's development (see 3.2. for further details on mining in South Africa). Nowadays, the [middle-income] country has a diversified economy, dominated by the tertiary sector (OECD, 2017). The Gini coefficient reveals that South Africa has one of the highest inequality rates in the world (World Bank, 2019); partly due to the legacy of exclusion, despite targeted empowerment strategies (Lowe *et al.*, 2020), and to the nature of its economic growth, which is not pro-poor and does not generate sufficient jobs (World Bank, 2019). Against this challenging background, protest politics burst out regularly (Nleya *et al.*, 2011; Bond and Mottiar, 2013). Post-apartheid South Africa is often portrayed as the first country of the world in protest numbers.

It is yet difficult to assess the extent of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the South African society, although social and economic repercussions are already evident. The lockdown and social distancing policy have notably increased gender-based violence and violence towards children, while they revealed implementation challenges in informal dwellings that also lack infrastructure, causing growing tensions between the people and the authorities enforcing the lockdown (Sekyere *et al.*, 2020). As the lockdown aggravates poverty, there is growing pressure on the national financial system to cope with the (global) economic crisis (ibid).



Map 1. Research locations in South Africa.

This map presents the five research locations, spread over Gauteng and Mpumalanga. Johannesburg, from where most of the fieldwork was conducted and where the organisation with which the research was conducted is based, is marked in blue, while the mining communities visited are labelled in red.

3.1.2. Gauteng province

The research was mainly conducted in Johannesburg, with three field trips in the townships of Khutsong, Evaton, and KwaThema, all located near mines (see the methodological chapter for an explanation of the selection).

The Gauteng province is located in the northeast part of South Africa. It is the smallest province of the country, yet the most densely populated (stats sa, 2019b). It is largely urbanised, with the major cities of Pretoria and Johannesburg. Blacks represent three-quarters of the province's population and whites about one fifth, and the most widely spoken languages are isiZulu, Afrikaans, Sotho, and English (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017).

The province is an economic hub with diverse activities, ranging from industry to finance, including mining. As its name 'Place of Gold' in Sotho languages indicates, Gauteng concentrates the main goldfields of the country (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Gold mining activities started at the end of the 19th century and rushed the establishment and development of Johannesburg, South Africa's largest urban area nowadays. Nowadays, the 159 mines in Gauteng produce a quarter of the country's total mineral production (Joburg, 2018).

Gold mining produces specific socio-economic and environmental impacts. Techniques to extract gold produce heavy metal pollution that then affects water systems. Acid mine drainage contaminates both

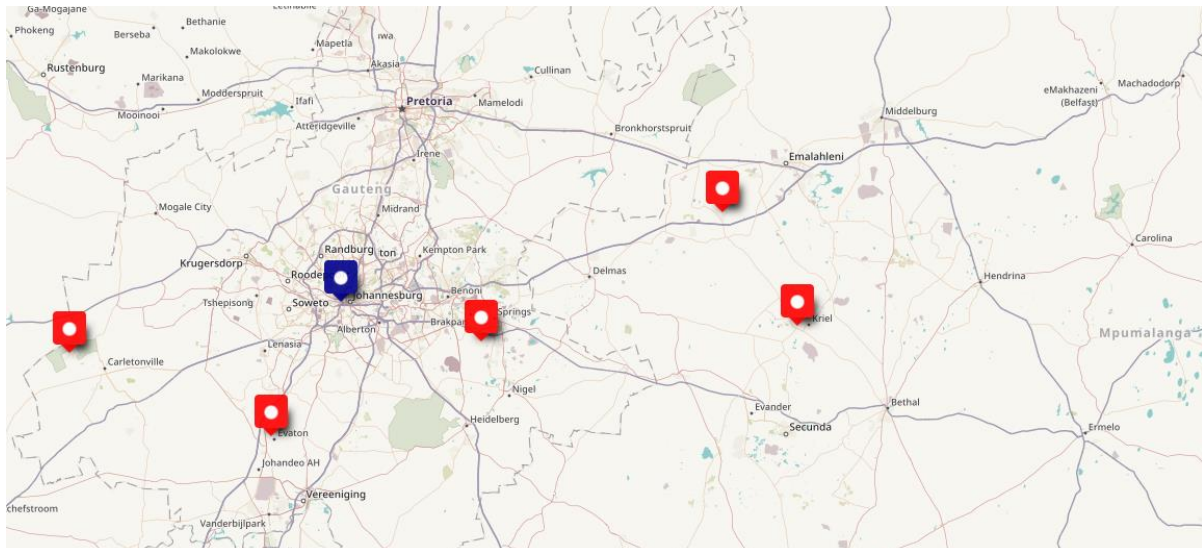
surface and groundwater (Naicker *et al.*, 2003; Durand, 2012). Gold-tailings dams modify the environment (Oelofse *et al.*, 2007). There is a risk of these dams to fail and release slimes.

3.1.3. Mpumalanga province

I visited two mining communities in Mpumalanga: Kriel and Phola. The province is located east to Gauteng. Blacks belonging mainly to the Nguni ethnicity make up about nine-tenths of the province's total population. They reside predominantly in rural areas and speak Bantu languages. Whites make up about one-tenth of the province's total population (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). Major economic activities in Mpumalanga are mining, agriculture, and tourism.

Mpumalanga is the province where most large known deposits of coal lie (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). Mining from Mpumalanga accounts for 83% of South Africa's coal production (Africa Mining IQ, 2019). This coal is produced for export and electricity. Nearly all of the country's electricity is produced from coal, and most of the electric power is generated at huge power stations in Mpumalanga, owned by the public company Eskom (Lowe *et al.*, 2020).

Coal mining takes place both on surface and underground (Lloyd, 2002). Coal washing produces large waste dumps, which may cause air pollution (ibid). Underground mining releases high amounts of methane – a greenhouse gas – in the atmosphere. Besides, the collapse of the roof can damage surface structures, rendering the surface completely unusable and putting the lives of miners at risk (ibid). Overall, coal mining negative impacts affect surrounding communities in a specific way, which further explains the rationale for grassroots movements.



Map 2. Research locations in Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

3.2. Mining in South Africa

Ever since the colonial era, mining has been an economic cornerstone for South Africa. The discovery of diamonds and gold in the second half of the 19th century fuelled the country's industrial revolution (Wilson, 2001). Looking at the other side of the story, the growth of this sector is based on racialised dispossession, as the industry has been dependent on the creation and maintenance of a cheap black labour force (Mtero, 2017). A system of oscillating migration controlled black workers' movements and created new spaces for them to live: the single-sex compounds (Crush, 1994; Wilson, 2001). Due to the short duration of their contracts, men were compelled to go back and forth between mining sites and their rural homelands (Wilson, 2001). The gold-mining industry also recruited men from all over rural southern Africa (ibid). Such a system had – and to a certain extent, still has – consequences on economic, political and social levels, with unequal patterns of development between mining regions and homelands and the perpetuation of a two-tier political and socio-economic order through the establishment of a 'separate development' under the Apartheid (ibid). The legislation prevented people from designated racial groups to apply to better job positions (Cruise, 2011), while trade unions were inaccessible to black people (Wilson, 2001). Geopolitical changes within the country and in the sub-Saharan region, with the decisive turn of the 1994 democratic transition, have resonated in the mining sector. Wages have risen, black workers were able to unionise, the colour bar preventing Black miners the access to certain jobs was abolished. Nowadays, mining holds a minor position in the South African economy: in 2015, its contribution to the national GDP was only of 8.3% (South African Market Insights, 2015) while it was of 21% at its peak in the 1980s (stats sa, 2017). Gold production has declined, and several gold mines closed in the 1990s, leaving thousands of mineworkers unemployed (Lowe *et al.*, 2020). However, South Africa remains the world's largest producer of platinum and the third of coal (OECD, 2017). Mining still holds a key position in terms of economic activity, job creation and exchange earnings (ibid). In 2018, it was employing 456,438 people according to data from the Minerals Council South Africa.

Current legislation and policy innovation continue to encourage gender and racial transformation in the mining industry (Cruise, 2011).³ Social Labour Plans were also introduced as prerequisites for companies intending to launch mining projects (ActionAid South Africa, 2018). Nevertheless, the sector is still impacted by the legacy of apartheid, with white people holding the best work positions (Casey, 2019). Critiques of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act emphasise the lack of a specific focus on women, and denounce the discrepancies between the promises and the reality, with communities not as involved in the negotiations between government (that issues mining rights) and the private sector as they ought to be according to the law (ActionAid South Africa, 2018).

Mining is thus a terrain of contestation, vividly marked by the Marikana massacre in 2012. In August, the police opened fire on mine workers who were on strike to criticize their exploitation at a platinum mine, killing 34 people. After this historic event, several civil society organisations gathered to discuss

³ In 2002, the ban on women in mines was lifted, and the Mining Charter introduced a 10% women quota by the Mining Charter (Human Rights Council, 2016).

the struggles of mining-affected communities in 2012. From this reunion emerged the movement MACUA-WAMUA (Mining Affect Communities United in Action and Women Affected by Mining United in Action), acting as an umbrella organisation of several grassroots movements and based in Johannesburg. This organisation was the entry point of this research, given its close links to grassroots movements. Access to the planned research locations depended on their contacts with the communities they represent.

3.3. Gender in South Africa

Inequality in South Africa also operates along the line of gender. Despite section 9 of the Constitution promoting gender equality, in practice inequalities are rampant. Women face inequalities in the labour market: in 2018, women's rate of unemployment was of 29.5% versus 25.3% amongst men (stats sa, 2019a). Women make up 69.2% of the population stuck in long term unemployment (stats sa, 2019a). While they account for 43.8% of the total employment in 2018, only one in three occupied managerial positions. They dominate the domestic worker and clerk occupation, and they are more likely than men to be involved in unpaid work (ibid).

Women, specifically in mining areas, are also the most affected by HIV. Finally, President Ramaphosa qualified gender-based violence in South Africa a “crisis” in March 2019, in a speech for the signing of the Declaration against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide. He emphasised the fact that gender-based violence “impacts [everybody]” (Ramaphosa, 2019). This violence finds its roots in apartheid and in patriarchal norms that are entrenched in today's society (Human Rights Council, 2016). The special rapporteur of the Council even speaks of a “violence against women pandemic” and denounces “systematic women's human rights violations”. Listing the different forms of violence women suffer, she recognised specifically the presence of violence, harassment, and abuses in mining (Human Rights Council, 2016). Finally, violence occurs particularly in challenging settings, such as informal settlements, and target vulnerable groups, such as women and girls with disabilities, migrants, elderly women and LGBT+ persons.

State responses to gender-based violence have taken different forms over time. The Domestic Violence Act of 1998 and the 2007 amendment in criminal law that condemns all non-consensual sexual activity both target gender-based violence. Other policies such as the Employment Equity Amendment Act in 2013 aimed at promoting gender equality. The National Development Plan 2030, adopted in 2012, identifies women as particularly vulnerable to poverty and focuses specifically on their empowerment. Despite this multi-dimensional strategy, gaps and challenges remain in all phases of prevention, protection and prosecution (Human Rights Council, 2016).

4. Methodology

This chapter sets out the research design and the methodological reflections that drove the research process. This research adopts constructivist and feminist ontology and epistemology to analyse and interpret the realities of women in grassroots movements. The unit of analysis and the data collection are first outlined, followed by reflections on the quality of the research and its ethics.

4.1. Unit of analysis

This research project looks at women in grassroots movements evolving around large-scale mining-related issues and their experiences within these. Data were collected about and with different women within the movements: holding different positions and telling different stories, views, and opinions on activism and mining. This variety of responses gives a nuanced picture of the voices and experiences of women engaged in grassroots movements.

4.2. Methods

4.2.1. Case study

Mining communities are spread all over the country. Each face context-specific issues and challenges that shape the relevance of the grassroots movements in the political arena. A case study methodology aims at capturing this diversity and exploring the real-life context of women in grassroots movements in South Africa. The objective is to gain an in-depth understanding of grassroots movements to understand women's involvement in each environment.

During the preparation phase of the research, I realised that being embedded in a South African organisation was crucial for feasibility and safety. As MACUA-WAMUA acts as a national umbrella to grassroots movements and organisations that deal with mining-related issues, partnering with them was necessary to access communities. The selection of grassroots movements is derived from the movements that form MACUA-WAMUA and has considered time and access constraints as the field trips needed to be organised in a five-weeks' period. Initially, I planned to conduct a first round of interviews in the mining areas, followed by a second round to allow for periods of reflection on the preliminary findings with members of the advisory office, and discussions with research participants. The latter round was eventually cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The calendar was co-defined with the five movements and organisations involved. They are located in different mining areas, each situated less than a two-hour drive away from Johannesburg:

- In Kriel, Mpumalanga,

- In Phola, Mpumalanga,
- In Khutsong, Gauteng,
- In Ekurhuleni, Gauteng,
- In the Vaal, Gauteng.

