

2021 GENDER AND EXTRACTIVES SYMPOSIUM COMMUNIQUE

From the 14th- 16th July 2021, the Platform on Gender and Extractives convened the annual Gender and Extractives Symposium virtually which ran under the theme, “**Women in leadership: advancing an equal future in the extractives sector.**” The 5th edition of this multi stakeholder engagement platform was attended by women in mining, mining associations led by women, mining communities from Bubi, Gwanda, Hurungwe, Shurugwi, Marange, Mutoko, Zvishavane and representatives from government departments, Women’s Microfinance Bank, development partners, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, Government Ministries, Parliament of Zimbabwe, and Parliamentary Portfolio Committees.

The Platform on Gender and Extractives notes that women in the extractive industry are a heterogeneous group with varying interests requiring different interventions appropriate to their needs.

We applaud the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mines and Mining Development for its fortitude in trying to address the plight of artisanal and small-scale miners.

Appreciating the Zimbabwe Miners Federation, for its concerted efforts in contributing to the growth, and empowerment of artisanal and small-scale miners (ASM) including women in mining.

Recognizing the efforts by the Government of Zimbabwe to address and find a lasting solution to the machete violence in the mining sector.

Delighted with the recent pronouncement by the Reserve Bank Governor noting that the Government is working on passing into law a Statutory Instrument to facilitate registration of artisanal miners to curb illegal mining, promote formalization and traceability of gold from the sector.

Commending the Government for putting in place Institutions such as the Gender Commission, facilitating and doing everything necessary to advance gender equality and women empowerment.

Pleased with how some women in mining have managed to acquire certificates as registered approved prospectors.



Noting the urgent need for concerted efforts to promote women's participation in the whole mining value chain to ensure that the impact of COVID-19 does not leave women disproportionately affected.

Realizing the need for the Government to ensure speedy establishment of the cadastre system to promote transparency in the administration of mining claims.

Outraged by the plight of child labourers in the artisanal mining sector strongly linked to poverty coupled with the negative effects of COVID-19.

Concerned by the delays in the finalization of the Mines and Minerals Bill. We believe the enactment of the Bill into an Act will address transparency and accountability risks and vulnerabilities of women associated with the archaic Mines and Minerals Act of 1961.

Course of Action and Possible Solutions

We now therefore call on the Government of Zimbabwe and relevant stakeholders to;

- Ensure it brings finality to the formalization of ASM. Delays in formalizing and regularizing Artisanal miners continues to affect the sector players whose contribution to the growth and development of Zimbabwe's economy cannot be overemphasized.
- Provide continuous oversight and monitoring of the activities of mining companies. The government through the Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) should monitor the violation of environmental, economic, social and cultural rights of women affected by mining activities in their communities. The Commission should investigate reports and institute the necessary processes that ensure communities get access to remedy.
- Support women in mining with the requisite tools to resuscitate their businesses, failure of which could result in some of them failing to continue with their mining operations, thus, plunging them deep into poverty. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in business losses and some women are being compelled to find alternatives to recapitalize their businesses. The International Labour Organization estimates that some 1.6 billion people employed in the informal economy or nearly half the global workforce could see their livelihoods



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destroyed due to the continued decline in working hours brought on by lockdowns to curb the spread of COVID-19.

- Ensure that public resources are allocated according to agreed strategic priorities, including ensuring that this address gender equality. Gender responsive budgeting should be integrated in planning and budgeting processes including introducing gender-related strategic objectives into policies and budgets.
- Gender mainstreaming across the mining value chain is of paramount importance: the government should enact laws and policies and ensure adherence to Section 17 of the Constitution which calls for gender parity in all spheres.
- Institute mechanisms that ensure that Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) are mandatory for every mining venture. GIAs will allow project planners to consider the impact that a project has on women, men, boys, and girls. They will ensure that negative project impacts are minimised at the same time promote women agency and empowerment.
- Implement taxation systems that have a gender lens that remove the tax burden on the most poor and vulnerable in society, particularly, women, youths, PWDs and the elderly.
- Recapitalize RBZ and Fidelity Printers to offer competitive prices for gold to support women in the ASM sector.
- Strengthen mining sector governance through joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a membership organization representing the global standard in promoting open and accountable management of oil, gas, and mineral revenue.
- Ensure enforcement of the legislative framework that addresses patriarchy and gender inequality. Patriarchy permeates society from domestic control to male dominated institutional structures in the mining sector. Negative stereotypes and historical beliefs continue to affect women's full participation in mining and if not addressed, these will continue being an acute inequality contributor between men and women in mining.
- Ensure that the loan acquisition process and access to finance is simplified so that women are capacitated with modest equipment to boost productivity. Mining is capital intensive and lack of funding continues to affect the level at which women miners can grow their mining enterprises. Even though there are several funders that are willing to support women, mining requires geological surveys and sadly many women do not have resources to undertake geomagnetic scans.
- Capacitate women in the ASM sector with skills and knowledge to operate effectively in the mining sector. It remains critical to continuously strengthen their ability to organize



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into mining syndicates and to legally register so that they acquire mining claims and operate as small-scale miners. There is need for continuous mentoring and support to ensure that these historical gender imbalances can be redressed.

- Implement social protection mechanisms that benefit women, youths, PWDs and other vulnerable groups living in mining host communities in line with section 298 of the Constitution which stipulates that the benefits and burdens of the use of resources must be shared equally between present and future generations.
- Socialise and raise awareness amongst young people on the importance of joining the mining sector as both an economic activity and a livelihood strategy.
- Capacitate women in mining. ASM requires improved environmental management, public health management, and mine safety to reduce its environmental and human costs. This will ensure that ASM practices are consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
- Ensure full engagement of women, in key decision-making positions matters including exploring feminist economic alternatives, recognising, reducing, and distributing unpaid care work, and building their confidence to ensure increased income in the extractive sector;

Although over the years, there have been changes in men's attitudes towards taking more responsibilities for unpaid care work, promotion of decent work for women in sectors such as the extractives industry is still a challenge which calls for urgent attention. Decent work is the only sustainable way out of eradicating poverty whilst building the necessary social cohesion. Therefore, there is need for continued partnerships and engagement of stakeholders, policy makers, relevant Government ministries and CSOs to promote Decent Work for women in the Extractive industry.

While we applaud the Government for joining forces with different stakeholders to address machete violence in ASM, an issue that dominated discussions during the 4th session of the Gender and Extractives Symposium, the Government and law enforcement agents must not rest on their laurels. Violence in the ASM sector must be totally abated, until then the #StopTheMachete campaign continues.

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HSTV ZOOM Webinar, 14-16 July 2021



LIST OF REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:

- ActionAid
- Christian Aid
- Community Based Organisations
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- Local Authorities
- Environmental Management Agency
- Honorable Members of Parliament
- Ministry of Mines and Mining Development
- Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises
- Professional Women, Women Executives and Business Women's Forum (PROWEB)
- Parliament of Zimbabwe
- Women and Law in Southern Africa
- Zimbabwe Women's Microfinance Bank
- Zimbabwe Gender Commission
- Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce
- Zimbabwe Council of Churches
- Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development
- Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Network
- Zimbabwe Women in Mining Association
- Zimbabwe Miners Federation
- Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association



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