

WEEKEND READER

"Your Weekly Read on Debt, Development & Socio-Economic Justice"

25 SEPT 2026

WOMEN'S PRE-BUDGET CAUCUS POSITION Making Tax Work for Women: Key Budget Asks for the 2027 National Budget



Zimbabwe's 2027 National Budget comes at a time of limited fiscal space, public debt pressures and rising costs for households. But fiscal policy is not gender-neutral. When governments rely heavily on consumption taxes, fees and levies while public services remain underfunded, women, especially those in low-income households and the informal economy, often carry a disproportionate burden. They pay through their incomes and consumption, and again through unpaid care work when gaps in health, water, sanitation, education and social protection have to be filled at home.

The Women's Pre-Budget Caucus is therefore calling for a budget that recognises these realities and ensures that Zimbabwe's tax system and natural resource wealth contribute to fairer outcomes for women and girls. This includes stronger mineral revenue mobilisation, greater transparency, investment in care-supporting public services and climate-resilient infrastructure, and fiscal measures that do not deepen inequality.

Read more

<https://zimcodd.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/WOMENS-PREBUDGET-CAUCUS-POSITION.pdf>

From Harare to Antalya: Communities Take the Floor on Climate and Critical Minerals Justice



The road to COP31 in Antalya must begin with people living with the consequences of climate change, resource extraction and economic inequality. This was a key message from the People's COP 2026, held on 23 September at Golden Conifer in Harare under the theme "From Harare to Antalya: Community Climate Justice, Critical Minerals and the Road to COP31." The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) joined government officials, parliamentarians, civil society, academia, traditional and community leaders, women, youth and persons with disabilities to discuss climate justice and Zimbabwe's critical minerals transition. ZIMCODD brought a debt justice, fiscal justice and sustainable resource management lens, highlighting the links between climate change, public finance, natural resource governance and community rights.

The event opened with a documentary on Cyclone Idai and the continued challenges facing communities in Chimanimani, including displacement, lost livelihoods and inadequate infrastructure. Similar concerns emerged from resource-rich communities.

In Marange, Brilliant Matambo spoke about displacement, the destruction of close to 3,000 graves during diamond mining and the decline of mining activity, leaving workers unpaid and communities questioning what lasting development their mineral wealth has delivered. In Hwange, Claris Ngoma described communities competing with more than thirty mines for water, with women walking long distances to collect water. These experiences raise a central question for resource governance: who benefits from the resources extracted from mining communities?

Discussions on Zimbabwe's lithium, platinum, nickel, copper, chromium and graphite resources examined the opportunities and risks associated with the country's just energy transition. Concerns were raised over the environmental and health costs of mining and whether communities are receiving sufficient benefits. Tracy Mafa of ActionAid Zimbabwe cautioned that beneficiation does not automatically guarantee local ownership or equitable development, with corruption, smuggling, weak enforcement and under-declaration potentially limiting benefits reaching communities and the public.

ZIMCODD emphasised that value addition must be accompanied by stronger domestic resource mobilisation, transparent revenue collection, effective taxation and accountable public spending. This is particularly important where mineral revenues are linked to resource-backed financing, requiring transparency, parliamentary oversight and public accountability to protect Zimbabwe's future fiscal space.

The People's COP also highlighted the gap between climate commitments and the resources reaching vulnerable communities. In Chiredzi, Ephraim Mtombeni described adaptation efforts including drought-resistant crops and smaller livestock, but noted inadequate boreholes, dams, veterinary support and affordable groundwater permits. For ZIMCODD, climate finance must be transparently tracked and directed towards communities facing the greatest climate risks, strengthening water security, livelihoods and essential public services.

Women, youth and persons with disabilities also highlighted the unequal impacts of climate change. Women face increased burdens through water collection, food insecurity, unpaid care work and exposure to gender-based violence, while young people face barriers to opportunities in renewable energy and critical minerals. Persons with disabilities experience additional challenges during climate-related disasters. These perspectives reinforce the need for inclusive budgeting, gender-responsive climate finance and meaningful community participation.

The People's COP demonstrated that climate justice extends beyond international negotiations. It is also about decisions over minerals, public revenue, debt, taxation, climate finance and public spending. ZIMCODD calls for stronger transparency around mining revenues and resource-backed financing, improved compensation mechanisms and greater investment in climate-resilient infrastructure. Parliament must strengthen oversight of borrowing and critical minerals agreements, while SADC and the African Union should deepen cooperation on resource-backed loans, taxation, illicit financial flows and critical minerals governance.

The message from Harare is clear: the road to Antalya must begin with communities whose lives are already being shaped by climate change, mining and economic decisions. Climate justice must address who pays, who benefits and who decides.

ZIMCODD Participates in Critical Minerals and Just Transition Workshop



On 24 September 2026, the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) participated as a panelist at the Trade Unions and Civil Society Workshop on Critical Minerals and Just Transition, held at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Harare. The workshop brought together trade unions, civil society organisations and other stakeholders to discuss how Zimbabwe can harness its critical mineral resources to advance inclusive and sustainable development.

Discussions examined Zimbabwe's position in global critical mineral value chains, noting that the country remains largely concentrated at the extraction stage. This limits opportunities to retain greater economic value through domestic beneficiation and value addition, despite growing global demand for minerals linked to renewable energy, battery technologies and electric vehicles.

