COMMUNITIES, METHOD OF USAGE: UNRAVELLING MINING GUIDES, MANUALS AND REPORTS

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Abstract

Over the past twenty years, in different parts of the world, there has been an increase in environmental conflicts related to mining activities. In order to understand how agents in the extractive sector have described these conflicts and the way in which they have acted in response to them, this article analyzes two sets of publications produced during the last decade. Risk and trend reports for the extractive sector prepared through consultancies by Ernst & Young, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte and KPMG and three community relations manuals issued by the Brazilian Mining Institute, the National Confederation of Industry and the International Mining and Metals Council. We identified that the production and circulation of these materials are part of a set of authoritarian practices by extractive corporations set within at least three dimensions: i) an understanding that organized social actors who act in the defense of territories are risks that need to be managed; ii) the dissemination of "dialogue" and "social participation" techniques used to identify and classify social actors and iii) promoting the idea that the destiny of the territory is ineluctably linked to the corporation.

Keywords

Extractive Sector; Environmental Conflicts; Social Risks; Affected Communities; Corporations; Neo-Extractivism.

COMUNIDADES, MODO DE USAR: DESVENDANDO GUIAS, MANUAIS E RELATÓRIOS DA MINERAÇÃO

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Resumo

Nos últimos vinte anos, observou-se um aumento dos conflitos ambientais relacionados às atividades de mineração em diversas partes do mundo. A fim de compreender como os agentes do setor extrativo descrevem estes conflitos e de que forma têm atuado para respondê-los, este artigo analisará dois conjuntos de publicações produzidos na última década. Os relatórios de riscos e tendências do setor extrativo elaborados pelas consultorias Ernst & Young, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte e KPMG e três manuais de relacionamento com comunidades do Instituto Brasileiro de Mineração, da Confederação Nacional da Indústria e do Conselho Internacional de Mineração e Metais. Identificamos que a produção e a circulação destes materiais integram o conjunto de práticas autoritárias das corporações extrativas em pelo menos três dimensões: i) a compreensão de que atores sociais organizados que atuam na defesa dos territórios são riscos a serem gerenciados; ii) à difusão de técnicas de "diálogo" e "participação social" utilizadas para a identificação e classificação dos atores sociais e iii) a promoção da ideia de que o destino do território está inelutavelmente ligado à corporação.

Palavras-chave

Setor Extrativo; Conflitos Ambientais; Riscos Sociais; Comunidades Atingidas; Corporações; Neoextrativismo.

COMMUNITIES, METHOD OF USAGE: UNRAVELLING MINING GUIDES, MANUALS AND REPORTS[1]

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Introduction

Extractive activities have been accompanied by environmental conflicts led by peoples, communities and social movements that have denounced the violations of their rights and the destruction of their territories and expressed other forms of use and meaning for the environment. Academic studies (Coumans, 2011; Franks et al., 2014; Kirsch, 2014; Gaviria, 2015; Acselrad, 2018; Giffoni Pinto, 2019; Bronz, 2019; Oliveira; Zucarelli, 2020) and a substantial number of corporate documents have presented the concerns of the extractive sector with regard to the actions of peoples, non-governmental organizations and public agents who contest its operations. This growing attention to environmental conflicts, on the part of mining companies, is related to the political gains and mobilizations which, to some extent, social groups have managed to achieve, and which have implied various costs for corporations, such as: lawsuits, difficulties in licensing, project stoppages, etc.

In order to understand how certain agents in the extractive sector describe social protest and how they have acted in response to it, this article analyzes two sets of publications produced over the last decade. One set includes the risk reports for the extractive sector prepared between 2012 and 2022 by the firms Ernst & Young (EY), PricewaterhouseCoopers Brasil Ltda (PwC), Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu

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Limited and KPMG Auditores Independentes Ltda. These companies, within the corporate world, have come to be known as the "Big Four", which, in the field of auditing, consultancy, and fiscal and tax analysis, are the four biggest companies in the world. The other set of publications refers to guides and manuals that aim to help corporations deal with this environment of social contestation.

