



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LAPFF Report on Its Brazil Communities Visit Released
Need for Improved Stakeholder Engagement the Main Takeaway

LAPFF Chair, Cllr Doug McMurdo, visited communities devastated by the Mariana tailings dam collapse of 5 November 2015 and the Brumadinho tailings dam collapse of 25 January 2019 during the summer of 2022. The Mariana dam is owned by Samarco, which is a joint venture between BHP and Vale. The Brumadinho dam is wholly owned by Vale. LAPFF also visited Conceição do Mato Dentro to see Anglo American's Minas Rio tailings dam which has not collapsed but about which surrounding community members have concerns.

The [report](#) of LAPFF's findings from this visit has now been made public. A related [video](#) is also available.

The report flags a host of human rights and environmental concerns that have yet to be addressed in the wake of the Mariana and Brumadinho disasters. Apart from issues related to housing, health, and livelihoods, the impact on cultural rights was a prominent problem for affected community members to whom LAPFF spoke throughout the visit. Among the range of environmental impacts noted in conversations with affected community representatives, severe concerns about water quality and availability arose consistently. There were underlying concerns about the companies' failure to engage meaningfully and effectively with all communities affected by all three of the companies' mining operations.

Cllr McMurdo also met with company representatives and Brazilian investors during his visit. Vale Chair, José Penido, took two days to show Cllr McMurdo two resettlement areas in Mariana and the site of the dam collapse at Brumadinho. Cllr McMurdo met with staff at Samarco to understand better how the collapse had happened and measures the company is taking to rectify the problems. JGP Asset Management then organized a meeting of LAPFF, Brazilian investors, and Vale to discuss a sustainable way to rectify the outstanding reparations work. BHP declined to make a representative available to meet with LAPFF in Brazil.

It was clear to LAPFF from these meetings that the companies need to do a better job of communicating to both communities and investors the steps they are taking to address human rights and environmental concerns.

Quote from LAPFF Chair, Cllr Doug McMurdo: *"I knew the visit would be difficult, but I wasn't prepared for the scale of devastation I saw nearly seven years on from the Mariana collapse*

and three and a half years on from the Brumadinho collapse. Seeing it with my own eyes was a wake up call – investors must do more! It was truly heartbreaking. My main concerns were the issues around water quality and availability and the apparent lack of communication between the companies and the communities. I can't see how there can be meaningful progress until this communication gap is rectified, but it is a tall order. I am also now more convinced than ever that this is an issue of financial materiality.”

ENDS>

25 May 2023

For further information:

Lara Blecher, Engagement Services Manager
PIRC Ltd, (research and engagement partner to LAPFF)
Email: lara.blecher@lapfforum.org

About the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum: The Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF) is a voluntary association of 87 public sector pension funds and six pool companies based in the UK with combined assets of over £350 billion. It exists to ‘promote the long-term investment interests of local authority pension funds, and to maximise their influence as shareholders to promote corporate responsibility and high standards of corporate governance amongst the companies in which they invest.’ PIRC is the Research and Engagement partner to LAPFF.

<https://lapfforum.org/>.