ZIMCODD brought a socio-economic and fiscal justice lens to the discussion, emphasising that the success of the critical minerals sector should not be measured only through increased production and exports. It should also be assessed by whether mineral wealth is generating decent work, strengthening domestic resource mobilisation, improving community livelihoods and contributing to essential public services. The discussion also highlighted concerns around labour conditions, environmental impacts and access to land, water and sustainable livelihoods in mining communities. ZIMCODD stressed the need for meaningful community participation, stronger protection of workers' rights and greater transparency and accountability across critical mineral value chains.

A key focus was the need to strengthen domestic resource mobilisation and address revenue leakages so that Zimbabwe captures a fairer share of the value generated from its mineral resources. Mineral revenues should contribute to financing national development priorities, including health, education, social protection and climate-resilient infrastructure. The engagement reaffirmed the importance of collaboration among government, communities, trade unions, civil society and the private sector in shaping a critical minerals framework that promotes decent work, environmental sustainability, transparency, accountability and equitable distribution of mineral wealth.

For ZIMCODD, a just transition must go beyond extracting and exporting critical minerals. It must ensure that Zimbabwe retains greater value from its resources and that mineral wealth translates into fiscal space, decent livelihoods and tangible benefits for communities.

Beyond the Lithium: Goromonzi Communities Speak on the Realities of Mining



For communities in Goromonzi, Zimbabwe's growing lithium industry is not simply a story of mineral wealth, investment and economic opportunity. It is a reality unfolding around their homes, schools, water sources, roads, livelihoods and workplaces. On a recent community visit, the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development engaged residents to provide a first-hand account of the challenges facing communities living alongside mining operations.

The engagement provided an opportunity for community members to speak directly about the social and economic pressures associated with rapid population growth and mining activity. Residents described increasing overcrowding in Goromonzi, alongside limited public infrastructure and services. The shortage of government schools was raised as a major concern, with only two government schools serving a growing population of learners. Water scarcity was also highlighted, with households facing challenges accessing adequate and reliable water. Residents further raised concerns about increasing social pressures, including reports of sex work and related health risks, demonstrating how the expansion of economic activity can place additional strain on already limited social services.

At the centre of the discussion was a question that speaks directly to ZIMCODD's fiscal justice and sustainable resource governance agenda: what is the community actually gaining from the extraction of its mineral wealth? Goromonzi has become part of Zimbabwe's growing lithium economy, yet residents questioned whether the wealth generated from mining is translating into improved public services, infrastructure, livelihoods and opportunities for local people. For ZIMCODD, mineral wealth must contribute to domestic resource mobilisation and inclusive development, rather than extraction taking place alongside communities that continue to experience inadequate basic services.

The condition of local roads provided another example of the disconnect between mining activity and community benefit. Residents reported that the heavy trucks transporting minerals and supplies in and out of mining areas are contributing to the deterioration of roads. The impact extends beyond transport, affecting access to schools, health facilities, markets and livelihoods. The experiences shared raised questions about the extent to which mining companies contribute towards the infrastructure demands created by their operations and whether public resources are being used to absorb costs associated with private mineral extraction.

The visit also brought the realities of mine workers into the discussion. Two workers shared their experiences of employment in the mining sector, including concerns about working in confined spaces without adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), employment-related abuses and communication challenges arising from language barriers. Their testimonies highlighted the importance of decent work, occupational health and safety, workers' rights and effective enforcement of labour standards across the mining sector. A just transition cannot be achieved by increasing production of minerals needed for the global energy transition while workers remain exposed to unsafe working conditions and communities carry the social and environmental costs.

The concerns raised in Goromonzi reinforce the need to look beyond the volume of minerals extracted or the investment attracted into the sector. From a ZIMCodd perspective, the critical minerals agenda must be connected to questions of who owns, who benefits, who pays and who has a voice in decisions concerning Zimbabwe's natural resources. Stronger transparency in mining revenues, effective taxation, accountability for mineral agreements, protection of workers and meaningful participation by affected communities are essential if Zimbabwe is to translate its mineral endowment into sustainable development.

The engagement also demonstrated the value of bringing development partners closer to the communities at the centre of these policy questions. The visit provided an opportunity to hear directly from residents and workers rather than relying solely on policy discussions and reports. For ZIMCodd, such engagements are important in connecting community experiences to broader advocacy on debt justice, fiscal justice, domestic resource mobilisation and equitable natural resource governance.

The voices from Goromonzi point to a wider development challenge. Zimbabwe's lithium and other critical minerals can contribute to economic development, but this will depend on whether the country is able to retain greater value from its resources, mobilise sufficient public revenue, protect workers and communities, and invest mineral wealth in the public goods and services that people need. Mineral wealth should not only leave the ground; it should translate into tangible improvements in the lives and livelihoods of the communities where that wealth is found.

Opportunities

Communications, Advocacy and Regional Engagement Consultant (Part-time)

[https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/articles/item/communications-advocacy-and-regional-engagement-consultant-\(part-time\)](https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/articles/item/communications-advocacy-and-regional-engagement-consultant-(part-time))

UNDP Monitoring & Evaluation Data Solutions Consultant – Home-Based

<http://supplier.quantum.partneragencies.org>

End-of-Project Evaluation Consultant – DAPP Zimbabwe

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Legal Officer – Zimbabwe Gender Commission

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