



Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba

12th Edition

16- 20 October

2023

The 12th Edition of Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba roared to life – @ZAMI2023



Participants during the Youth Symposium 16/10/23

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) in partnership with Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers Association (ZELA) and Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) hosted the 12th Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba (ZAMI) from 16 to 20 October 2023. Kicking off the ZAMI, the ZCC co- convened the Youth Symposium and also held an Annual High-Level Engagement Meeting on Peace and Cohesion (HLEMPC) – 2023-2028. These events not only showcased the important role of the Church in the community agendas but also provided platforms for dialogue and addressing past hurts.

The youth symposium, held at the Enterprise Hotel, focused on natural resource governance, an issue that affects many young individuals who feel excluded from the decision-making processes in mining. Youths are facing employment challenges and resorting to negative coping as our minerals are extracted under a model failing to transformatively contribute to the Zimbabwean economy. 44 youths (20 males, 24 females) participated. The number is exclusive of other stakeholders and facilitators above 35 years of age.

The youth symposium allowed the youths to discuss and formulate strategies for becoming major players in natural resource governance. These strategies include policy advocacy and lobbying and continuous engagements with key stakeholders including the Ministry of Mines to create a specific desk for youth in mining.

As a precursor and part of ZAMI side events, the ZCC also convened a High Level Peace and Social Cohesion meeting, bringing together academia, traditional leaders, communities and civil society organisations to converse on issues of peace and cohesion for communities affected by past hurts and violence so as to establish and strengthen paths to justice, peace and reconciliation in our country.

Speaking at the Peace Building and Social Cohesion meeting, Professor Sifiso Mpfu, a renowned academic, highlighted the crucial role of the Church in addressing past wounds. He emphasized that unresolved issues of the past could potentially lead to future disasters if not addressed.

“There is need to include women and youths in peacebuilding dialogues especially from communities that were affected by past atrocities. Continuously ignoring these issues will not do good to the country as the issue will not be resolved and continue to affect the nation.”





Rev Wilfred Dimingu steering discussions at the HLEMP meeting 16/10/23

The High- Level meeting helped to shape strategies for the Church to respond to the issues of peace and cohesion that continues to be pressing for the country.

To celebrate the start of the ZAMI, a welcoming dinner was organized at the Enterprise Hotel for all ZCC participants from the communities. During the dinner, the Clergy, lay leaders and members of the ZCC Supervisory Council from mining communities were encouraged to become ambassadors of their communities. The ZCC envisions a society where everyone benefits from the country's rich mineral resources, and it is through the collective effort of social actors such as the Church that this can be achieved.

The ZAMI is an annual platform where vulnerable communities affected by mining activities engages with various stakeholders, including mining companies and government ministries. Through these engagements, challenges faced by these communities can be highlighted and solutions collectively developed. The solutions collated during the ZAMI will be consolidated in the declaration and informs policy and local engagements post the ZAMI.

The young people resolved that they need to push for the designing of mining taxes and royalties that stimulate local value addition and youths to be represented and visible in mining boards governing mining affairs in the country. In addition, young people need to undertake initiatives to ensure a just energy transition by occupying the climate justice agenda. Continuous engagement with key stakeholders in communities to address mining related challenges that affect youths were also encouraged.

The youths further encouraged the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development at District and Provincial Levels to set up a Youth Desks that will assist youths to easily access mining opportunities.

The ZCC plays a crucial role in facilitating constructive dialogue, advocating for the interests of marginalized communities, and ensuring that their voices are heard.

Faith leaders advocates for Tax Justice in the extractives sector



Engineer Simba Mbokochena, Ministry of Mines giving a presentation during the Tax Justice side session

Bulawayo witnessed a powerful session on Tax Justice at the 12th edition of the Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba (ZAMI), jointly organized by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) on October 18th, 2023.

During the session, participants discussed the urgent need for the Church to take charge and address the issues surrounding Tax Justice, rather than merely praising those who appear benevolent without taking effective action.

ZCC Tax Justice Network member, Rev Taurai Maforo delivered a compelling presentation on Tax Justice Issues within the Extractives sector, shedding light on the current disparities in Zimbabwe's taxation system which allows foreign mining companies to mine tax free for the first five years of their operations while the locals are heavily taxed.