Three documents produced by major business associations were analyzed: the Socio-institutional Relations Guide for the Mining Sector by the Brazilian Institute of Mining (IBRAM, 2022), the Manual for Community Relations in Mining Projects by the National Confederation of Industry (CNI, 2022) and the Understanding Company–Community Relations Toolkit, 2015, by the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM). These documents were selected because they had been prepared by associations that are of significant relevance on both the national and international scene, such as IBRAM, which represents the main companies and institutions in the mineral sector in Brazil, and ICMM, which brings together the largest mining corporations in the world. Both play a leading role in developing and disseminating guidance materials for this sector. Although the CNI is not a specific institution in the mineral sector, the document analyzed focuses on the extractive industry.

Through an analysis on the risk reports of this sector, we intend to present the diagnoses of problems for which these guides and manuals seek to prescribe solutions. We argue that the production and circulation of these materials are part of a set of authoritarian practices by extractive corporations in at least three interconnected dimensions: the first concerns an understanding that organized social actors, who act in defense of territories, are risks that need to be managed; the second refers to the dissemination of "dialogue" and "social participation" techniques used to identify and classify social actors, and the third is the promotion of the idea that the destiny of the territory is ineluctably linked to the corporation, and that the company's success or failure are shared with the community.

In addition to this Introduction and Final Considerations, the article has two more sections, which seek to reflect on the two abovementioned sets of publications and their implicit discourses. In section 1, "Environmental conflicts as a 'corporate risk' in the mineral sector", we address the corporate category "social risk" and analyze the risk and trend reports in the extractive sector prepared through consultancies by EY, PwC, Deloitte and KPMG, and which were launched between 2012 and 2022. In section 2, "Prescriptions for community relations techniques", we analyze three manuals for community relations in mining prepared by IBRAM, CNI and ICMM, as a way of reflecting on these instruments and their implicit discourses.

1. Environmental conflicts as "social risks" for the mineral sector

In the so-called boom and post-boom periods[2] of commodities on the international market (Conceação; Marone, 2008; Milanez, 2017; Milanez; Santos, 2020), an increase in environmental conflicts was observed in different parts of the world, either when the mineral sector adopted a diversification and expansion strategy for its technological park (boom), or when the strategy was based on a policy to cut production costs, to increase the volume extracted or to focus on the core business as a way of compensating for losses in the face of falling prices (post-boom) (Santos; Milanez, 2014).

During this period, there was an intensification of serious violations committed by mining companies and reported by peasants, indigenous peoples, traditional communities, non-governmental organizations, environmentalists and other social groups in several different countries. Through collective organization, these actors became mobilized to restrict, or even prohibit, new projects in certain locations and, simultaneously, defend existing forms of production and social reproduction as alternatives to the unsustainable extraction of minerals (MALERBA, 2014). These political disputes over the "meaning and destiny of territories"[3] (ZHOURI et al, 2018, p. 36) express the existence of different forms of appropriation and significance of the environment by different social groups. According to Acselrad (2010, p. 108-109):

> There is no environment without a subject – that is to say, it has different meanings and logic of use according to the standards of different societies and cultures. Environmental risks, from this perspective, are differentiated and unequally distributed, given the different capacity of social groups to escape the effects of the sources of such risks. By highlighting distributive inequality and the multiple meanings that societies may attribute to their material bases, a space is opened in order to perceive and condemn the fact that the environment of certain social subjects prevails over that of others, giving rise to what has become called "environmental conflicts".

Over recent years, data from the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT) have demonstrated a huge increase in rural conflicts in mining territories. In 2004, four cases were registered, while in 2011 there were 55. In 2014, this had risen to 103, and, finally, by 2019, they reached their peak, with 288 cases being reported (Wanderley; Leão; Coelho, 2021).

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2. With specific reference to the mineral sector, the constant rise in mineral prices occurred from 2002 to 2011, and the post-boom decline in prices began in 2012.

3. This and all other non-English citations hereafter have been translated by the authors.

When analyzing the collective actions of protest by groups affected by extractivism in Brazil and Latin America, it is possible to observe a complex, structured process of mobilization by these social actors. One of the possible classifications (Losekann, 2016, p. 153) presents organizational repertoires of collective action, which in many aspects dialogues with the concerns found in the "good practice" guides for mining. These are:

> i. Visibility (communication strategies, visibility, training, research, internet campaigns, social networks);
>
> ii. Production of knowledge and information (research, creation of databases and observatories, use of access to information laws, campaigns on social networks, hacker activism, documentaries);
>
> iii. Mobilization (organization of exchanges, visits to affected areas, public hearings);
>
> iv. Extreme survival resistance (occupations, civil disobedience actions);
>
> v. Institutional intervention (impact on public policies, national and international legal actions, meetings with representatives of the executive and legislative branches and members of the justice system).