All these grassroots movements address the socioeconomic issues and the environmental impacts of large-scale mining. Three have a mixed basis while two are primarily women's movements. Given the limited number of cases, the research may present limitations in capturing diversity. Consequently, in the field, attention was paid to interviewing women with diverse backgrounds (jobs, position in the community and in the movement, age when possible).

4.2.2. Data collection

The research relies on qualitative methods to dive in the lived experiences of women from the grassroots movements (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative methods are appropriate to understand their roles and their perceptions. The methods are based on the operationalisation of the key concepts, defined before the field study (see annexe 1 for the operationalisation table). These concepts are associated with variables that informed the questions asked during focus groups discussions and semi-structured interviews, defined the structure of the participatory activity, shaped participant observation, and helped the selection of documents to analyse.

- Focus groups discussions (FGDs) allow exploring collectively issues women face in the activist environment and engaging debate. Discussions were held in four different communities with members of the local grassroots movement. Participants were recruited by the grassroots leader based on the female members of the movement. Being part of a grassroots movement was the primary criterion of selection. To establish a safe space for women to talk freely, four of the five discussions involved only women. On average, ten women participated in the FGDs, except for one FGD where 27 women participated. An interpreter-facilitator was present each time to ease the conversation flow. Initially, two rounds of FGD were planned: the second round to validate research findings and to give back to the communities was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Participatory methods were used during FGDS to define collectively the main issues women want to raise and how to address them. This was done with two posters labelled "Issues women face in the community" and "Women's answers" and sticky notes: women had to identify issues and answers to those and stick them in the corresponding charters. This activity served twice to break the ice at the beginning of the session and provided material for group discussion on women's participation in the movements and on their personal and collective objectives. It

allowed women to be actively involved in the research process and allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of their views on their community and the grassroots movements.

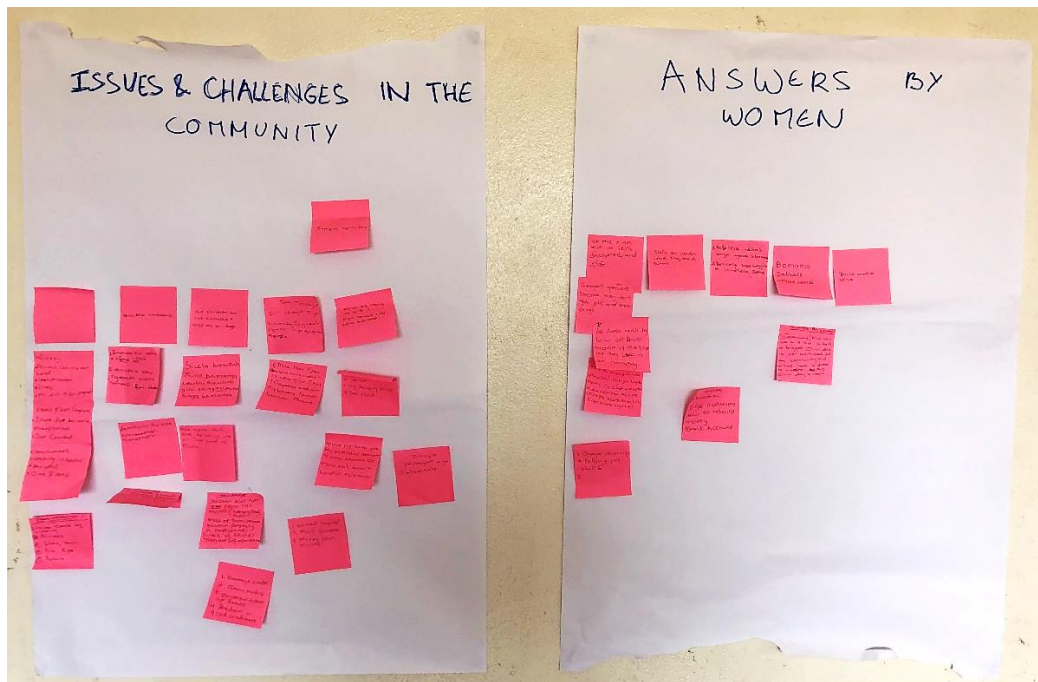


Figure 3. Photograph of the charters at the end of the participatory activity. FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02.

- Semi-structured interviews provided insights into how participants view the world (Bryman, 2012). The interview guides were based on a single model, with some context-specific questions adapted to the interviewee and refined based on research experience. Life-history interviews methods partly informed the structure of the interviews, as this format allows the interviewee to tell his/her complete story and to link it to the social and political context (Adriansen, 2012). This method was useful to start off and to get an in-depth understanding of people's experiences. The pool of 14 respondents – selected with the help of the facilitator – from different communities included both women and men in the grassroots movements, key figures in the community, and members of the umbrella organisation. Two women were selected based on their ideas and engagement during the FGDs to be individually interviewed. Grassroots movements leaders provided a broad picture of the movement and reflected on the topics raised during the group sessions. Finally, as I stayed for five days in one community, I was able to interview key stakeholders – a member of the city council, a former community leader, a movement leader – and a duo of women activists in the cultural domain., who elaborated on the community context and told experiences in other types of spaces of participation. The question of scaling was also discussed during these interviews, as strategies were easier to evoke in this setting than in the FGDs that included members not engaged in scaling activities. My early departure from the field due to the Covid-19 outbreak prevented me from conducting the

individual interviews of three members of the advisory office. I was counting on these to reflect with them on the preliminary findings and the lessons that could be drawn for MACUA-WAMUA. Fortunately, I was able to interview one of them via WhatsApp.

- Participatory observation by taking part in the daily life of the advice office of MACUA-WAMUA in Johannesburg. I participated in two staff meetings and a two-day meeting with the 33 leaders of the grassroots movements. Particular attention was paid to gender relations in mixed settings.
- Document analysis: official policy statements – in English – deriving from the state (the Mining Charter) and from the umbrella organisation (the People’s Mining Charter) are compared through a gendered lens to provide information on women’s formal inclusion in the mining sector. Indeed, document analysis provides data on the context and contextualises the data (Bowen, 2009).

4.3. Methodological reflection

The quality and trustworthiness of this study are assessed with the set of criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba for qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985): credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. In addition, the criterion of authenticity considers the impacts of this research.

- Credibility

Aiming for credibility implies to ensure that “research is carried out according to the canons of good practice” (Bryman, 2012). Opting for adapted and participatory methods was important in two ways: in grasping the particularity of each environment and in creating trust with participants. Preliminary research on each location partly informed interview guides, which were then refined as the understanding of women’s experiences increased. Respecting the ethical principles outlined in section 4.4. was meant to build trust. Being associated with the umbrella organisation further legitimised the research, as did the presence of a facilitator familiar with the community. On the other hand, these facts may have influenced people’s criticism (or lack thereof) towards MACUA-WAMUA, although my neutrality was well stated. Since people would meet me only shortly before the discussions, some time after the discussion was dedicated to informal conversations. These allowed participants to ask me questions and enabled me to validate research findings.

Given the embeddedness of the study in a sometimes (politically) normative activist environment, rendering a realistic account of the context was a salient concern. To enhance the credibility of findings, several data collection methods were used and data were triangulated. The pool of communities allowed

for patterns to emerge. Findings at the local level were discussed with a member of the national office to validate them.

- Transferability

Due to the context-specific nature of the research, it is difficult to assess whether the findings hold in other settings. Efforts to devote attention to contexts included preliminary research, fact-checking, and openness. Along with thick descriptions of the context, these allow assessing for transferability. Nevertheless, findings concerning the gendered dynamics of participation in activist spaces can be of use for activist organisations reflecting on internal power relations. Similarly, the thoroughly described methodology should be transferable to other contexts.

- Dependability

The methodological process was entirely transparent to the organisations involved. Methods considered the potentially sensitive content of the discussion. As interviews and FGDs touched upon gender inequalities, questions were asked in a neutral way in efforts not to influence the respondents. To establish safe spaces for discussion, most focus groups only included women, except for one. The unexpected setting of the latter – with two women and eight men – was challenging in that regard, yet the relatively narrow age-gap between respondents and myself allowed for a relaxed atmosphere with what seemed open and honest discussions.

Each group session was held with a facilitator from the advisory office who was in charge of translation. As direct translation during the FGDs cannot render what is exactly being said, the transcription was later made by an (outside) translator. Even though I explained that the facilitator was a neutral helper, assessing the influence of her presence on the openness of respondents is difficult.

Being overtly associated with the umbrella organisation was, in a way, mitigating the effects of my image as an outsider researcher. I was also able to check my own expectations before going in the research locations with development workers familiar with the communities.

- Confirmability

As “complete objectivity is impossible in social research” (Bryman, 2012), I made sure to be aware of my potential biases. During the fieldwork, I developed close relationships with members of the organisation. To prevent losing a critical distance, discussions on the methods and findings with auditors external to the research context – including my supervisor in Amsterdam and peers from the IDS Master – occurred throughout the whole research process. In order not to impose white feminist views, attention was devoted to representing fairly the different experiences of women. Questions were void of loaded concepts such as ‘feminism’, and respondents were asked to come up with their own definition of gender inequality.

- Authenticity

This additional criterion seems relevant as recommendations for MACUA-WAMUA will be issued at the end of the writing process. Since COVID-19-related restrictions prevented any trips back to the communities to share reflections on preliminary findings, these recommendations and a policy brief are the main ways of ‘giving back.’ To ensure the authenticity of such outputs, various stakeholders in the activist spaces were interviewed in efforts to give the fairest representation of opinions.

As such, ontological authenticity – i.e. whether research participants understand better their social reality – is to be attained with findings on the experiences of women within the activist spaces of MACUA-WAMUA. Similarly, reflections on the gendered dynamics of participation that permeate these spaces and prevent them from fully being safe spaces will enhance catalytic authenticity – assessing whether the research encouraged participants to engage in action for change (Bryman, 2012).

4.4. Ethical reflection

In the context of South Africa and the topic, conducting research in collaboration with the organisation MACUA-WAMUA was prerequisite for my safety during the fieldwork. Independence and critical perspective were safeguarded through the triangulation of methods and the advice of both my local supervisor and my Amsterdam supervisor.

A task of the researcher is to make sure that the research does not harm participants (Bryman, 2012), notably when it comes to gathering data. The methodology was therefore designed with the insights of MACUA members and the local supervisor. Participants in group discussions were recruited by grassroots movements leaders, who were to explain the research purpose. Before each discussion, this information was repeated and willingness to participate and to being recorded was reiterated. Explicit consent was made orally, as a written form was deemed too formal and difficult to manage considering the multiplicity of languages spoken. Attention was given to the safety and comfort of interviewees. It was made clear that the findings would be shared both with the university and the organisation according to the objective of the research, while the data would remain anonymous and confidential.

Respondents in group sessions were compensated in cash for their lunch and transport, in line with the MACUA policy. This system escalated once: in Phola, Mpumalanga, 27 women came instead of the ten women expected. Together with the local leader, we eventually decided to divide the initial amount among all the participants, who were informed of the reasons why.

Transparency on my side was primordial as I wanted participants to have some ownership of the research. I shared the interview scripts when asked. Others used the data themselves: women took pictures of the charts drawn during the group activity to reflect on them. In the daily reality of participatory observation, everybody knew who I was and what I was doing. This transparency also informed the awareness of my positionality and encouraged continuous reflexivity.

I was introduced as a research student collaborating with MACUA to avoid any misconceptions about my role and my ‘wealth.’ My student status was also insisted upon to keep the expectations about the research reasonable. Yet, the image of an outsider from a donor country could be persistent in the way participants viewed me. At first, I stuck to a ‘passive’ listener position to not impose myself as a ‘knowledge possessor’ while distinguishing myself from an activist, then I understood the usefulness of giving examples from my own experience. I found that the similarities in personal perspectives contributed to reducing the researcher-researched gap. Similarly, the fact that I am a woman helped to establish bonds with women I was interviewing.

As most of the fieldwork time was spent in Johannesburg, known for its high crime rates, I was extremely cautious about my safety. Living in the relatively safe and wealthy area of Melville was helpful in that regard. However, staying there also created a gap with the people I was doing research with: one field trip in a particularly poor area contrasted painfully with the life I was leading back in Johannesburg. I was glad to be surrounded by a development worker and an academic researcher to discuss the underlying power dynamics of conducting research in less favoured settings than my own. I tried to present myself as modestly as possible, while also trying to be honest about my privileges.

4.5. Data analysis

The most important task was to analyse the qualitative data drawn from the interviews and participatory activities. A mixture of methods was used for coding with the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.Ti. Firstly, codes issued from the operationalisation were applied deductively to the data. Inductive coding was then used to draw links and find paths through the data (Bryman, 2012). This latter method was chosen for its openness and flexibility that gives room to reflection on the dataset at hand.