Zimbabwe cannot be a tax haven for foreigners while its own citizens shoulder the burden of taxes," The Church needs to advocate against such practices', affirmed Rev Maforo.

The statements resonated with the audience, highlighting the pressing need for reforms that promote fairness and transparency in the tax system.

The participants acknowledged that achieving Tax Justice is not an easy task, with Rev Lazarus Sajeni posing a metaphorical representation of addressing tax disparities.

"The road to Jericho, will continue to be dangerous as long as we keep on celebrating the Good Samaritan and if actions are not taken. By addressing these issues head-on, the Church can become a powerful force for change in the extractive sector.

Engineer Simba Mbokochena from the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, contributed to the conversation by providing an outline of Zimbabwe's mining industry. He emphasized that the sector had generated an astounding \$20.5 billion in revenue since 2018.

The participants however felt that these figures underscored the significance of tax contributions from the mining sector as the majority is still languishing in abject poverty despite the projected figures by the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development.

Stop the Bleeding campaign manager, Mr Mukasiri Sibanda hammered the need to prioritize environmental rights in our nation. "Economic rights and environmental rights are not equal as all rights are dependent on environmental rights," said Sibanda.

The session concluded with the Church advocating for the #ZacTax, Just Taxation for an Economy of Life and Ecological Justice. Participants stressed that the Church must play an instrumental role in bridging the gap between celebratory gestures and effective action.

JOIN THE #ZAC TAX CAMPAIGN!

#ZacTax: Just Taxation for an Economy of Life & Ecological Justice

The Zacchaeus Story, Luke 19: 1 10

“Jesus went on into Jericho and was passing through. There was a chief tax collector there named Zacchaeus, who was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see JesusWhen Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to Zacchaeus, “Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today.” Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy . All the people who saw it started grumbling, “This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!” Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Listen, sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much.” Jesus said to him, “Salvation has come to this house today.”

ZacTax Calls for Tax Justice

- The Church calls for the enactment of progressive wealth taxes at global and national levels to curb the growing concentration of wealth in the hands of an increasingly powerful few, hand in hand with increased public spending to stamp out poverty.
- The Church demand for a stop to tax evasion and avoidance by multinational corporations (MNCs) and affluent.
- The Church urgently call for progressive carbon and pollution taxes at different levels to protect our only planetary home.
- The Church calls for the immediate implementation of a financial transaction tax on trade in equities, bonds, currencies and derivatives to curb harmful speculative activities.

ZacTax Calls for Reparation

- Midway through the International Decade for People of African Descent, 2015 2024, the Church call for the establishment from taxation of an Enslavement Reparation Fund overseen by a Global Commission for Reparatory Justice.
- The Church demands for debt cancellation as a further measure to bring reparation and restoration to nations impoverished by the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade and struggling with the impacts of runaway climate change.

ZacTax Calls to Churches

- Faith leaders calls on Churches to discern and study the issues around just taxation and reparation for slavery and ecological debt through the lens of the covenantal relationships that God calls us into with each other and the earth.
- Faith leaders urge for creative and prophetic readings of the Zacchaeus story in Luke 19:1 10.
- Faith leaders encourage Churches to join the Zacchaeus campaign and lobby and advocate with national governments and global financial and economic institutions for tax and reparative justice.
- Faith leaders call on Churches to organise their finances in line with Zacchaeus principles for just taxation, sharing of resources and reparation for historical injustice.

Mining for Everyone: Promoting Access and Inclusion for People with Disabilities



Disability Advocates during the 12th edition of the ZAMI

People with Disabilities (PWDs) are intensifying their calls for equal access and inclusion in the country's natural resource sector and issues of national interest. These concerns were raised during the side sessions of the Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba, held in Bulawayo.

The session, organized by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers Association, provided a platform for PWDs to voice the challenges they face, particularly in relation to mining activities.

The dialogue brought together various stakeholders, including representatives from the National Council of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe, Parliamentarians, and other advocacy groups.

Dorcas Makaza, Legal Programme Officer at Women and Law in Southern Africa, expressed deep concern over the treatment of PWDs in the mining sector. She highlighted the discrimination faced by PWDs in hiring and promotion decisions, as many mining sites are not physically accessible to them. This lack of accessibility makes it difficult for PWDs to commute to work and perform their jobs safely.