What we observed is that such repertoires have attracted the attention of extractive corporations in such a way that, even within this period of history, we find a diversity of studies conducted by business consultancies and think tanks on how to act in the face of contestatory political actions by so-called "interested parties" or "stakeholders." Denouncing environmental dispossession, expressed by collective subjects, is classified as a risk, since social demonstrations, as well as some of their achievements, may cause financial, logistical, operational difficulties and free access to natural resources (ICMM et al., 2005; Kytle; Ruggie, 2005; Davis; Franks, 2014; Franks et al., 2014).

According to Beth Kytle and John Ruggie (2005, p. 6), corporate social risk is defined when an "empowered stakeholder takes up a social issue area and applies pressure on a corporation (exploiting a vulnerability in the earnings drivers - e.g., reputation, corporate image". Corporate social risks may, therefore, involve direct actions by social movements, such as demonstrations by social groups on railway lines or construction sites, the overt presence of critical groups at annual shareholder meetings, international denunciations, or embargoes filed by regulatory justice departments, and stoppages or even denial of licenses.

> The notions of "risk" and "cost" therefore go beyond the boundaries of a strictly commercial balance, and are used to interpret and explain the damage that social criticism is able to cause to the corporate

economy. Anticipation and innovation are no longer restricted to intercapitalist competition, but are fundamental attitudes for the company's relationship with social agents of contestation. (Giffoni Pinto, 2019, p. 13).

In the most recent reports, the acronym ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) appears frequently to address issues involving a company's reputation and access to financing from banks and investors. In different publications that work to promote the idea of ESG risks, there is a justification that translating disrespect for human rights and labor and environmental legislation into economic risks is the most effective way of convincing business agents to be socially responsible. Therefore, it should be of very particular interest to companies to respect human rights, since not doing so could result in lost economic and financing opportunities. Within this rationale, we encounter the well-known neoliberal argument of the self-regulated market, now aimed at protecting human rights.

However, empirical analysis on the consequences of disasters for corporations demonstrates the fragility of this argument. An emblematic example was the rapid recovery of Vale's market value after the collapse of the B1 dam in Brumadinho, in the state of Minas Gerais, which caused the death of 272 people and the environmental destruction of the Paraopeba River basin (Mansur, 2022).

1.1 Measuring social contestation

Every year, large consulting firms prepare trend reports for the mining sector. In this section, we analyze reports from the world's four largest companies in the field of auditing, consulting, and fiscal and tax analysis: EY, KPMG, Deloitte and PwC.

The international consulting firm Ernst & Young (EY) produces reports, based on interviews conducted with executives from extractive corporations,[4] in which it presents the 10 main "risks and opportunities" for the sector. Since 2021, EY Brasil, in partnership with IBRAM, has prepared a contextualization of this global study with the specificities of the Brazilian scenario.[5] The studies produced by KPMG[6] are

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4. For the 2020 global study, more than 250 industry executives were interviewed, most of whom were senior (EY, 2020).

5. "The Brazilian study did not involve quantitative research like that carried out globally, but a qualitative analysis based on interviews given by senior executives in the sector, combined with the knowledge of professionals from EY and IBRAM regarding the situation and prospects of mining in Brazil" (EY, 2021, p. 5).

6. KPMG is a network of independent firms that provides consulting and auditing services to companies, governments and non-governmental organizations. It is present in 146 countries. See: https://kpmg.com/br/pt/home/sobre-a-kpmg/visao-geral/history.html

prepared based on a survey with executives from the extractive sector regarding the main trends in the sector and expectations for the companies they manage. The company also prepares regional studies. The annual reports produced by PwC are dedicated to presenting the industry's "global trends" based on a performance analysis of the 40 largest mining companies in the world through their annual and financial reports. To date, 19 annual reports have been published by PwC on the mineral sector, although not all of them are available on the company's website. Deloitte's annual publication on sector trends has existed since 2009 and lists the 10 main global challenges for the mineral sector.