The quality of the documents to analyse was first assessed according to the criteria of authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Bryman, 2012) and then went through qualitative content analysis with Atlas.Ti. First, a content analysis organised information into categories related to the central research questions, then a thematic analysis uncovered patterns (Bowen, 2009).

5. Grassroots movements as spaces of (inter)action for women

Women enter the spaces of grassroots movements and organisations to achieve certain objectives. They participate in the internal dynamics of these spaces while they interact with the other members. As such, grassroots movements and organisations are spaces for (inter)action for women. This chapter focuses on the internal processes of grassroots movements and organisations. It first examines why women enter activist spaces and second how they experience them. It answers the first two sub-questions:

- What are the motivations of women establishing or joining grassroots movements and what are the issues they face and raise?
- How do women in grassroots movements participate in, negotiate and shape the internal processes of the movements?

5.1. Women entering grassroots movements and organisations

Women establish or join movements for various motivated reasons. This section first lays out women's motivations to join activist spaces, then discusses the issues they face in the mining community and the issues they raise in the movements and organisations.

5.1.1. Women's motivations to join or to establish movements and organisations

During the research, female participants were asked about their motivations to establish or join movements and organisations. Three trends emerged out of these diverse motivations, that relate to three types of roles (or narratives): that of a woman; of a community member; and an activist. These roles often overlapped, as the following table demonstrates:

Roles Motivations	Woman	Community member	Activist
Solidarity with other women	X		
Discussing women's issues	X		
Collective reflection, knowledge and skills sharing	X	X	
Improving living conditions		X	X
Obtaining benefits from the mining companies	X	X	
Taking action, tackling problems			X
Being an inspiration		X	X

Figure 4. *Women's motivations and the associated roles.*

First, since most research participants were women, the most prominent set of motivations relates to caring for other women. Joining activist spaces is a way of demonstrating and building solidarity among women. Women in the mining community gather to discuss their experiences and exchange knowledge. This solidarity incentive particularly holds in the women's movements: women come together in reaction to women suffering. For instance, a woman explained that witnessing her sister struggling with her disabled child and the shame associated with disability made her want to join and support other women experiencing the same. Similarly, women in Phola started an organisation to organise and mobilise women about rampant gender-based violence in the area. The women in these communities created a safe space for discussion, where they share their stories and reflect on them. This kind of support was also sought by a focus group participant in Khutsong:

"I think by joining the movement you have a chance as a woman to talk about our problems [...] the challenges that women are facing – how to work them out; how to solve them; to help each other. So [...] I joined the movement [...] to bring change to women, to the daily living of a woman in our community" (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02).

Collective reflection aims at gaining knowledge about themselves and their situation: "to understand ourselves as women and the kind of space we are currently in" (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02). They want to share practical skills as well: in Evaton, women were teaching one another to knit or make shoes and jewellery. Moreover, women find pride in gathering, they develop a group identity, which is demonstrated in the following statement from one of the grassroots women's organisation leaders: "Let me add that if we attend meetings with women who are serious and take themselves so, it means we are indeed women" (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02).

To support and empower the women, women in grassroots movements physically bring them all together and take them out of the space where they "suffer" from their (gender-) specific burden: "We want to help women to stand up. Women should not [lock] themselves in their homes with this suffering" (FGD2, Evaton, 20/02). They give them the opportunity to speak for themselves.

These movements later connect the issues to mining activities: they worked to understand the impacts mining activities have on their living conditions (e.g. gender-based violence associated with the presence of mines) and looked for potential benefits that women can retrieve from the mines. For instance, they want specific types of jobs in the mines: in Phola and Khutsong, they agreed on the fact that working underground was not suitable for them and demanded cleaning or cooking positions. Women sometimes had different or even clashing objectives: in Phola, there were heated debates about whether they wanted jobs from the mines or whether they wanted the mines completely off their land:

“There is a lot that our communities do not know and are not aware of. All they want is to get employment. Ok fine, you will get the job and still complain about the money, that they are not paying enough. Your bosses will be staying overseas with their families and breathing fresh air while you will be busy breathing the unhealthy air that was caused by their doings. All I am saying is that these owners should pack up and leave; and never return so the mines could be closed” (FGD5, Phola, 10/03).

Some women were suggesting instead to ask for funds – as compensation for mining companies taking land and contributing to pollution – that they would collectively manage. In two occasions “alternatives” to LSM were found: farming and (inclusive) artisanal mining.

It is when they started affiliating with the national umbrella MACUA-WAMUA that women’s movements in Evaton and Phola extended their membership to men and integrated community-related rhetoric: “We have to fight for the community. We have to advocate for people who cannot talk for themselves and chase away things that affect the community” (FGD2, Evaton, 20/02).

The community discourse points to the second set of motivations, related to the role of a community member. Joining grassroots movements equates to having a significant role in the community by improving the living conditions. Entering these specific activist spaces is a means to understand their situation as a mining community and the legislation regarding their status. This discourse of understanding and knowledge sharing also serves to mobilise community members. Respondents referred to their responsibility towards the community: many explained that they were willing to “help” and “assist” the community, that they were even “fighting for the community.” One mentioned justice: “[I want] to do more for people, and see people getting the justice they really deserve” (SI3, Ekurhuleni, 28/02). Thus, they conceive their role as a movement or organisation member as essential to the life of the community.

These motivations are particularly evident in the objectives of mixed movements. Two of the movements under study emerged to tackle a specific community issue (undocumented children or dumping areas) and later drew connections to the impacts of mining activities. They now aim at obtaining benefits and profits from the mines:

“You know, mining companies they will say ‘we are developing communities’, but then when you go on your naked eye to check those developmental projects they are not being implemented, meaning that the communities are not benefitting from mining companies, so that’s when I started saying that ‘no, there’s something wrong’. The community, [...] we have to advocate for the rights. Because the policies are saying that communities should benefit” (SI9, Johannesburg, 05/03).

This male leader refers to the legislation that requires mining companies to implement development projects for the surrounding mining communities. He denounces the fact that in practice, most projects are not completed, or not in a substantial way. Through movements and organisations' actions and advocacy, women and men are acting on behalf of the whole mining community. These movements and organisations become a platform through which the mining community dialogues with the mining companies. In Gauteng, two different groups highlighted this empowering dimension of the movement:

"There is the lack of communication between the mines and the communities. We're not given the platform to speak our mind hence we turn to the organisations that can assist us in speaking to the mine" (FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02).

Furthermore, just as the women from the single-sex groups, women in the two mixed settings expect the movement to strengthen women specifically. The mixed movements under study are establishing women-only groups and adopting gendered objectives. For instance, a movement demanding jobs considers the specific issues women face during recruitment (see 5.1.2.).

Finally, participating in movements and organisations implies embracing the idealised role of an activist. Some women defined their motivation for becoming an activist as "being able to tackle problems" (SI3, Ekurhuleni, 28/02) or becoming, as declared a leader, "an inspiration to the community" (SI11, Phola, 10/03). In these statements, a strong bond with the community is demonstrated: "I just want to be in front of the community, telling them a lot of things" (S8, Provincial coordinator, Johannesburg, 05/03) while stressing the individual dimension of this engagement. By becoming activists, women reach a new level of 'responsibility': they have a personal duty to improve the collective living conditions. There is a sense of continuity, of connection to previous fights, "Now, if I have to break the chain, I have to break it now, for my kids no to be affected from what my parents have been affected [by]" (SI13), sometimes combined with a bigger struggle: "I will continue fighting, for black people to benefit" (SI10). Becoming an activist means belonging to a group, it implies to find one's place in a collective space where all the other members are your "comrades" in the common struggle.

Besides, in places heavily marked by unemployment, activism gives women a purposeful occupation:

"Before, I was a housewife, I was waiting for my husband to give me something. Now with the forum, even if I don't get paid, at least I can feel I am a human being because I am going in and out like a normal person. I am not staying in the sofa, I am sharing ideas, I'm getting more experience" (GI1, Ekurhuleni, 27/02)

Some women explained that activism was a full-time occupation that kept them "busy," while before they felt they were not doing something useful or significant. In a similar vein, several women demonstrated pride in the fact of volunteering and giving time to a cause that would serve the whole

community, without being paid for it. Being an activist is sometimes a career on its own, as some leaders interviewed had long experiences in different movements and/or organisations.

5.1.2. Women facing and raising issues

During the research, the best way to invite women to share their experiences was to ask about the issues they are facing as women in mining communities. These issues inform women's decisions to participate in grassroots movements as well as they shape movements agendas. The main issues raised can be grouped into six categories which inductively emerged from the data, as the following table displays:

Main issues		Relevance (frequently/sometimes/rarely mentioned)
Women's specific issues	Difficulties to express themselves/make themselves heard	Frequently mentioned
	Gender-based violence	Frequently mentioned
	Responsibilities in the household	Mentioned sometimes
Issues related to mining companies' practices	Difficulties to communicate with the mining companies, lack of transparency	Frequently mentioned
	Difficulties to understand the relationships between mining companies and the municipality	Mentioned sometimes
	Lack of participatory processes	Mentioned sometimes
	Issues with language and translation	Rarely mentioned (once)
	Difficult hiring prerequisites	Frequently mentioned
	Issues related to immigration	Frequently mentioned
Land and housing	Relocation	Mentioned sometimes
	Overcrowding	Rarely mentioned (twice)
	Informal settlements	Mentioned sometimes
	Potholes and cracking houses	Mentioned sometimes

Environmental and health issues	Breathing sicknesses	Frequently mentioned
Youth	Drug use	Frequently mentioned
	HIV and teenage pregnancy	Mentioned sometimes
	Unemployment	Frequently mentioned
	Lack of skills	Mentioned sometimes
Broader issues in the community	Service delivery	Frequently mentioned
	Poverty	Frequently mentioned
	Unemployment	Frequently mentioned

Figure 5. *Women facing and raising issues*

In addition to the explicit women's specific issues, most issues have gendered implications. The issues that were frequently mentioned were almost inevitably found in every mining community, as is the case for gender-based violence for instance. Other issues varied between communities or provoked different concerns, such as immigration that caused children to not have proper documents in Khutsong while immigration was deemed to be the source of crime and violence in Phola (see figure 6).

Issues Communities	Women's specific issues	Issues related to mining companies' practices	Land and housing	Environmental and health issues
Khutsong	GBV (incest)	Lack of transparency from the task team ⁴ Immigration (undocumented children)	Sinkholes and cracking houses	
Evaton	Concerns of mothers related to birth deformities			Birth deformities Pollution (air) Dumping sites and open sewers Dirty water

⁴ The task team is composed of elected community representatives, in charge of establishing a link between the mining company and the community.

Ekurhuleni		Lack of transparency (task team) Challenges related to language Immigration (jobs, STDs)	Informal settlements Cracking houses	Pollution (air)
Phola		Mines to close in ten years Lack of transparency (trust fund) Issues related to immigration (violence and xenophobia) Relocation	Overcrowding Informal settlements Cracking houses	Sicknesses (tuberculosis, pollution) Air pollution Dirty water
Kriel			Municipality Buildings (school & sanitary, internet)	Air pollution

Figure 6. *The context-specific issues*

To go back to the general issues raised (figure 5), first, women face specific issues due to their gender and the patriarchal norms that shape expectations about their behaviour. As the participatory activity demonstrated in Ekurhuleni (figure 7), women experience difficulties to express themselves:

Issue	Aspects	Quotations
Difficulties to express themselves / make themselves heard	Lack of credit granted to women's words.	"Women are not taken serious[ly] every time."
		"Women's voices are not heard."
	Ignorance of the common character of their issues, lack of spaces to discuss their issues.	"It is a lack of communication to talk about everything that connect us."

	When there are spaces dedicated to certain issues, these spaces are male dominated: unequal power dynamics permeate these. Lack of spaces for women owned by women.	“Women experience difficulties to engage and discuss issues affecting them because they don’t govern the platform to engage with anybody concerning them as women, i.e. in male-dominated areas.”
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Figure 7. *The different aspects of women’s difficulties to express themselves.* All the quotes are from FDG4, drawn from the participatory activity, PA1, Ekurhuleni, 28/02.

These difficulties are multi-faceted: women identified several dimensions of the lack of expression, ranging from the lack of credit granted to their word to the lack of communication among women themselves. Participants expressed women’s fear of not being listened to by men in their activist space and by the broader community. Subsequently, they blamed the lack of spaces dedicated to them alone, where they would be sure of being heard. In Ekurhuleni, they linked this lack of voice to cultural (patriarchal) norms:

“The power of communication is based mostly on men because women are expected to submit to their husband” (PA1, Ekurhuleni, 28/02)

“Women can’t voice out their feelings towards their male counterparts as they are considered to be submissive” (PA1, Ekurhuleni, 28/02)

Women in mining communities have internalised the idea that they must “submit” to their husband and that their opinion matters less than that of men’s. For male and female respondents, in general, women do not dare to ask or apply for jobs, nor do they dare to denounce the abuse they may face at home or in the workplace.