"People with disabilities are often discriminated against in hiring and promotion decisions in the mining industry as many mining sites are not physically accessible to people with disabilities," she said.

The representatives of PWDs called upon the government to establish regulations for safe mining practices. The current artisanal mining practices pose a significant hazard to PWDs and others, resulting in an increase in injuries and, in worst-case scenarios, deaths. It is crucial to address these unsafe mining methods and ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals involved in the mining industry.

Gabbuza Joel Gabuza, the legislator for Binga South, pledged to support PWDs by ensuring that their concerns reach the parliament. He emphasized the need for the enactment of the Disability Bill into law, which would provide legal protection and support for PWDs in various sectors, including mining.

“PWDs are often the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of resource exploitation, such as environmental degradation, displacement, and human rights abuses. However, they can also benefit from resource exploitation if it is done in a sustainable and equitable manner. It is essential to create an inclusive mining industry that considers the needs and rights of all individuals, regardless of their abilities,” he said.

“We are going to make it a point to engage stakeholders who will assist us with pushing for disability sensitive policies in Zimbabwe. Over the years, as disability advocates, we have realized that we have been engaging the wrong people without our interests at heart. The Disability Bill should be passed into law,” said ZCC Ecumenical Youth and Disability Advocate, Tariro Gurure.



ZCC Disability Champion, Tariro Gurure (right) facilitating the disability inclusion side session



Participants during the disability inclusion side session

The Church desires for Leadership to Embrace Contentment for a Sustainable Future



ZCC General Secretary, Rev Dimingu giving closing remarks at the ZAMI

The 12th edition of the Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba (ZAMI) concluded on a high note, with the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) Secretary General, Rev Wilfred Dimingu, calling upon leaders to follow the gospel of “Enough.”

Rev Dimingu emphasized the importance of contentment and the need for those in positions of power to be satisfied with what they have and make way for others when they feel they have nothing new to offer.

“Our leadership be it on companies and country must understand the gospel of enough, if you feel that there is nothing new for you to offer to your company or country there is nothing wrong in stepping down and leave for others with new ideas,” said Rev Dimingu.

In his address, the ZCC Secretary General, Rev Dimingu specifically called upon those in the mining industry to practice temperance and be satisfied with their current achievements. He expressed concern that the insatiable desire for more is pushing the nation to extremes, burdening future generations with the consequences.

The ZCC Secretary General also castigated those on positions of power to use their influence so that everyone benefits and not them alone. He referred them to as ‘foolish leaders’ who are worried about the multiplication of their own wealth and not that of their servants. He gave a striking Biblical allegory found in Matthew 25:14-30 in which his hero was the third slave who buried his talent and returned it to the master without any growth as he refused to be used in things that does not benefit him.



Communities raising some of the issues hindering development in our country

“My hero there is the third slave, I want to be like him. He refused to be used as a tool of continuous manipulation. Used to amass wealth for the foolish slave master while he benefits nothing but thank yous,” he said.

Rev Dimingu urged mining stakeholders to avoid the path of foreign companies, such as the Chinese, who prioritize their own benefits without considering the long-term impact on the country.

The ZAMI provided a platform for affected communities, particularly those from Hwange, Bikita, Buhera, Penalonga, Arda Transau, Marange and Mutoko, to voice their concerns and call upon the government to address unsafe mining practices. These practices have resulted in massive environmental degradation, water pollution, life-long injuries, and numerous deaths since 2017.

Former ZCC President, Bishop Khanye, also spoke at the event and urged the ZAMI organizers to engage the government at higher levels to expedite the resolution of mining-related challenges. He emphasized the influential role of the Church in advocating for the well-being of affected communities, given its strong following and deep understanding of the issues faced at the grassroots level.

“The Church is always in the community and interacts with them for more than 52 times a year and we now know their challenges as such there is need for the creation of platforms where we meet with the government and discuss issues affecting the communities especially caused by artisanal mining”

Bishop Khanye called for the establishment of structures where the Church leads the process of engaging the government in addressing mining challenges.