Each company produces a report with varying profiles, methodologies and sizes, which undergo changes in themes and languages over the years of publication. However, it is impossible to provide a more detailed overview of these documents in the space available in this article. The focus of our analysis herein is to understand how the social issue is presented and the way in which it is associated with possible risks to the business. In addition to the classic credit and market risks, risks involving "regulatory, public, socioeconomic, governmental and environmental issues that cause dysfunctions in activities and profits" (Deloitte, 2023) appear prominently in these documents. On occasions, under the name of social and socio-environmental risks, risks are related to the "social license to operate", ESG risks, "non-technical" risks and others that express concern over the consequences of political action by social groups. Some examples of the "social risks" experienced by the extractive sector are provided below:

> Protests, negative media coverage, violence, sabotage and other direct attacks on the business and its employees are all signs that a company is not an accepted part of the community (...) community conflicts incur damage to reputation as a reliable supplier, lost productivity, increased security costs, absorption of senior management's time etc. (EY, 2014, p.16-18).
>
> The industry has faced a number of sustainability challenges over the past few years, often manifesting themselves as roadblocks, social protests against big projects and difficulty in accessing finance for perceived 'dirty' projects. (PwC, 2017, p. 25).

In these excerpts, we observe descriptions of direct actions that may cause disruption to the extraction of minerals and their logistical flows (road and railway blockages), communication actions that have a negative impact on the company's reputation and legal and judicial actions that may delay the deadlines of a project, or even make it unfeasible.

In the 2019 and 2020 reports, risks related to the granting of licenses (Permitting risks) occupied the second position among the 10 highest risks for the sector. Risks relating to community relations and the social license to operate ranked third in 2019 and fourth in 2020 and 2021 (KPMG, 2019; 2020).

> A variety of political groups and non-government organizations that are concerned by the impacts of mining and metals production are agitating for a variety of outcomes, from a ban on all mining to greater distribution of wealth. Both legitimate complainants and political activists know that the significant margins that mining and metals companies have been earning recently increases their urgency to settle disputes in order to maximize production sold into this period of premium pricing. Protecting reputation by being reactive can therefore be high risk and very expensive.
> **To stay ahead, companies have to be proactive in their dealings with communities and governments. Speed is important as it prevents a potential issue becoming political.** (EY, 2012, p. 26. Emphasis added)

Since 2019, IBRAM has commissioned studies to assess the reputation of mining across Brazilian society. In the same year, 2019, the study indicated that "of the 450 respondents throughout the country, 74% registered no or little familiarity or empathy with national mining. The level of fear and distrust reached 70%" (Brasil Mineral, 2023). This result was mainly attributed to the failures of the Vale/Samarco/BHP Fundão dams in 2015 and Vale's B1 dams in 2019. Over the last three years, IBRAM has held a series of seminars to discuss the topic of reputation. According to the institute's assessment, there is a problem in how the sector communicates with society and a strong concern regarding the association between mining and prospecting on indigenous lands.

Associated with reputational risks are the so-called "regulatory risks". According to the 2019 KPMG report, the disasters resulting from the failure of the Fundão Dam and the Vale B1 were identified as critical events for the sector that "will significantly impact discussions about the role and responsibilities of the mining sector in the country, increasing the risks related to Environmental licenses and community relations and social license to operate" (KPMG, 2019, p. 8). The issue of disaster-crimes resulting from the failure of dams in Brazil also appears in the EY report:

> Authorities and organized groups continue to generate legal instability on issues such as tax costs, the licensing of new projects and the expansion of projects. The echoes of the failure of the two tailing dams still encourage some popular resistance toward mining (EY, 2022, p. 7).

1.2 Judicial risk

Although consultancy reports do not directly mention judicial conflicts, an analysis of the reports reveals the extent to which this is a problem for mining companies. The topic of collaboration with the community appears as an "enigma" and is treated as the antithesis of litigation in an item of the report that deals with reputational costs:

> Early engagement in a culturally appropriate manner: Engagement with communities should begin as early on in a project as possible and continue throughout the project lifecycle. The investment required to establish a meaningful two-way dialogue is far less than that required for legal challenges, or to rebuild a relationship after litigation. Reputational costs should also be considered (Deloitte, 2022, p. 34).

Legal issues appear intrinsically linked to social conflicts and risks from the activities and are dealt with as:

i. Costs with legal fees, legal agreements and court decisions;
ii. Reputation costs due to a damaged image;
iii. Difficulty in relationships with communities after litigation;
iv. Judicial uncertainty with changes in regulatory frameworks;
v. Costs for adapting practices to environmental, labor and humanitarian legal frameworks.