Furthermore, women are often the ones in charge of household life and chores, which may leave them economically dependent on the men in the household as they do not work or earn enough money. Particular to mining communities, research respondents evoked the cases of retrenchment from the mines: would the man (the head of the household) become unable to work, the woman would have to take care of him and to perform his duties as well. Besides, staying at home can expose women to gender-based violence:

“Remember if the men are working in the mines, and the women are left to care for the children at home, it becomes difficult for the women to sustain their own, because their husbands are not there. You find that the women have a heavier load than any other people in the communities. [...] you find the gender-based violence is affecting

mostly the women because when the men come from work they are tired and they don't wanna leave the women their chance to rest as well.” (FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02).

Women insisted on the pernicious aspects of gender-based violence occurring at home: because there is this personal, intimate dimension, women find it difficult to talk about, especially when they are afraid of potential repercussions. As outlined in the context chapter, South Africa is marked by extremely high rates of gender-based violence. This violence takes different forms:

“The problems that are affecting us, especially for women as you all know; they are abused, killed, raped and children as well. At the end of the day, we are the ones who shed a tear, isn't it?” (FGD2)

Many respondents highlighted beatings and they pointed out the roots of the violence to frustration (linked to unemployment and/or poverty). Gender-based violence also occurs in the workplace (or at the entrance of the workplace): in three different locations, women denounced the ‘sex bribes’ they were asked by men in the mines to obtain jobs.

The second line of issues identified and raised by women relates to the mining activities taking place near the community. Many respondents want to tackle the lack of transparency and accountability in the mining sector. Women in all the mining communities lacked information regarding mines in their areas, they were often lost between Social Labour Plans (defined by mining companies) and Integrated Development Plans (defined by municipalities) and regretted that mines were often hard to get in touch with. Further, as women in Kriel particularly insisted upon, the relationships between the mining companies and the (local) authorities are often ambiguous: “The municipality is fighting for the mine, not the community” (PO1, Kriel, 06/02). In Phola, there were problems with the trust fund: the community had no information whatsoever about the amount of money that it represented and how it was utilised⁵. This lack of transparency is echoed by the People’s Mining Charter, written and ratified by all the movements and organisations gathered under MACUA:

“We note that the mining industry is cloaked in secrecy which runs contrary to our constitutional values and insist that both government and corporations have a duty to provide affected communities with transparent information and processes”.
(MACUA-WAMUA, 2016)

Women in grassroots movements and organisations denounce the lack of participatory processes: communities blame the lack of involvement by mining companies in their establishment and the drafting

⁵ The Mining Charter requires that a trust (or a similar vehicle) should be set up by the mining companies to the benefit of host mining communities.

of the SLPs. Under the umbrella, all movements and organisations demand from the legislation the right to consent, instead of consultation.

Related to the issue of transparency is that of language, as raised in Ekurhuleni specifically. Although the Mining Charter requires documents to be translated in English and one of the local languages, women are concerned about whether they are understood when they go to the mines to address certain issues or fear they do not understand everything that concerns them.

Working positions in mines are difficult to obtain for women. All grassroots movements and organisations raise the issue of impossible requirements to obtain a job (e.g. related to studies or experience), and women accused mines of hiring more men than women. Furthermore, as mining companies often bring in and employ migrant workers from other provinces or neighbouring countries, immigration raises tensions in the communities. In locations gripped with high rates of unemployment and where informal settlements adjoin formal ones, tensions over jobs and housing arise. The fact that mining companies hire “foreigners instead of” locals was denounced in almost all focus groups. Migrants were also often blamed for different issues linked to crime and violence. In Phola, participants were particularly harsh on migrants: “This placed is filled with people from [KwaZulu] Natal, and they have already started terrorising the residents” (FGD5, Phola, 10/03). Moreover, workers migrate from one working place to another and/or move from their family village to their working place, and these movements create concerns for the women and children left behind. Not only are women (“official” wives in the family village or girlfriends in the mining community) left to care alone for the children, but migrants were also accused by some research participants of leaving them with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. The children born from migrant workers who do not have proper documents are denied access to healthcare and education.

The third line of issues raised by women is that of land and housing: when mining companies establish themselves, they often require to relocate people or graveyards. One male leader from KwaZulu Natal explained that he started a movement because his father’s grave was to be displaced by a mining company. When mining companies close the sites, they are required by the Mining Charter to rehabilitate the land. However, several participants told that this obligation was not always met, leaving polluted and unsafe abandoned mines. With mines taking land and attracting people, mining communities can also experience severe overcrowding, as in Phola. In three areas – both in Gauteng and Mpumalanga – women mentioned informal settlements where people lack water and electricity. Besides, mining activities have a direct impact on the landscape: women described the mining blasting that causes tremors provoking sinkholes and cracking houses in Khutsong and Ekurhuleni. The constant traffic of mining trucks marks the roads and create big potholes, which I could see for myself when reaching the communities. Finally, land-related issues have historical and political relevance. Several movement leaders recalled that the colonial and apartheid regimes have dispossessed black people of land and explained that nowadays land is subject to vivid tensions. Women are often excluded from land

possession, and some female leaders emphasised women's links to the land in order to define their position regarding women's land ownership.

Fourth, women in mining communities raise environmental and health issues. Air and water mining pollution cause diverse sicknesses, from itchy skin to sinuses. In Ekurhuleni, women explained that formally linking their symptoms to mining activities is hard and they planned to involve an expert to that end.

Fifth, women in mining communities are concerned for the youth. According to them, they lack skills, which prevents them from getting jobs – when there are jobs at all. In turn, the lack of activity and income are factors which contribute to drug use and crime. They also want to raise awareness about teenage pregnancy and HIV.

Finally, they voice broad concerns about life in the community, naming poverty and unemployment as deeply rooted issues. They also target service delivery and facilities, notably in Evaton and Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act states that mining companies must align their SLPs with the local IDPs. Mining companies are required to include in their plans a local economic development programme, part of which is dedicated to the local infrastructure and should contribute to basic services delivery. As such, women denounce electricity and water shortages, when mining activities require vast amounts of power.

5.2. Women experiencing movement's spaces and their internal processes

Once women have integrated movements and organisations, they must find their place in a space with its processes. As outlined in the theoretical framework, grassroots entities are infused with power dynamics. This section considers the design of activist spaces and highlights women's experiences within these. It aims at 'assessing' their participation in internal processes, at exploring the challenges they potentially face and the strategies to deal with them. It first looks at the structure and design of movements, second at women's conception of their experiences, and third at how they negotiate and shape internal processes.

5.2.1. Grassroots movements and organisations' spaces design

Two types of spaces are studied: (1) single-sex spaces (progressively opening to male membership), and (2) mixed spaces (progressively establishing an all-female space). The first women's group in Evaton started in 2014 to support women. Its core activities include sewing for the women and children in need in their area. They have an affiliated group in a neighbouring section, where (mostly old) women do

gardening. As the group grows and affiliates with the national movement, they are opening their constituency to men, and they address broader issues in the community, related to mining. They organise pickets and marches, along with lobbying with mines and local authorities. Since women are dominating in terms of number, they are the ones leading the group. Similarly, the women's organisation in Phola was established by and for women, it was launched as a movement and then registered as a non-profit organisation. They organise "storytelling" workshops for women to speak freely about their experiences of assault for instance. As they partnered with MACUA, they included men and the youth. Still, men join knowing:

"this is how we work; this is how we prioritise women and we don't practice patriarchal system in the movement" (SI11, Phola, 10/03).

Again, as women are the most numerous, they hold the main positions in the executive board.

The mixed groups under study seem to follow the reverse dynamic: drawing inspiration from the "safe" nature of single-sex groups, they are establishing women units. This trend is largely encouraged by the national movement, in efforts to focus on the gendered impacts of mining and to give more voice and space to women within the movements.

One of these grassroots organisations is already composed of a mixed group and a branch dedicated to the youth. Their women branch will lead its own campaigns and define its own agenda. The executive oversees the whole group and is currently composed of three men (including the chairperson) and three women (vice-chairperson, treasurer, and secretary), leading a hundred members altogether. Three other women are in charge of structuring the new branch. One of them explained how it started:

"We were supposed to ask for funding for an event we were doing for women's month, so [the chairperson] decided I should just write the letters and emails for funding and say that I am the chairperson of the women organisation" (SI3, Ekurhuleni, 28/02).

When asked about women's involvement, she answered that the women structure was operational,

"although I would say that participation of our women is not that much, because some of them they can't write, they can't understand the things that we do. [...] but we want everybody to be involved [...] some don't know much and can't voice out because some [...] are afraid to voice out, they think that people would laugh at them or whatever" (ibid).

She thus evokes the difficulties of organising women.

In the mixed movement in Khutsong, the women explained that everyone does his/her job. However, "women are there but we are not balanced" (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02). The male chairperson explained

that the membership is currently dominated by men, but they are working on recruiting women, in order to “capacitate them in activism” (SI1). The logic is

“that [women being in leadership positions] will transfer to the community, because the things we are doing, it starts small, upwards to the executive, and then goes back to the community” (SI1, Khutsong, 19/02).

Mixed movements organise activities that are geared towards daily life, such as cleaning campaigns, charity events, or that are issue-based. They also resort to protest politics, often with the support of other communities. Both mixed and women’s movements participate in government consultations over mining legislation under the name of MACUA. All of them organise actions to gather and spread information, and more and more of them address specifically gender-based violence.

5.2.2. Women’s participating in internal processes experiences

Experiences with the internal processes vary from one woman to another. These experiences tell about the nature of activist spaces and account for women’s participation. During the FGDs, I asked what participants thought about the activist spaces, whether they had ever faced challenges within their movement. Most of the time, they answered straight away that these were spaces of equality, where women’s voices matter as much as men’s:

“There is equality. We are all equal within MACUA, it is even better now that we have men in MACUA, right?” (FGD2, Evaton, 20/02)

“It’s a safe movement, a safe platform [other women nodding]” (FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02).

On the contrary, the first group felt that women were not equal to men within the movement:

“W1: We are not yet equal because most of the jobs are done by men and then we as women will always...”

Facilitator: follow them.

W2: They will come and report to you: ‘this what we have done, I have just come from the municipality office and talked to the mayor, this is what happened’ [...] what can I say?” (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02)

In that same organisation, the assistant (a woman) of the chairperson (a man) recalled how her legitimacy as an assistant was once questioned by a man. Questions in terms of roles and leadership, that are going beyond the mere presence of women, were raised in another organisation as well:

“When you compare to the organisation, men will always be in power, like we don’t have to hide it, we have to be straightforward [...] [men] are informed, they have full understanding, they know how to work with the mines you know, so sometimes it’s like you feel outside” (FDG4, all-female).

Women warned against ‘false’ equality, consisting of appointing or recruiting women only to satisfy quotas and representation purposes. A key informant observed that women in the executive of their grassroots organisation hold the positions of secretary, treasurer, and vice-chairperson, in other words ‘administrative’ positions, without as much decision-making power as other executive positions. A group of women put in perspective this leadership inequality within the activist spaces with similar inequalities in their daily lives. During the FGD and the participatory activity with the charters “issues” and “answers” (see 4.2.2) a woman wrote the positions women hold in different spheres (the workplace, the household, and the organisation) on the first board, and on the ‘answers’ board, she imagined the positions she wanted them to hold. The left column represents the ‘issues’ charter and the bottom-left box her corresponding post-it, the right column the ‘answers’ charter and the bottom-right box the matching note:

Issues faced by women in the community	Answers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working place: e.g. admin[istration] - Houses: have to cook - Organisation: men leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working place: women become CEO for the companies - Houses: men can help around the houses e.g. [with] children work - Organisation: women can voice out and lead the communities

Figure 8. Participatory activity 1, Ekurhuleni (28/02/2020)

She highlights that women are confined to certain ‘secondary or background’ roles while men are leaders, even in the organisation. With the organisation, she wants women to be able to voice out, and outside the organisation, she wishes women lead the community.

As outlined in section 5.1.2., both male and female grassroots leaders felt that women have difficulties to speak up and that even in the mixed activist spaces they are not vocal enough. For them, it is because women have internalised patriarchal norms that they “put themselves at the back” (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02). Even within the movement, women do not always feel that their arguments are deemed as legitimate as men’s. According to some female respondents, this internalisation was also demonstrated in the lack of support for women leaders from other women, who would tend to prefer male leaders.