The conclusion of the 12th ZAMI highlighted the urgent need for responsible mining practices, the promotion of contentment among leaders, and the active involvement of the Church in addressing mining-related challenges.

Summary of Key Issues and 2023– 28 Action Plan

Key Emerging Issues:

- The Devolution Bill is not very clear on how regions must manage their natural resources as most proceeds from mining activities are still centralised in the capital and the provincial regions have to rely on the government for devolution funds.
- Miners' rights -especially in Chinese-owned mines are not respected as workers are exposed to slave like working conditions, not paying the wages and salaries that commensurate with the work they do.
- Concerns were also raised on the lack of the Disability Act despite numerous loud calls for inclusivity in mining. PWDs were not venturing into mining because they felt they were not protected by law.
- Concerns were raised over lack of skills base in Zimbabwe and it was suggested that as part of their corporate social responsibility. It was also raised that a number of mining companies were not developing areas they were operating in. Most of the companies are concerned about the minerals that they are getting from the communities and not doing corporate social responsibility.
- Traditional leaders should be capacitated to be able to trace and closely monitor and evaluate the activities of mining companies in their communities.
- There is rampant environmental degradation, poisoning of water sources in areas where mining is taking place (especially where artisanal mining activities is taking place).
- Concerns were also raised on the lack of unity among the COSs in calling for sustainable mining and a just energy transition as they are crying in different corners and realising no tangible goals.
- Improve education and awareness by translating climate-related and economic policy documents into local languages for easier dissemination.

2023-28 Strategic Action Plans

- Advocate for the implementation of the devolution and decentralization policy to allow communities to manage their natural resources effectively.
- Foster unity among civil society organizations (CSOs) to support a just energy transition that addresses the needs of all stakeholders and communities. Foster collaboration among CSOs, labor unions, and Parliament to support a just energy transition that considers the needs of all stakeholders and communities.
- Ensure respect for mine workers' rights and establish workers' committees and unions in line with the Constitution and Labor Act.

- Improve education and awareness by translating climate-related and economic policy documents into local languages for easier dissemination.
- Review minimum wages for mine workers in collaboration with the Government and private sector.
- Enhance collaboration and coordination between Government departments to address community challenges at the local level. Ensure transparency and accountability in mineral governance by providing information to traditional leaders, the church, and communities involved in ensuring ESG compliance.
- Revisit community beneficial ownership schemes in consultation with communities and stakeholders to ensure real benefits for communities.
- Promote regional integration among SADC countries to regulate the price of critical minerals.
- Prioritize the development of a comprehensive critical minerals framework in Parliament, addressing value addition, skills transfer, and tech transfer from the global north to the global south.
- Prioritize the Enactment of the Disability Bill in Parliament to protect the rights of people with disabilities in all spheres.
- Mobilize communities and advocate for sustainable natural resource management and a just energy transition framework, with the active involvement of the Church.
- Ensure engagement of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission with mineral-hosting communities, providing access to non-judicial mechanisms for redress.
- Prioritize the amendment of the Mines and Minerals Act in Parliament, ensuring comprehensive consultation of communities.
- Establish operational grievance redress mechanisms for affected communities within the mining value chain.
- Establish a School of Renewable Energy and provide grants for research and innovation to position the country as a key player in the just energy transition.
- Broaden contracts with international investors to include training opportunities for local communities and companies in the processing of raw minerals, promoting knowledge exchange programs for sustainable mining operations.
- Mobilize domestic resources to fund the just energy transition, reducing the burden on citizens by returning the corporate income tax to pre-pandemic levels of 25%. Avoid entering into Resource Backed Loans to prevent perpetuating the cycle of poverty and leveraging the futures of young people.
- Ensure adequate compensation and respect for land and consent rights when mining operations displace communities. Mandate mining companies to have a sustainability plan for post-mining operations to ensure social, environmental, and economic recovery for affected communities.
- Promote the formation of a body to address the welfare of female miners and women and girls living in mining operations.
- Increase funding and spending for disability sector, particularly for women and girls with impairments, in line with the Abuja health declaration. Advocate for increased funding for health service delivery to women, ensuring the fulfillment of the 15% Abuja health declaration.
- Prioritize infrastructure, equipment, and supply provisions to address the needs of people with disabilities in the national budget.