For this last item, in "Mine 2022 – A critical transition", by PwC, the case of cobalt mining in central Africa is cited: "In central Africa, cobalt miners are under pressure to uphold community expectations on worker rights and child labour. These serious matters are a priority that demands miners' attention" (2022, p. 25). The subject is commented on in the chapter entitled "Trust is a critical material" (idem), as if the community's membership itself were a commodity to be extracted along with the ore.

The reports also indicate trends of future changes in legal issues, especially those linked to land uses and indigenous demands, and refer to the costs of litigation and strain on relationships with communities due to litigation, as observed in the previously mentioned excerpt. Thus, the relationship with indigenous peoples appears as a trending challenge for the future, as cited in the Deloitte report based on the testimony of a partner from the Indigenous Services Group, Deloitte Australia, "What we are seeing now is Indigenous people standing up for themselves and

wanting to take more agency in shaping the future of their nations. What that means is that the legal, economic and social relationship between Indigenous people and the rest of the nation is going to change dramatically" (Deloitte, 2022, p. 32).

Furthermore, the tendency to establish a new paradigm for relations with indigenous people appears as a precaution in order to face the new rights which they had won and that had become crystallized in laws:

> Awareness of indigenous rights, particularly in relation to social license, has grown hugely in the past decade. [...] There are also various legislative acts, both at the federal and provincial level, which incorporate principles from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (Deloitte, 2022, p. 32).

> We expect to see increased activity from governments trying to bridge the gap between community expectations and company practices, potentially merging features of the informal license with more formal ones [...] Of course, there is also the risk that once these new needs are met, expectations may be raised even further (EY, 2014, p. 18).

> Projects continue to be delayed or shelved completely because of conflicting community interests, with governments increasingly backing these communities (EY, 2015, p.3).

In addition to indigenous mobilizations for rights, legal action by environmentalists is also cited as a risk and is assessed as an expanding repertoire:

> As communities and advocates become more and more litigious, early consultation and negotiation is crucial to avoid expensive and potentially damaging legal battles. Organizations also need to be aware that community attitudes often run ahead of the legal and regulatory framework (EY, 2015, p. 22).

Also cited are the judicial assaults by environmental groups in climate litigation, where mining companies are accused of involvement in the extraction of fossil fuels: "Environmental groups are targeting miners involved in extracting fossil fuels through protests and legal action" (EY, 2015, p. 47).

It should be noted that the recommendation to change the behavior of mining companies is related to the perception of the ill effects arising from legal challenges and the consequent disinvestment in the sector. In other words, the change in behavior, described as a phenomenon of corporate reconfiguration for "ethical investment", is nothing more than a search to legitimize corporate action, where

one of its elements is to establish agreements and/or participation of communities in the business, anticipating conflicts that could become litigious.

2. Prescriptions for community relations techniques

Business associations in the sector, in conjunction with business consultancies, have developed a set of manuals, guides, sourcebooks, and toolkits to help corporations deal with the conflicting scenario involving their mining operations. In this section, we analyze three manuals for the extractive sector produced by the Brazilian Mining Institute (IBRAM), the (Brazilian) National Confederation of Industry (CNI) and the International Council on Mining and Metals Council (ICMM).

The "Manual for community relations in mining projects", by the trade union system, CNI, in partnership with the consulting firm Integratio, was published in 2022, the same year which saw the release of the *Socio-institutional relations guide for the mining sector* prepared by IBRAM, a private non-profit association, together with the company Falconi Consultoria.

The Understanding Company–Community Relations Toolkit was launched in 2015 by the ICMM, an international organization made up of 25 mining and metals companies and 33 regional and commodity associations. The ICMM, since its emergence in the early 2000s, has produced several guides designed to instruct the mineral sector in dealing with conflicts.

The documents consulted are extensive and detailed, with various excerpts from both national and international legislation, infographics and examples of "success" cases. They present an updated discussion on the issue of human rights, the rights of indigenous and traditional peoples and even anthropological notions that could astonish those who are unfamiliar with the updating capacity of corporate agents.

The manuals not only recommend conduct, but also present themselves as a product of this conduct. They are a way of revealing an enlightened, updated sector to a wider audience: "In addition to being a precious resource for companies, the manual may also be of great value to groups from civil society, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), entities, class movements, commercial associations and mining service companies" (CNI, 2022, p.16).