Similarly, within the national movement, an important male figure would be praised for his leadership, while his (somewhat) sexist jokes would go completely unquestioned. His tendency to oversee everything for himself was widely accepted, while his female counterpart was held accountable for the same practices. Therefore, patriarchal culture, gendered norms and inequalities present in the South African society transfer to a certain extent to grassroots movements and organisations.

To counter this challenge, the movements and organisations are setting up (or female members wish/ask them to) specific workshops and training for women, and work on their internal processes. Indeed, two male leaders insisted on the role of the movement to “capacitate women.” Similarly, the national movement, in a top-down approach, serves as an example by setting up spaces with parity. In the mixed meeting with local and provincial leaders, women were as vocal as men. They were also the main ones discussing their gendered agenda. Finally, it is worth remembering that women experiences differ. Several women insisted on the fact that they were comfortable working in both mixed groups and single-sex groups. Among women in focus groups, I witnessed age dynamics: the elders (occupying leading positions in the community) would be the most talkative, while the youngest would be the ones agreeing to the one-on-one interviews following the FGD.

5.2.3. Women’s strategies

Women employ, consciously or not, strategies to navigate activist spaces and their internal dynamics. These strategies can be formal, and rely on structural provisions such as legal rights, or the movement’s formal action repertoire, or they can be informal, and rely on discourse politics so women “develop autonomous space within which they can generate new values, norms and frames” (Beckwith, 2014). During the research, the formal strategies that emerged relied on the existing claim to equality to make it substantial and meaningful.

“Give us our space, give us our role so that you can see what women can do” (SII3)

To that end, women in FGDs asked for an equal appointment of women and men in executive positions. As most movements and organisations are in the process of recruiting women or establishing women units, most female respondents reclaim more women in power positions. In addition, most women demanded to be represented by women rather than by men speaking on their behalf. They denounced the risk to cede to a façade women’s empowerment rhetoric to attract funders, as including gendered agendas is part of a larger trend in development work in South Africa, one key informant explained. They also reclaim spaces and platforms dedicated to them within their movement so they can have safe spaces to grow and decide how they do so. Several respondents consider that empowerment within safe spaces strengthens women’s roles and positions in the whole mixed movement. Besides, most women in the research insisted on the importance of solidarity among themselves for them to build one another. A vivid example of the potential of safe spaces was when a woman shared a personal story of rape in a focus group: all the women present felt for her and gave her advice as to where to go to. Such support

could be less formal: a female leader and her peers created a WhatsApp female-only chat to use during big meetings to interact and back one another up out loud in front of male leaders. She explained that this would make them feel more comfortable and provided a way of appropriating the mixed space.

The movements and organisations roles (influenced by their female members) include teaching women not only through dedicated workshops, but also in their autonomy, by supporting their projects. Teaching implies strengthening women and making them grow: the ultimate goal is, according to a national female leader quoting the black American feminist Audre Lorde “with us as women, the more we grow stronger the more we fight to dismantle the master’s house” (FGD1, Khutsong, 19/02).

On a more individual level and in a less overt manner, women within mixed spaces adopt informal strategies to assert their place. The following distinction of three types of strategies emerged mainly from individual interviews.

First, women assert themselves as vocal, straightforward, confident:

“Within the organisations [...] as a woman, I don’t allow [men to be more vocal than women]. [...] I am the type of person who doesn’t allow to be controlled by men. I want to control my space. Whether you are a president, you are a chief, you are whoever, you are an academic, myself I don’t care” (SI8, Johannesburg, 05/03).

Being loud is a way of contradicting the expectation that women should remain silent and discrete. It is about reclaiming speech, asserting one’s voice in the debate. This straightforwardness functions with the idea of confrontation when women are challenged: women can impose their presence (in the group) and directly confront the challengers.

A less direct strategy is that of negotiating. One key female leader praised such a strategy: she described it as “women standing up” rather than “challenging men”. She explained

“to be submissive is part of our culture. You cannot change that. But you can say to your leaders ‘yes, this is right, but can we change this in this way?’ Because even if this is wrong, this is not what you’re going to tell them, it’s about giving them [an alternative]” (SI13, WhatsApp, 30/03).

Instead of directly questioning (men’s) authority, it is about guiding them. She compared it to “bribing [her] way” since it is about compromising in one domain in order to negotiate on another topic. The day I met her, she and another young woman were explaining this ‘negotiating’ strategy by physically taking one step backwards, then two steps forward.

Finally, a strategy on the long term can be labelled as being “reasonable”: remaining “quiet” and hardworking, until earning legitimacy. Some women explained that they would ignore critics until they proved them wrong with their actions. In their view, patience, tenacity, and rationality would demonstrate to others their legitimacy. Such view was echoed by a grassroots leader, who explained that

when she entered the men's space of artisanal mining (as she put it herself) "I had to be reasonable, I had to tell them how I believe things have to be done, then my comrades were like 'ok, we want this type of person to represent us'" (SI8, Johannesburg, 05/03). This same woman otherwise claimed herself to be loud and vocal, thus showing that the two strategies can function simultaneously, depending on the space in question. Thus, all three strategies can be used alternatively.

5.3. Concluding remarks

Grassroots movements conceptualised as spaces of interaction allow the analysis to focus on: (1) activist spaces as a means for women to take action towards certain objectives and on (2) activists spaces as a space where they interact with other women and men. Women enter these spaces with motivations that relate to three types of roles: that of a woman, that of a community member, and that of an activist. They articulate these roles (often simultaneously) to raise different issues to tackle. Women experience activist spaces differently depending on their structure. While most women thought of such spaces as places of equality, discrepancies (that echo patriarchal norms and values) between men and women in participation sometimes remain. Women then resort to formal and less formal strategies to further their interests.

As this section has analysed women's agency within activist spaces, the following section sheds light on women's agency outside activist spaces. Indeed, activist spaces are not closed spaces, secluded from other spaces. They intersect with several dimensions of women's lives, as well as with other scales of action.

6. Grassroots movements as intersections

Grassroots movements are spaces and actors interlocked in wider social and political dynamics. Besides the mining community, they interact with various stakeholders of the mining sector. This chapter explores the linkages between the movements and external actors and processes. These linkages are conceptualised in two ways: they consist of the (individual) external processes of women expanding their activism outside the activist space and they comprise the (collective) actions of women dealing with external politics of the movements. As such, grassroots movements are intersections in the individual lives of women, as spaces between the household and the community, and intersections in the collective lives of women, between horizontal and vertical scale levels.

This chapter is divided along the horizontal and vertical lines of linking processes. The horizontal perspective focuses on women in grassroots movements tying their activism to their immediate environment, while the vertical one sheds light on the linkages established with actors at higher scale levels. This chapter answers the last sub-question:

- How and with what objectives do women from grassroots movements establish horizontal and vertical links with different stakeholders?

6.1. Women activists linking horizontally

Women evolve within activist spaces, demonstrating various roles as they adapt to and shape internal processes. In turn, these experiences influence women's identities in their immediate environment outside activist spaces. These experiences are part of the processes of horizontal linking. This section puts in perspective women's actions in different spaces at the horizontal level, namely on the personal level, at home and in the community (see figure 9).

Activism also empowers women in the combination of “women’s roles” and “activist roles” (as outlined in 5.1.1.). Women develop their self-confidence: it is a space where they develop an identity of their own. One leader explained,

“I was born for this [being an activist], I don’t believe in saying that maybe I should accept that I am a woman, that there are certain things I shouldn’t do, no. I think, as a woman, I can do everything, even that men can do” (SI8, Johannesburg, 05/03).

She emphasises that her activist role enables her to go beyond the silent role that is expected from women. This emancipation could echo a feminist philosophy, and yet, during the research, few women explicitly referred to feminism. Two young women who are intervening regularly at the grassroots and the national level declared to be feminists but admitted that this label was not embraced by a lot of women. Later, one of them explained:

“This feminist thing is a big word [ish]. I think people take it the wrong way. [taking a mocking voice] ‘I’m a feminist, I’m not going to be led by men, [...] I am a leader’, no. to be a feminist, I think it’s being strong, as a woman, it’s being built, as a woman, it’s being a leader, as a woman.[...] It’s to understand what individually you want, it’s to support people when they need the support.” (SI13, WhatsApp, 30/03)

Here she opposes an individualistic take on feminism, disconnected from the reality, to a strong figure, connected to the others. For her, feminism is about becoming “independent”, but also about helping others to achieve the same. In fact, the lack of an explicit feminist label does not prevent women and organisation to take on actions that could be analysed as feminist. According to some research participants, it is more a matter of misconception or ignorance of what feminism entails, rather than a rejection of ‘feminism’.

During the research, I asked about both gains and losses of being an activist. As outlined above, women evoked empowerment, while they expressed only a few downsides apart from not being paid, which was formulated as something to be proud of. One response depicted the ups and downs of the combined role of being a woman/mother and being an activist:

I lose a lot of things, like opportunities [...] maybe I would have went to school, to study something, maybe I would be working somewhere [...] but now I don’t have time, because I am full-time advocating for the rights of the communities [...] I am losing because I have a daughter, she’s eleven, so if I’m not even working, how am I going to take care of her?” (SI8, Johannesburg, 05/03).

She is proud of being an activist, nevertheless, she regrets the lack of time and money to dedicate to her daughter. As such, activism impacts her personal life in terms of jobs and education, and her family life as a mother.

All in all, the individual identity formed in the activist space allows women to navigate other spaces in their personal lives: the household, the workplace, and the community. Their engagement equates to capacity building, enabling them to reclaim space and legitimacy in other spaces, but also teaching them valuable skills for their empowerment.

6.1.2. Activism at home

The transition between activist spaces and the home is an intriguing one. It takes different forms, from going between two separate spaces to integrating activism in the household. All the women in Evaton considered the trajectory from the home to the activist space empowering: “At home you are a mother. But when you get here you are supposed to be equal to others” (FGD2, Evaton, 20/02). This quotation echoes views expressed in another location, where women explained that they had to submit to their husband at home, while they were equal to men in the grassroots organisation. Conversely, going from a space of equality back to a space with more gender inequalities can be challenging. Two young women from the advisory office highlighted the different roles they were adopting in the name of MACUA: they were strong female leaders travelling all over the country to mobilise women and youth, while they were still facing difficulties due to their gender at home (both of them live in mining communities near Johannesburg). Later, one of them elaborated:

“we submit, even when we are comrades. At home I leave my comrade [outfit] at the gate. [I am] still ruled by my dad, whether it is right or wrong, my mother has to submit to her husband” (SI13, WhatsApp, 30/03).

On the contrary, another woman found in her activist experiences the strength to challenge her father concerning the legacy he was planning on giving to her two brothers, while she was not supposed to receive anything.

In a focus group with a women’s organisation, the elders explained that there were some things about their activism they were not telling their husbands. Not only was it their space of their own, but they were also fearing disapproval. For instance, one never tells her partner about the money she uses to buy sewing material for the group, as she fears he would get mad about this expenditure. On the other hand, the leader of this group nuanced the view that women had to be submissive and that their opinions mattered less than men’s. She explained that as a pastor’s wife, she has a key role in the community, and she is able to share her strong opinions with the congregation as much as her husband is able to. She added that this leading role comes with duties, and she has to leave her problems at home in order to be focused and to appear as a strong leader.

Most of the women insisted on the benefits of a safe place/activist space as an escape from difficulties at home or in the workplace. They find courage in the company of women experiencing similar challenges. The activist space can contrast heavily with the home, making the return home arduous. Some women find themselves articulating different identities according to the space they are in, while others feel that they are activists 24 hours a day and that it is precisely this identity that allows them to negotiate differences and inequalities at home. Further, family support varies and influences the interconnectedness of the activist space and the household.