Scenes from the 2023 ZAMI



lyasa Dance Group performing on the injustices within the extractives sector



Participants during the 12th edition of the ZAMI



(From Left to right) Former ZCC President, Bishop Khanye; AFRODAD's Afshin Nazir and ZCC General Secretary Rev Dimingu



ZCC Clergy during the ZAMI 12th edition

Youth Symposium Declaration 2023

Key Demands:

On the 16th of October 2023, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) and the Zimbabwe Environmental Law (ZELA) Association facilitated a Youth Symposium held under the theme “A Just Energy transition, situating the role of young people in Zimbabwe”. The Youths who attended the symposium made the following submissions:

A just energy transition:

- Government should establish the School of Renewable Energy where it gives grants for research and innovation in order to position the country as a key player in the just energy transition.
- Government should broaden contracts with international investors to include training opportunities for local communities and local companies in the processing of raw minerals by international investors as knowledge exchange programs to ensure that mining operations are sustainable beyond international investors.

Domestic Resource Mobilisation

- A just energy transition in Zimbabwe must be funded through domestic resource mobilisation to reduce burden on citizens since the country is failing to service its huge debt to the IMF and World Bank. For example, the Corporate income tax needs to go back to pre-pandemic levels of 25%.
- The government should desist from entering into Resource Backed Loans because this continues to perpetuate the cycle of poverty by leveraging the futures of young people.

Mining and mining communities

- There is need for increased transparency by mining companies and government ministries to local mining communities with regards to mining contracts. This increases community oversight on natural resources while ensuring community ownership of mining projects.
- Mining companies that displace communities to give way to their mining operations should adequately compensate the affected communities.
- The mines and minerals bill that was tabled before the last parliament session should have provisions that mandate adequate and fair corporate social responsibility to address the challenges faced in mining communities that include poverty and diseases.
- For responsible mining purposes and for Zimbabwe to realise its growth dividend particularly in the mining sector, it is pertinent that the ministry of environment, lands and climate along with other like-minded ministries mandate that mining companies have a sustainability plan that will be executed after their mining operations are done. The sustainability plan should include social, environment and economic recovery aspects for the affected mining community.

- It is essential that every registered mining company including small scale miners to have risk teams in place at their work stations. This will increase the extent of mining disasters and accidents that have made news headlines in recent months.
- The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare will need to step up efforts in enforcing labour laws in the country as external investors who are mainly Chinese have been accused in recent months of violating the Labour Act. This is evidenced by the accusations of child labour, unfair working hours, terrible living conditions for workers and unfair dismissals which are becoming rampant in the mining sector.

Youth representation and inclusion

- Youth representation should be visible in every mining body governing mining affairs in the country. This includes the Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe (MMCZ) and the Chamber of Mines.
- The aspirations, challenges and other issues affecting youth in mining are pertinent in making the mining sector more inclusive and sensitive to young people hence the need to set in place a Youth in Mining Desk at national and provincial headquarters for youths in Zimbabwe.
- The youths demand the formation of a body that will look at the welfare of female miners and women and girls living in the mining operations. This comes amidst sexual, physical and economic violence that continues to manifest itself in the sector.

The Environment

- The Environmental Management Authority must ensure that the Environmental Act is enforced in its entirety in order to reduce the extreme effects of irresponsible mining on the environment and the livelihoods of communities.
- Administration must be decentralized in the mining sector, specifically in the administration of diamonds.



Student from Zimbabwe School of Mines, Rumbidzai Rose Bakayidza presenting the Youth Symposium declaration

Scenes from the 2023 ZAMI



ZCC President, Bishop Dr Ignitius Makumbe giving Theological Reflections to kick-start ZAMI 2023



ZCC Director Church, Peace and Just Societies giving a background of the ZAMI



ZCC Programs Coordinator, Ms Caroline Mutsago presenting ZAMI achievements in the last 12 years



ZIMCODD Programmes Manager, John Maketo during plenary for the Oil and Gas side session



Rev Taurai Maforo facilitating the Oil and Gas side session



Rev Tariro Zhou giving a presentation during the Tax Justice side session