The analyzed manuals operate in a prescriptive order of discourse, creating a compendium of ideas that reflect little on how mining actually acts. The manuals are, therefore, performative initiatives and pieces of rhetoric that seek to present discursive guidelines for the sector, as instruments for constructing narratives. The manuals seek to give credibility to a business model that promises to deliver value to shareholders (Froud et al., 2006; 2009).

When analyzing the business communication instruments of large corporations in the extractive sector, giving special attention to the diagrammatic material that integrates them, Acselrad and Assis (2022, p. 4) indicated that such documents are not only business discourses for building a good reputation, but also amount to discourses on a certain representation of social space:

> These instruments are part of a set of forms of spatial representation and diagrams through which corporations may disseminate the beneficial manner with which they hope to be seen, or sometimes forge strategic readings specific to the social field in which they operate.

According to the rhetoric of business associations, the CNI manual aims to provide

> practical guidelines for community relations, so that the company engages and actively participates in understanding the local reality and requirements, thereby helping to develop solutions within its territory of operation (CNI, 2022, p. 13).

The guide published by IBRAM is described as a "milestone in the evolution of the management of the most important mining stakeholders, which are the communities located around mining projects" (IBRAM, 2022, p. 6). The ICMM's Understanding Company-Community Relations Toolkit is presented as a response to the difficulty encountered by companies in achieving "community support".

2.1 Communities: method of use

In the CNI guide, a game is established between the stated need for companies to "act in the engagement and social mobilization of interested parties, aiming to establish permanent, dialogic and, above all, participatory lines of communication" (CNI, 2022, p. 11); and the concept of social mobilization. According to the guide:

> Social mobilization may be understood as the bringing together of **people articulated in a responsible, interdependent manner**, who share knowledge and responsibilities to bring about improvements and positive changes so as to transform a common reality. Social mobilization should be a dynamic, permanent process of involvement, commitment and **change in values and behaviors**, both by the company and the community. Each social mobilization process may generate a different and unique benefit, influencing one or more communities (CNI, 2022, p. 12, Emphasis added).

Following on, the guide also suggests a graph[7] of steps to "begin social mobilization". What may be perceived is the adapted use of common concepts dear to social movements. "Engagement", "social mobilization", "participation" are all positive terms within the linguistic universe of social movements and communities, especially those that are engaged in struggles that target mining companies and their practices. Before any estrangement, it is important to note that this appropriation presents with significant shifts in the meaning in such terms. Below we highlight some of the most striking elements.

First, the definition of social mobilization is brought with an adjective that implies (if operationalized) a moral evaluation, i.e., the idea of "people articulated in a responsible manner". The highlighted text also mentions, "commitment and a change in values and behaviors", once again charged with a moral sense, although, in addition, from a viewpoint of conformity, agreement, and convergence, between community and company. Thus, this definition operates with a way of incorporating and neutralizing the concept of social mobilization, whose empirical referent is generally contrary to mining companies and little anchored in consensual, compliant perspectives. However, this procedure creates the possibility of differentiating the social mobilizations that are desirable to business from those which, to the contrary, undermine business, and which could be classified as "irresponsible".

Going further, the concept is reformed to business logic, within which it makes sense to consider that "Each process of social mobilization may generate a different and unique benefit, influencing one or more communities". Following the logic of "method of use", expressed in the graph that follows the definition, social mobilization is treated as a product, with the result being a goal. Far from the complex meaning it has for social movements and communities, here mobilization is sterilized, generating "a different and unique benefit" and, moreover, it is mobilization that influences the community and not the opposite. This last aspect reveals how far such content is from the original term, by placing mining companies, the guide's target audience, as agents of social mobilization whose destiny is the community.

Lastly, the guide offers an organizational chart where the term "common interest" is surrounded by circles where the most different actors involved are mentioned and positioned in a symmetrical way: "communities", "company", "leaders", "NGOs", etc. This graph makes the real objective of social mobilization clear, generating common interest, capable of reducing social risks arising from contestatory and conflict-filled mobilizations. In other words, a search takes place for an ideal, imagined consensus that, while recognizing the difference between

7. See "Figure 1. Initial steps toward social mobilization" (CNI, 2022, p. 12).

the social actors involved, erases any disagreements by encouraging a type of dialogue and "collective participation" that starts from the displacement of terms and linguistic appropriation. According to Acselrad and Assis (2022, p. 17), such descriptions do not represent a pre-existing world, but produce a new reality: "it is about making people see, believe and recognize a social world without dissent, in which the groups affected by the projects see themselves as partners, 'stakeholders' and 'psychological co-owners' of these projects".