6.1.3. Activism in the community

Grassroots movements and organisation fit in the mining community, which is another form of horizontal linking. Since they act in the name of the whole community, they create strong linkages with other community members to build their legitimacy and increase their impact. One female leader formulated how the community support mattered to her:

“I can say I am glad with the support that I get, because it’s a support that I was looking for and the recognition from the community, because now at least people they do take you seriously that you’re trying to fight the injustices for the community, at least there is someone who is not just keeping quiet.” (SI11, Phola, 10/03)

This recognition from the community depends on the extent of transparency of the movement or organisation and their willingness to involve community members in their actions, be they cleaning campaigns or charity events for the people in need. Most leaders are committed to making people in the community understand their goals and strategies while they express that they are fighting for the community as a whole. Such movements and organisations act as a bridge between the community, the local government and local mining companies, an unprecedented role ‘of public interest.’ However, mass recruitment is sometimes difficult because of the lack of funds and the voluntary nature of activism:

“The thing is, people who come here do not have the desire to assist the community, instead they are expecting a payment. Unfortunately, we do not get any payment because it is not a workplace” (FGD2, Evaton, 20/03)

Asserting their position within the community as a key actor requires movements to be acknowledged by the municipality. Sometimes movements need the support of the municipality for their actions and projects, and movements might want to discuss and/or address issues with the municipality, especially regarding their links with mining activities. Relationships between movements and local institutions can thus be ambiguous, oscillating between collaboration and mutual suspicion. In one community specifically, respondents explained that the municipality would always delay their meetings or send

them from one interlocutor to the other until they would get weary. Generally, communities feel excluded from the decision-making, they do not feel informed nor consulted about Integrated Development Plans or Social Labour Plans. In a focus group, participants evoked how politics could make the situation even more complicated for the movement:

“It’s difficult for us because the ANC, the other parties they think we are against them...they think we are politically-minded. You see, everything is about the ANC, [...] they do the IDPs, but when we try to question those, it doesn’t have full answers. Sometimes when we go to the local [office] it’s like we are against them because of the political party that is inactive” (FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02)

There is a fine line between confronting the municipality on their lack of transparency and appearing to compete with them on the political stage. In Ekurhuleni specifically, both leaders and members discussed the difficulty for people in the community to differentiate activists from politicians. Again, grassroots movements occupy an ambiguous place in the community, that has to be clearly defined for the community members to understand their work.

In other communities however, movements and organisations were working closely with the municipality, even participating in the decision-making. For instance, one women’s organisation was part of the municipality AIDS council and they were invited to the police station for meetings about gender-based violence.

Horizontal linking also entails to partner with local non-profit organisations and other key actors of the community life. In Khutsong, a woman managed to partner with the local church to launch an awareness campaign about gender-based violence. Bonding with mining trade unions is also considered necessary to reach the mineworkers and the mining companies from the inside. One women’s organisation was also establishing links with several women groups, thus expanding their network of women activists. To mobilise resources, some grassroots entities would ask local businesses and supermarkets to sponsor their events. They also counted on local media (newspapers, radio) to draw attention to their demands.

Looking at women specifically, being part of grassroots movements is a way to earn legitimacy within the community. Women find a voice as a group or by belonging to an acknowledged group. In a focus group, one woman stated, “[The mining companies] will not listen to us as women, they want to talk with a group led by men” (FGD4, Ekurhuleni, 28/02). Several leaders also told their experiences of being challenged at first, when they were standing on their own, while they were now acknowledged thanks to their movement.

6.2. Women activists scaling vertically

Women in grassroots movements expand their strategies at scale levels beyond the mining community to reach a broader audience and make a stronger impact. They act along a vertical scale by connecting with other mining communities, by linking up with regional and national organisations, and by interacting with the different spheres of government (see figure 10). In addition to higher stakeholders in the mining sector, including the national umbrella (MACUA-WAMUA), grassroots movements expand their agendas by linking with organisations concerned with other issues. This way, women move up and down institutions and actors between various scale levels.

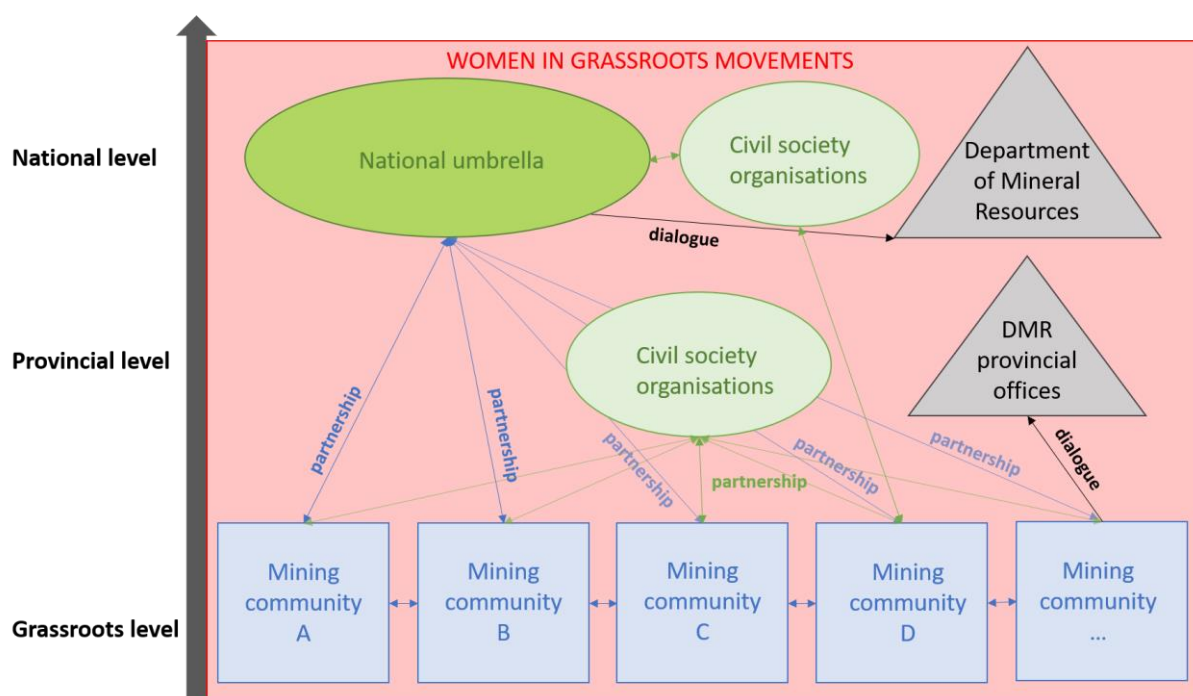


Figure 10. Vertical scaling by women in grassroots movements.

As the left arrow indicates, vertical scaling goes across the grassroots, provincial and national levels. Actors located at each scale interact with one another and with others at different levels. At the grassroots level, mining communities and their corresponding grassroots movements form a specific scale, communicating and exchanging with one another. Relations go both ways, bottom-up and top-down between grassroots movements, the national umbrella and civil society organisations.

Scaling up with major mining stakeholders equates to creating one's own space within the mining sector while earning a seat at the decision-making table. By linking with relevant stakeholders, movements enter the governance of mineral resources. This section adopts a scalar view and outlines the linkage politics set up at different scale levels.

6.2.1. The grassroots level

At the local level, movements in mining communities engage in a grassroots scale by networking with movements and organisations located in different mining communities, reaching the nine provinces of South Africa. Within this scale, they jointly organise actions, they share experience and expertise about mining conflicts. By asserting their voices and rights as mining communities – through the umbrella – they have shaped an existing scale to give it agency. Mining communities are the object of legislation and policies, at the same time, they try to be agents of influence on these laws.

At the grassroots level, one women group was proud to partner with a network of rural women's movements and organisations in Southern Africa to share skills and knowledge. A women branch in KwaZulu Natal was leading a project to exchange seeds under the umbrella of an environmental and social justice NGO. Women thus partner according to the specific issues they raise, here these issues were linked to their role of putting food on the family table, gardening etc.

6.2.2. The provincial level

Besides their links with local authorities, grassroots movements address provincial institutions of government. For instance, they mobilise people to picket or march in front of provincial offices of the Department of Mineral Resources when official consultations are organised. Thus, they are simultaneously acting in invited sites of participation while increasing these participation processes to a more mass-based audience. In these spaces, they specifically raise the issues of mining companies' practices, but also of mining legislation.

6.2.3. The national level

The main vertical link from the grassroots level to the national one is under the national umbrella MACUA-WAMUA. This movement emerged as a gathering of existing mining community movements, groups and organisations in the aftermath of the Marikana Massacre. In a bottom-up perspective, it aims at aggregating their demands over participation, justice, and transparency to become a single-voice actor. The flow of information and resources goes 'top-down' from the umbrella to the grassroots. Agendas are set at the junction of these vertical flows: grassroots movements raise local issues and ask for support by the umbrella – for instance, to challenge a mine in legal terms – while the umbrella sensitises local levels on specific issues (that they identified during social audits), notably gender inequalities and gender-based violence.

Movements and organisations affiliate to MACUA for different reasons, and at different times: at the origins of the movement, when confronted to the establishment of a new mine taking over land, or when realising that the local issue they are tackling is linked to mining impacts. A male leader explained,

“We [in the grassroots organisation] are tired of this thing that if you fight alone in Ekurhuleni, nobody notices you. What we want to do is to make sure that we are

not only talking to local government, but we are talking to the three spheres of government. So MACUA as a national movement we speak nationally with the DMR and other departments involved.” (SI12, Johannesburg, 19/03).

Thus, MACUA-WAMUA acts as a platform of dialogue between mining communities and official mining departments. It is progressively acknowledged as a force in the mining sector, as an increasing number of grassroots organisations and movements join, and as more partnerships with other civil society organisations are established. Particularly, MACUA is obtaining recognition from national trade unions. As they are invited to partner with the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union and the South African Federation of Trade Unions, they still need to define the types of partnerships they want to establish. Such trade unions are well-embedded in the political and economic landscape of South Africa, and the challenge is for the movement to find its place without being co-opted. In other instances, MACUA representatives were despised by trade unions, who saw them as competitors in the representation of mining employees.

Both grassroots movements and the national movement link up with national and international NGOs, on various issues. One grassroots organisation was targeting specifically environmental organisations of national and international significance to link their local environmental issues to broader agendas. They benefit from the expertise on issues other than mining, thus gaining wider recognition. One mixed organisation was alternating partnerships, between environmental or women organisations for instance, depending on their strategies and the issues they wanted to tackle. The latter linkages were particularly resorted to for campaigns on gender-based violence.

Scaling up offers personal careers as well. One female leader told how she started from the grassroots and is now sitting at the board of three different national mining organisations. Nevertheless, there are challenges related to individual scaling. Most leaders were mindful to empower the grassroots level, knowing that they themselves were less anchored as they were scaling up. Several leaders who had reached provincial or national levels explained that they were delegating a lot of their responsibilities to other members of their local organisations. They expressed the responsibility of finding a balance between their engagement at the grassroots level and the national level, the idea of staying true (accountable to) the community and not “selling it out.”

“at first, the movement was not taken seriously because we would invite NGOs from outside, then most community members would think that we are selling out the communities to people from outside, or that we communicate with the mines. But now they do realise that we are fighting for the community.” (SI11, Phola, 10/03)

‘Selling the community out’ would mean to betray it, either in using legitimacy for personal profits, or giving it up to foreign organisations for the prestige. This idea pointed to a sort of distrust by the communities towards institutions, distrust that grassroots movements must deal with.

6.3. Concluding remarks

Grassroots movements are intersections in the lives of women. On a horizontal perspective, activism encourages capacity-building that shapes women’s behaviours and expectations in other horizontal spaces. On a vertical perspective, women in grassroots movements rely on scalar politics to expand their demands and actions at different scale-levels.

7. Conclusion chapter

This research aims at recovering women's agency in grassroots movements in mining settings. To do so, it analyses women's motivations, the issues they raise and their strategies within and outside the activist spaces.

This chapter first answers the research questions and links them to the theoretical framework then reflects on the theoretical and methodological foundations of the research, and finally makes recommendations for academia, activist spaces, and government.

7.1. Answers to the research questions

The empirical chapters outlined both the internal and external processes and dynamics of grassroots movements to understand how women participate in and navigate across activist spaces. This section answers the sub-questions one by one and ends by answering the main research question.

7.1.1. What are the motivations of women establishing or joining grassroots movements and what are the issues they raise?

Women's motivations and the issues they raise tell about women's activism narratives. The motivations outlined in Section 5.1.1. give a complex picture of women's activism. The research identified diverse motivations to establish or join grassroots movements and organisations. The motivations identified inductively emerged from the data and relate to three roles: that of a woman, a community member, and an activist. These roles often overlap, and women seemed to articulate them alternately.

The first set tells a story of solidarity with other women, a narrative that could be labelled as 'sisterhood.'⁶ Women gather for their similarities – their shared experiences, concerns and challenges – as well as for their differences, each bringing a specific skill and exchanging it with others. This female solidarity echoes one of the gendered strategies to sustain collective action identified by Deonandan et al. (2017) in the activism of Guatemalan women. In their study, this strategy was influenced and motivated by women's specific (individual and collective) context. In the case of South African women, this sisterhood acts both as a trigger and as a 'glue:' they have a duty to gather and call other sisters to join the movement. This way, they aim at empowering and supporting women, by offering them a physical safe space, and by involving them in the movement and its objectives.

Second, women embrace a discourse related to the community, with a community pictured as suffering from the mining impacts, but also as a community-agent, asking for change. This discourse was punctuated with references to participation and voice, knowledge, and justice. Women in grassroots

⁶ 'Sisterhood' itself was not explicitly mentioned, though the vocab 'sister' could be used.

movements reclaim the right to participate, as mining communities in general, and as women in mining communities. As such, women articulate this community identity with that of being women.

Thirdly, women referred to the idealised figure of the activist. By describing their will to bring justice to the community and the women, they depict the figure of an activist engaged for the community and the women's wellbeing.

These motivations contradict both the image of women-as-victims and that of women activists as mere supporters of the men's struggles. The first image derives from the tendency to render women's experiences invisible and to focus only on what affects them, leaving them a powerless group of victims (Jenkins, 2015). The second one implies that when women are involved in activism (e.g. strikes in mines) they hold background positions, providing food and emotional support to the male strikers (Benya, 2013). Against these images, a recent trend of research focuses on (indigenous) women's activism in Latin America (Jenkins, 2015; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015; Deonandan, *et al.*, 2017), in Canada and Australia (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013) and South Africa (Benya, 2013). This trend uncovers women's agency as political agents in mining environments, as willing to take part in the industry, and as essential economic agents of mining communities (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012). This research contributes to this growing body of research by focusing on activist women in South Africa, specifically by analysing their continuous engagement in grassroots movements and organisations, while other studies focused on specific times, e.g. negotiations (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013) or strikes (Benya, 2013). This study puts in perspective their daily experiences in the activist spaces and with their experiences in other spaces. Not only are women political and economic agents in the community and the industry, but they are also agents willing to make their claims within and outside grassroots movements.

The motivations and roles identified in this research give nuance to an artificially homogenised group of women activists: they do not all have the same motivations, nor the same objectives. For instance, the research shows that women had different perspectives on whether mines should remain in their area or should be closed. Besides, women combine and articulate different narratives. These motivations are gendered in the sense that they correspond to a certain extent to the roles expected from women (in the household and the community). They take care of themselves and other women, and at the same time, they take care of the community, especially the youth, ensuring the wellbeing and reproduction of life. These gendered narratives were also identified by Jenkins (2015) and Deonandan *et al.* (2017) in indigenous mining communities. Nevertheless, this study shows that when women refer to the ideals of justice and participation, they do not explicitly gender them, and refer to the neutral figure of an activist.

Women in movements raised several types of issues. The gendered mining impacts, along with more general gender inequalities, were often the first to be mentioned. One of the most cited was gender-based violence. Several reports emphasised the exacerbated violence in South African mining communities (Human Rights Council, 2016; ActionAid South Africa, 2018), and research participants did link high rates of violence and tensions to the presence of mines. In general, the issues mentioned

are common to mining communities studied by others, with cultural specificities (Jenkins, 2014; ActionAid South Africa, 2018). The internalised idea of women having to submit to men as analysed by several female participants resonates with the patriarchy studied by Bradshaw et al. (2017). The authors explain that patriarchal power “operates at a hidden subconscious level, as well as overtly,” hence the internalisation and acceptance as the given order. In their demonstration of the existence of supernormal patriarchy in mining environments, they explored the range of transactional sexual activities. In this study, ‘only’ the existence of sex bribes was found, as other types of activities were beyond the scope of this research.

Moreover, women in this research raised issues related to the practices of mining companies, specifically transparency and accountability. This statement resonates with the 2018 ActionAid report that concluded that there were “political, economic and social structural impediments” that communities were facing in holding corporations and state parties accountable. Frequently mentioned issues in the research were also related to the direct impacts of mining on environment and health, land and housing, and broader ones such as poverty and unemployment.

In both their motivations and the issues they raise, women display a mix of gendered and more “neutral” ideas. In the activist spaces under study, women are generally the ones raising gender-specific issues within the movements, asking for platforms dedicated to them and dealing with some aspects of gender-based violence, but they combine these issues with broader ones. This study thus nuances the literature, women do bring in gendered issues, but not always consciously, and sometimes not at all.

7.1.2. How do women in grassroots movements participate in, negotiate and shape the internal processes of the movements?

Once women have integrated movements and organisations, they must find their place in a space with its processes and internal (power) dynamics. Section 5.2. first gave an outline of grassroots movements and organisations designs, then placed women’s experiences and negotiations of the internal processes.

There are two types of spaces: single-sex spaces progressively becoming mixed, and mixed spaces progressively establishing a single-sex space for women. The first type is primarily designed by women for women. In these spaces, power dynamics are acting along the lines of age and status in the community rather than gender. These dynamics were observable in the group discussions, during which the elders would dominate the conversation. Similarly, women with prominent positions in the community (member of the community council, married to the pastor) were the most vocal in group discussions and the ones leading collective actions.

Going back to Batliwala’s (2012) characteristics of feminist movements, we find that such groups, movements and organisations do build their agenda from a gendered analysis of the situation (e.g.

women are the ones most affected by violence or birth deformities), women form a critical mass of the movement (they are a majority and hold leading positions, hence they set the agenda), they define gendered political goals (obtaining jobs for women), gendered strategies and methods (female solidarity, workshops for women, consciousness-raising). In practice, the movements under study did not frame themselves as feminist, even though they display most of the characteristics defined by Batliwala (2012). Mixed groups draw inspiration from the “safe” nature of single-sex groups and establish women units. This trend is largely encouraged by the national umbrella MACUA-WAMUA, in efforts to focus on the gendered impacts of mining and to give more voice and space to women within the movements. The objective is twofold: for women to voice out and for the whole movement to build them, make them stronger for linking to other spaces and scales. Nevertheless, mixed grassroots organisations display less feminist characteristics: a gendered analysis is progressively integrated, yet women are the minority and do not always have access to the leadership positions with the most decision-making power, even though the leadership is equally composed of men and women. To look closer at the content of the agenda, it is worth relying on Jenkins (Jenkins, 2014) intersecting areas of mining impacts on women. In the movements under study, the realities of women mineworkers are not taken into account since (female) mineworkers were not included. The gendered impacts of mining are indeed more and more included, although the focus is mainly women: leadership workshops are dedicated to women, while men do not have workshops on masculinity for instance. Moreover, this study explores women activism, thus contributing to the knowledge gap on women’s changing identities in mining communities identified by Jenkins (2014).

The second line of analysis focused on the reality of participation. According to Cornwall (2002), it is necessary to look at the assumptions versus the practices of participation and the nature of the spaces and the interactions within them. This study realised a concrete analysis of Cornwall’s dimensions of meaningful participation.

During the group discussions, most women were qualifying activist spaces as “spaces of equality”, without discrepancies between men and women. However, several research participants voiced challenges that impeded women’s participation: gendered norms and expectations prevent women from voicing out and may discredit them in the eyes of men. Structural differences between men and women in mixed spaces entail unbalance in participation and shape interactions in certain ways.

From the data, told experiences and observed behaviours, it seems obvious that patriarchal norms and values also permeate activist spaces by creating power inequalities. Then, how do the less vocal influence the agenda? To navigate activist spaces, women employ, consciously or not, formal and less formal strategies. In Katzenstein’s definition (1998), formal strategies refer to means that are coherent with the movement action repertoire, while informal strategies rely on discourse politics. In the movements under study, women resort to the existing (and formal) means of the activist spaces, by recruiting more women, creating spaces of their own, demanding leadership positions and dedicating

collective actions to women. In parallel, they resort to more informal, individual, and less overt strategies. Adding to Cornwall (2002) and Katzenstein's (1998) findings on the ways for women to reshape spaces, three types of behavioural and discursive strategies emerged from the data: being straightforward and confident; negotiating; and keeping a low profile while working hard.

7.1.3. How and with what objectives do women from grassroots movements establish horizontal and vertical links with different stakeholders?

Grassroots movements interact with other spaces and actors. They are intersections in the personal lives of women, as spaces horizontally located between the household and the community, and intersections in the collective lives of women, as intersections between horizontal and vertical scale levels.

Situating activist spaces at the local level necessitates to look at processes of horizontal linkages, be they from an individual perspective or a collective one. These linkages reach three levels: the personal, the household and the community.

First, grassroots movements influence the personal level. With the movement, women take actions and learn to perform roles that impact their identity and their personal space. At this level, activism capacitates women in ways that reach other horizontal spaces. Few women referred to feminism, but rather than an overt rejection of a deemed Western concept (see in: Gouws, 2017), some analysed this fact as ignorance or misconception.

Second, the trajectory between the household and the activist space takes multiple forms along a spectrum that emerged inductively from the data, with the two extremes being: 1) going in between two separate spaces and 2) integrating and practising activism at home. Existing literature analyses the influence of the milieu on the activist space and vice versa, without real consideration of personal trajectories as is the case here. Particularly, this research adds to Benya's (2013) work on South African women in the 2012 strike, whose roles in the strike influenced their roles at home and in the workplace: in this study, the roles adopted durably in grassroots movements shape women's identities in other spaces.

Thirdly, horizontal processes consist of establishing links with spaces and stakeholders at the same level as grassroots movements to mobilise people and resources. Movements and organisations must find their place among other community actors. They build their legitimacy on their mass-basis, in line with Batliwala's (2002) definition of grassroots movements, and they rely on consciousness-building, a strategy identified by Deonandan et al. (2017). This process echoes the first step of linkage politics identified by Carruthers and Rodriguez (2009).

To push their demands, grassroots movements and organisations practice vertical scaling. They establish multi-scalar linkages with various stakeholders. The frame of grassroots scalar politics (Hoogesteger & Verzijl, 2015) allows us to pinpoint several strategies of grassroots movements at the grassroots, the provincial and the national levels: 1) the creation of a “supra-community” network of grassroots movements and mining communities; 2) the use of the national umbrella as a platform to share information, resources and practices and to engage in dialogue with mining stakeholders; 3) the alliances with external actors to reach a broader audience. These scalar politics serve the objective of becoming a key actor in the mining sector, embedded in its governance. Grassroots movements reshape the grassroots scale of mining communities to that end: by negotiating with stakeholders and establishing networking platforms, they enter power dynamics and gain agency. They contest the configuration of existing scales that exclude mining communities at the national level of decision-making. This study thus confirms the knowledge on grassroots scalar politics. It puts scalar politics in parallel to participation literature, as it demonstrates that the sites of ‘radical possibility’ (the grassroots movements) necessarily and purposely engage with ‘invited sites of participation’ (consultations with the DMR). These connections are necessary for people who are usually excluded from participation. In these configurations, women create and define their own opportunities and terms of engagement through these autonomous forms of action.

Besides, this research contributes to the scalar literature by briefly outlining the personal opportunities of scaling up. In these politics, women as bridge leaderships, a strategy identified by Deonandan et al. (2017): women establish relevant links themselves, for the movement as a whole and their gendered interests as well.

The linkage and scalar politics set these grassroots movements and organisations in the long run, compared to other community movements (such as service delivery protests). While they do start as issue-based and do not have a revolutionary project, just as the community uprising studied by Bond and Mottiar (2013), they do link their fight against abuses from mining companies to democratic ideals (participation and transparency) and aim at representing the poor. It is yet difficult to assess the results of such movements, while they do draw a more complex landscape of community movements in South Africa.

7.1.4. How, and with what objectives, do women involved in and impacted by large-scale mining in South Africa, participate in and navigate grassroots movements and other activist spaces at different scale-levels?

Based on the answers to the previous sub-questions, this section answers the main research question and reflects on the conceptual scheme.

This research uncovers women activist's agency in different settings: within the grassroots movements, at the horizontal level and on a vertical scale. This multi-level perspective gives a complex picture of women's identities, roles and behaviours. Women come in movements with expectations, develop different identities in activism that then shape their behaviours in other spaces and at other scales. Women who were vocal already enhance their confidence, others learn to negotiate with men activists and then negotiate at home, others impose themselves in bridging leaderships...

The conceptual scheme was defined before going into the field and revised after coming back.