The ICMM report addresses the issue in the same way by reinforcing the notion that

> stakeholders develop a path forward together, so that the process of building (or strengthening) a relationship is a joint effort and the actions taken to get there are identified, supported and carried out together. (ICMM, 2015, p. 10).

Discursively, the desires are intertwined as one: that of the company and of the communities. Despite the vocabulary used in the reports, the subtext reveals the permanence of an anti-democratic notion regarding the concepts of "dialogue" and "participation".

It may be observed in the ICMM report the moral meaning of the categories, by stating that "community support" can be measured through four factors "that reflect the quality of the relationships between a company and its host community" (ICMN, 2015, p. 12). These are: "legitimacy", "compatibility of interests", "respect" and "trust". Legitimacy encompasses a combination of formal and informal approval that goes through the "social license to operate". The compatibility of interests reveals the notion of accommodating interests, where the community "must believe that this success will benefit them in a way that serves as a counterbalance to the costs to them of project development" (ICMM, 2015, p. 14).

Respect is about cultural differences, but also about sharing information, adopting a joint approach to solving problems and making decisions (ICMM, 2015, p. 14). Trust involves communication, understanding, collaboration and a belief in the possibility of mutual benefits. However, as the report itself explains, "in order for trust to be built and maintained, there must be alignment between the counterparts' expectations of and beliefs in each other's capacities to make commitments and meet them and their actual capacity to do so" (ICMM, 2015, p. 15). A figure is presented[8] on page 16, showing that in the moral organization chart of corporations, "trust" is the central element in the search for community support.

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8. See "Figure 2: Indicators of community support and contextual factors" (ICMM, 2015, p. 16).

The element of control throughout this process is noteworthy, with the designated monitoring of community support over time. "Comparison of monitoring results over time can then be used to identify leading and lagging indicators of changing relationships" (ICMM, 2015, p. 28). In other words, in the search to monitor this relationship, there is an implicit effort for the action of social actors to become administrated, manageable and, therefore, predictable, acting at moments considered to be necessary in the search for a "joint path". "The company's achievement is being able to add its voice to the community, becoming part of the whole" (IBRAM, 2022, p. 48).

Furthermore, the presentation of methodologies in the propositional style: 'method of use' draws attention. The main source of methodological guidance is, evidently, in the field of human sciences, with emphasis on qualitative methods, such as interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, etc. It is also possible to observe a recommendation for practices frequently used by social movements, such as "participatory mapping", "ethnomaps", "dialogue circles" (CNI, 2022). In this sense, IBRAM recommends that the teams that will carry out territorial diagnoses "use strategies (sic) such as social dialogue, walks through the territory, social cartography, conversation circles, workshops and guided listening" (IBRAM, 2022, p. 128). Elements from the field of education are also used, with emphasis on "adult education" and the "non-violent communication" approach used mainly in the area of administration and human resources.

The expertise of professionals from the area of humanities, is generally used both in the preparation of these documents and in the execution of studies and social projects of mining companies. This expertise is perceived as social engineering, which has the capacity to promote consensus on the operation of companies (Giffoni Pinto, 2019).

The methodology is the central objective of the IBRAM guide and the concepts serve to build a cognitive base of rapprochement between the actors that need to be won over in the process (all those involved in the contestation networks). It is through such methods that the central objective of taming social contestations may be achieved, as revealed in the following excerpt: "It is clear that constructing social legitimacy provides the enterprise with an operation that has a greater tendency toward stability in an environment more conducive to enabling future plans, thereby reducing the social risks of the initiative" (IBRAM, 2022, p. 25).

It is interesting to observe the evident parallels between criticality indicators, as in the guide produced by IBRAM, and the repertoires of the collective actions of the communities. Furthermore, all the variables identified in the guide relating to the so-called "community matrix" are more related to the perception that people

may have of the enterprise than any type of assessment of the damage itself, which only appears implicitly in the classification made a priori to the community risk according to the definition of Directly Affected Area (ADA), Area of Direct Influence (AID) and Area of Indirect Influence (AII).