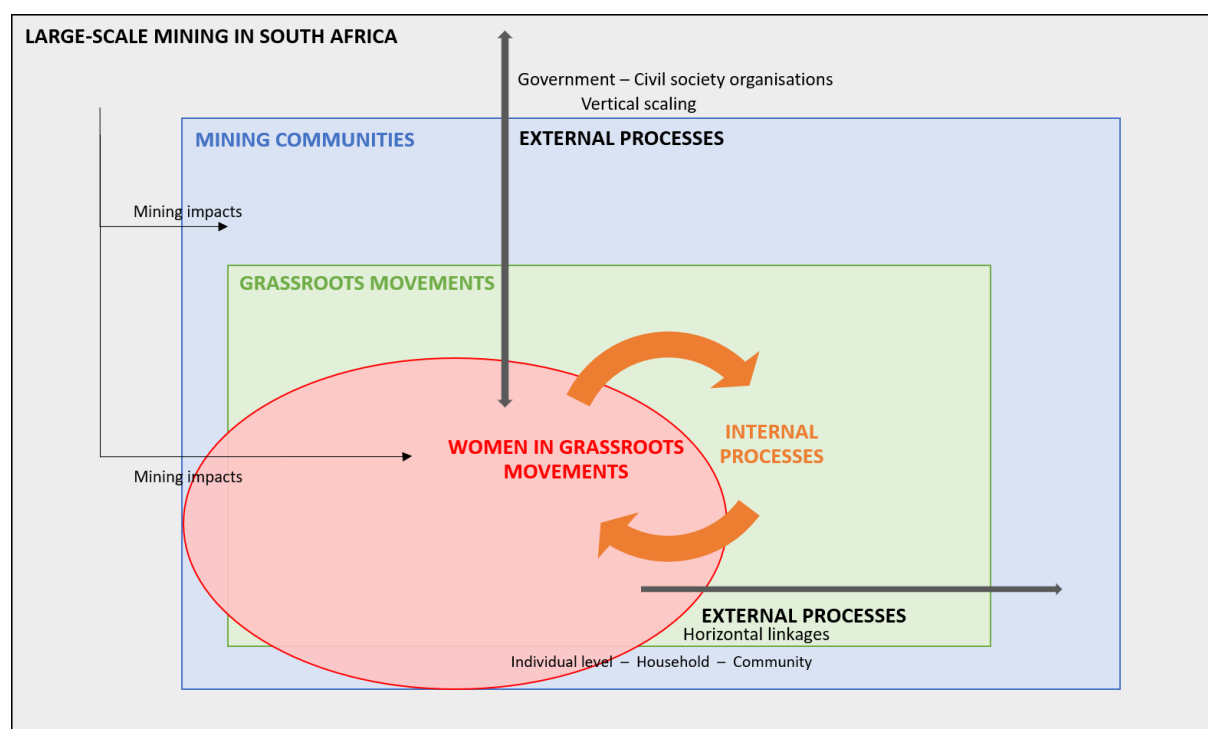


Figure 10. *Conceptual scheme*

Overall, the conceptual finding still holds regarding the research findings. Slight improvements would include more explicitness about scalar analysis and grassroots scalar politics. Moreover, the conceptual scheme lacks considerations on socio-cultural norms and their influences on power dimensions. In a similar vein, there is no explicit mention of patriarchy that infuses the large-scale mining context. Patriarchy does express itself in all the spaces, and it partly influences the issues women raise. I expected external and internal processes to be linked, yet the extent to which they are only emerged from the data after the conceptual scheme was finalised. The collective and individual lenses resorted to alternately in this research are not easy to distinguish, hence they do not appear in this scheme.

7.2. Theoretical (and methodological) reflections

7.2.1. Theoretical reflection

The focus of the research is women in grassroots movements according to two perspectives: women as individuals, and women as a collective. This approach builds on the growing body of literature focusing on women activists in mining environments while combining it with the literature on scalar politics. As such, it sheds light on women's agency at different stages and spaces of their activism. These multiple considerations give a complex picture of the experiences of women activists, at the same time as they limit the in-depth exploration of one in particular. This broad view was adopted to give an overall perspective on women's agency in all its forms considering the limited amount of time available.

A valuable contribution of this research is the conceptualisation of grassroots movements as both spaces and actors, spaces in which women interact, and actors through which women interact with other actors.

Some conceptual reconsiderations were only possible on the ground. To begin with, in the discourse of research participants, movements and organisations are more or less the same, while the literature has different sets of definitions (Batliwala, 2002). Both men and women activists had taken part in one form or the other, and they made no distinction nor hierarchy.

This research adopted a gender lens that is quite binary. Researching the experiences of people with other gender identities than men and women and other sexual orientations in mining communities could be a whole new topic. Besides, the analysis of power dynamics is mainly based on gender (in otherwise quite homogenous spaces in terms of class and race) when issues of difference act on other factors, such as age or disability for instance. These choices do give a certain frame that could be extended by future research.

7.2.2. Methodological reflection

As outlined in the methodology section, methods were defined with the help of my supervisors in Amsterdam and South Africa, and members of the MACUA-WAMUA advisory office.

The sample of the study consists almost exclusively of members of organisations affiliated to MACUA-WAMUA. Only two women from a community-based forum in a mining community were interviewed, which is not enough to make comparisons between different types of activist spaces. Participants were recruited 'randomly', in the sense that I had not defined any criteria besides that of gender. As such, the sample might not be representative in terms of age, an indicator that had concrete implications in certain settings, notably in group discussions dominated by elder women. Other criteria such as ethnicity or language were completely disregarded. These constraints are explained by the fact that I had to rely on the national umbrella and that I had limited prior knowledge on the members of the movement, which is partly due to the fact that many members are not officially registered.

Other ‘categories’ of women, already found in the literature, were expected to be met during the research, which did not happen in reality. The insights of namely sex workers and female mineworkers would have been precious with regards to their involvement (or not) in grassroots movements in mining communities. Furthermore, focusing only on women affected by mining still tells about only one (‘victim’) aspect of being a woman in mining environments.

Focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were conducted on the basis of one interview guide that was then adapted to each context. Questions were asked in neutral terms in order not to draw divisions between men and women, but this neutrality made it sometimes difficult for participants to relate to the questions. I was glad to be accompanied by a helpful facilitator, who quickly grasped the objectives of the questions, and was able to adapt them when needed. I found group discussions sometimes hard to maintain fluid, hence the usefulness of the participatory activity. This activity with charters and sticky notes required every woman present to participate, although I found it difficult to have a collective discussion on some of the quotes. Indeed, it was often the woman who had written the note who was reacting the first. In the end, this participatory activity provided precious data, in the form of numerous written submissions, including imaginative visual ones, although it was realised only twice since it took time to finalise and validate the concept.

During the fieldwork, I was able to stay extensively in one of the mining communities. I was glad to spend time with some of the leaders, I had group discussions with two branches of the organisation and met and exchanged with key community members in formal and less formal settings to better grasp the reality of the research focus and context. This stay provided unique data, and it is something that I wish to have done in the other communities as well, although time and money constraints could not allow it.

7.3. Recommendations

This section draws recommendations for further research, for activist spaces and for policy makers.

For further research on women activism in mining communities:

- Research to explore further the narratives of women activists, specifically in less binary terms, to nuance literature
- Research to focus more on the individual experiences of women scaling vertically
- Research on dynamics of participation on other lines than gender

For activist spaces in mining environments:

- Giving women powerful positions in the movements, both for the movement’s sake and women’s personal sake given the influence of the activist space on more personal spaces

- It is also by meaningfully including women that activism can challenge male hegemony
- By checking women's objectives, grassroots movements can be made accountable
- Women branches in activist spaces should be autonomous, but not completely independent nor disconnected.
- All in all, efforts geared to women's emancipation should involve men as well, in order not to label women as weaker or less legitimate

For policymaking:

- Improving the dialogue between mining communities and the DMR, and specifically between women and the DMR
- Including women's specific demands in government consultation and in mining legislation

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Annexe 1

The operationalisation table:

Key Concepts	Dimensions	Variables	Indicators	Questions
Grassroots movements	External processes	Objectives and motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rationale - Desired outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why was the movement established? What events/issues led to its emergence? - What are the desired outputs/results?
		Issues raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Socioeconomic impacts - Environmental impacts - Women's position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the themes and issues raised? - Who raises what?
		Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are they addressing to? What kind of actors? 	
		Strategies and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of political strategies / initiatives / actions - Interlocutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do grassroots movements do? What types of activities or strategies, and to what aim? - Who are they dialoguing/partnering with?
	Internal processes	Organisation and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who's who? - Who does what? - Who's included? 	
		Partnership conditions Participation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power - Trust - Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there formal and/or informal (perceived) hierarchies? → do you feel that some people have more power than others? Do you feel more comfortable working in mixed settings or single-sex settings?

Women's voices and experiences	Positionality	Women's characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Education - Family background - Professional occupation / voluntary work - Role in the household - Role in the community - Role in the movement 	
	In mining environments	(Patriarchal) relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of relations women-men - Types of relations women-women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you feel in mixed settings? - How do you view relations among women (/girls)?
		Gender roles and identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceptions of women's roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are activities and tasks in your community and your household usually divided? What are the reasons for this division? - In your opinion, what are gender inequalities? How do you deal with them?
	In grassroots movements	Objectives and motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification with the movements' objectives - Personal motivations? - Issues they want to raise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What motivated you to establish/join the movement? - What do you expect from the movement? - What are the issues you would want the movement to tackle?
		Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership - Levels of participation - Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are the leaders? - What do you do in the movement? How are activities/discussions organised?

		Actions/strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narratives and rhetoric - Types of actions: protests, advocacy, publicity, ‘weapons of the weak’... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What types of activities in the movement do you do? Why these ones?
Scales	Locally		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With communities - With grassroots movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who do you interact with at this level? For what reasons?
	Provincially		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With other civil society actors - With government institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who do you interact with at this level? For what reasons?
	Nationally		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With networks - With national civil society organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who do you interact with at this level? For what reasons?
Context	Relational	Links with other actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government institutions (municipality!) - Mining companies - Civil society organisations: trade unions, umbrella organisation, other branches, churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you qualify the relations between the grassroots movements and other actors?
	Legal	Influence of legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contesting mining legislation - Shaping mining legislation - Legislation shaping/constraining movements’ actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have legal/policy claims? In regard to what? How do you formulate them?

Annexe 2

Interview guide Ekurhuleni

Focus group discussion

*Ekurhuleni Environmental Organisation, in Springs; Ekurhuleni Municipality, township of KwaThema.
Single sex group of 6 to 10 women.*

- **Context**

Township south-west of Springs, East Rand, Gauteng. Established in 1951: Africans resettled from Payneville as the apartheid government considered it too close to a white town. The new township's layout became a model for many subsequent townships. In 1985: violent unrest and right-wing vigilante activity.

Predominant languages: Sotho, isiZulu.

Coal (open cast) and gold mining (legacy). Anglo, Canyon Coal.

- **Introduction**

Thanking everybody for coming, presentation of myself and the research.

Explaining the organisation of the discussion, permission to record and explanation of what will happen to the data (anonymous & confidential). Precise that participants can leave and/or choose not to respond if they feel uncomfortable with the questions or topics (it is a safe place).

Round of individual introductions (name, age, how long they've been involved with EEO, why).

- **Main topics and questions**

Topic 1

➔ Women's experiences in mining environments:

1. **Key question: What are the issues people face in this area and how do they affect you specifically? ➔ what are the issues you face in this area?**

Probing questions: What kinds of issues? What are the causes? Do they affect differently certain groups/settings?

2. **In your opinion and experience, what is (gender) inequality? Have you experienced gender inequalities?**

What kinds of inequalities do you experience and in what spheres?

How are activities and tasks in your community and your household usually divided? What are the reasons for this division?

Who leads/ who do you feel are the main leaders?

What happens when the man works and not the woman, and vice versa?

➔ Identify one issue that you feel women face and write it on a note

3. How do you deal with gender inequalities, what do you do about gender inequalities?

Negotiate, go to organisations and movements, remain silent, go to women's groups...

➔ Identify one solution/strategy/way of dealing with that issue (YOUR solution)

Placing them on a chart 'In the community': issues//answers. What do you think about this? Any change, suggestion?

Topic 2

➔ Women's experiences in activist spaces:

1. Why did you join the movement? Same motivations or different to others?

What are the main issues raised by the movement, and what is your perception on these? Do you feel that they are the most important ones? Do you miss issues?

Who is included and do you feel that there are people that are 'excluded' but that should be included?

2. Do you face/ have you ever faced any particular challenge within the movement? If so, what, why? Do you feel like there are differences in terms of opinions and roles between certain groups in the movement?

How is the movement composed? Who is taking leadership roles?

Do specific groups bring in specific issues? If so, are they integrated? Who gets the final word?

On (gender) relations: In your experience, is it easier to work in a mixed group or in a single-sex group?

If so, why? In what setting is it easier to achieve your goals?

➔ Identify one challenge

3. If you feel like there are differences, do you do something about it, and what?

How do you make others listen to you? What kinds of strategies would you use to influence a decision/ to make your voice heard/ to deal with people who think differently?

➔ Identify one answer

New chart 'In the movement': Challenges // Answers ➔ if no new chart, ask how the movement deals with the issues outlined above.

4. What types of activities do you do in the movement?

Is there a specific division? Could you give me a concrete/detailed example of an activity that you would do (collectively or not)?

Topic 3

➔ Comparison and conclusion:

1. **Comparing the two charts:** what do they think about it? Do they see differences and/or similarities between the two?

Do movements reflect key issues in the community? What are key differences? In case they address issues that are not playing a role: is it relevant these issues are reflected? In case they miss out on specific issues: is this a problem?

2. **Do you believe gendered patterns in the community transfer to the movement?**

Do you feel empowered? How? For what? Does this empowerment transfer to other spheres of your life?

3. **Extra thoughts and ideas?** What did you get out of this meeting? Any comments to make such sessions better?