Below we present two slides (Figure 1) presented at an IBRAM internal seminar in 2021 by Falconi Consultoria on the work of managing the neighboring communities of a company called Mosaic Fertilizantes, a phosphate and potassium mining company in Goiás.

Figure 1. The criticality matrix.
Source: IBRAM and Falconi, 2021.

The extractive function of corporations, even in their relationship with communities, is present in all the guides. This is evident from the so-called "mapping of social and economic assets" which includes several existential dimensions of the affected communities, as explained in the guide itself:

> The set of social, economic, cultural and environmental actors, institutions and initiatives existing in the territories are considered active. Each has its own relationship with the city, based on projects, programs, proposals, among other milestones, related to different themes (education, culture, work and income, environment, art, health, social assistance, etc.) and in an intersectoral perspective [...]. (IBRAM, 2022, p. 67).

In other words, everything that is not the core activity of mining, but has implications for it, needs to be extracted, classified, monitored and, if possible, arranged so that it is in accordance with the central activity. Thus, the mining company positions itself as a kind of sovereign, totalitarian figure, although with an affable, generous appearance, over the territory and its pre-existing forms of life. It could be compared to a Leviathan for its claim to dominance, but more like Machiavelli's virtuous prince who manages to be loved and feared.

It is thus that a true tyranny of social dialogue is established, in which, contrary to the genuine sense, of a dialogue in which it is possible to disagree and act autonomously, communities are treated as assets to be uncovered, classified, conquered and, at worst, monitored. When analyzing a community relations manual prepared for internal use by employees of a Brazilian mining company, Bronz stated that the social dialogue proposed in this document was important for the production of data on communities:

> [...] on how they think and what they want. As well as to make them understand how much everyone will gain if they develop a good relationship with the company or if they cooperate with the activities and projects it proposes. Social dialogue is a way for the company to help the community to help it. (Bronz, 2019, p. 333)

Lastly, manuals play an active role in forming a view of the position of corporations within society. They act "together" and "in dialogue" with the communities affected by their projects, where "corporation" and "community" are social actors in broad convergence. This is to say that the success of the corporation is also the success of the communities. Therefore, organizational discourse is one of the mechanisms through which organizations create a social reality that underlies the perception or projection of their identity (Costa; Carvalho, 2005, p. 4).

Final considerations

Through an analysis of risk reports and of guides and manuals for relations with mining communities, this article has sought to understand how certain agents in the extractive sector describe social protest and how they have acted in response to it. These documents may be understood as devices of power (Bronz, 2019), in which the descriptions of territories and the prescriptions for good relations with the "community" aim to curb, and even avoid, the political potential of environmental conflicts.

In these guides, it is possible to identify a search to normalize reality and the use of disciplinary techniques that conform to the actions of communities. By introducing, as a central element, the search for a combination of a "common interest" or "joint path" between corporation and community, there is a commitment to expanding the "company" form for social actors, impacting subjectivities and ways of life and shaping discourses and desires (Dardot; Laval, 2016). The documents seek to prescribe the corporation/community relationship, while seeking the homogenization of social relations. Thus, there is an imperative of conduct (Weber, 2004) that establishes a new moral relationship between individuals and corporations.

Communities are generally classified as belonging to the corporate sphere: "interested parties", "hosts" and "partners", if they renounce their conflicting stance. As Acselrad (2018, p. 11) summarizes: "large corporations seek to solve their own problems by assigning themselves a direct political role in society, creating their own private 'public space', unilaterally deciding who the 'interested parties' are and which ones are not".

The construction of this mining morality is in all the guides, particularly that of IBRAM, which presents an even higher prescriptive level. With 142 pages, this guide presents concepts ranging from those traditionally used by the corporate sector, such as "stakeholders", through to the incorporation of typical concepts of social movements such as "engagement", and on to the inclusion of academic debates on human rights. The content of the guide is an articulated response to the main challenges facing mining: network mobilizations that bring together affected communities, social movements, civil society actors and researchers.

Corporate guides and manuals for "community relations" are the result of an authoritarian, and therefore, anti-democratic perspective on environmental conflicts, which attempts to prevent debate on the huge environmental inequality present in mined territories, obstructing the realization of the rights of affected social groups.

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