

AMI Concept Note 2021

Theme- Building forward together, pivoting the extractives sector for adaptation and resilience against COVID-19

Slogan: The Alternative Mining Indaba Will Not be Muted!

The world will never be the same again. Over the past 12 months the advent of the coronavirus pandemic has altered the very core of life as we know it. Likewise, the Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI) has been impacted. The pandemic threatens to undo the decade long assiduous work done by AMI. Strengthening transparency, public participation and accountability, pillars of good governance in the extractive sector, in the COVID era is by no means an easy task. Heavy reliance on digital spaces for community solidarity, communication and engagement with stakeholders - government, industry, and civil society - massively marginalises mining impacted communities. To compound matters, COVID-19 regulations have been used in some instances to increase crackdowns on people's freedoms, further shrinking civic space.

Added to this the spectre of terrorism and conflict in Cabo Delgado Province in northern Mozambique which has claimed the lives of more than 1 500 people with a further 310 000 displaced since 2017 at the hands of a group of insurgents known as Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jammah (ASWJ), who are said to be aligned with the so-called Islamic State. Displaced people are taking shelter across Cabo Delgado as well as in neighbouring provinces. The majority are living with host families, further disrupting local COVID-19 protocols and resources. Others are staying in temporary camps set up recently by the government, while many are hiding out in the bush – some for weeks or months on end, fighting cholera and malaria. Rather than bringing great economic opportunity, mining operations in this part of Mozambique have instead created unmet economic expectations, generated human rights violations and increased the levels of poverty and unemployment; which are now being exploited by foreign and local militants to escalate the conflict as they seek to recruit members.

The Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI), a people's movement aimed towards bringing justice, accountability, transparency and fostering democratic participation by ordinary people in mining and the extractives industry sector has lost much ground due to travel bans and the curtailing of in-person meetings, replaced by virtual meetings and the gradual attrition of solidarity and cohesion that meetings across the continent had come to embody. Guided by the principle of inclusivity, the AMI strongly emphasizes that people's struggles against extractivism need to be

grounded within communities where extraction of mineral resources occurs and as such, AMI has been cascaded further to include Village-level Alternative Mining Indabas (VAMIs) or Local-level AMIs, and District-level AMIs in addition to Provincial and National AMIs.

The tumultuous uncertainty associated with COVID-19 has raised the stakes for the AMI, with high data costs becoming a new form of extractives, which should not be ignored as we align to the new normal. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to some of the highest data costs in the world, posing yet another barrier for already marginalized communities to participate in important civic roles such as participatory decision-making and oversight roles. The “new normal” could very well leave communities behind, with barriers such as accessibility to smartphones and laptops, which are further exacerbated by poor networks and the high cost of data. The AMI views this as another form of exclusion and as such, would use this opportunity to address these compounded socio-economic inequalities.

The AMI is a unique faith-based solidarity platform comprising mining affected and impacted communities, grassroots community-based organisations, civil society and other actors from across the African continent and beyond, characterized by round-table meetings with government and private sector actors, workshops and capacity building forums. For the last 12 years it has brought together those who subscribe to the principles and spirit of good governance, inclusivity and equitable distribution of profits in the extractive and mainly mining sector. It has sought to build a bridge of knowledge between those adversely affected by mining activities, and those who profit from it. It is a platform that brings together communities, grassroots movements, national governments, labour, civil society and mining company executives, who mining-affected communities cannot otherwise easily access, to engage in dialogue and provides an open space to ensure the communities will benefit from natural resource extraction and that their voices are heard at national, continental and global levels.

COVID19 has further exposed the huge pre-existing socio-economic inequalities existing in our region and across the African continent. With inadequate and crumbling health and educational facilities, high food insecurity and lack of decent livelihoods, the poor and marginalised have been left more vulnerable by the pandemic and will suffer the impacts for a long time to come. The World Bank estimates that an additional 88 million people will live in extreme poverty in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 and that this number could rise to 115 million under the COVID-19-downside scenario with more severe economic impacts of the pandemic. Mining

communities and women in particular, already predisposed of high poverty and socio-economic inequalities, are bearing the severe brunt of the pandemic.

Efforts to secure the vaccine – while now advanced in the developed world - are yet to materialise in Africa. Inequality is once again rearing its ugly head as the rich scramble to secure more than what they need of the vaccine while Africa remains on the periphery of access to the vaccine.

Africa's promising oil industry may have been pushed into the doldrums, due to lockdowns, the demand for oil plummeted and the knock-on effect is telling on oil prices. Further, the climate change agenda for decarbonisation, shifting from fossil fuels to clean energies has gained traction.

While impacted, AMI has taken this crisis head-on, prioritised the new challenges faced by mining communities and adapted with great agility to ensure community consultations and voices remain central in all decision-making processes. Recognizing the growing poverty, injustices and inequality shows that the AMI is more relevant now than before. Greater emphasis has been placed on the redoubling of efforts to rally communities and bend policy and practice reforms towards fair benefit sharing from oil, gas and mineral wealth. AMI, over the past year, has embraced change, implementing new ways of communication with stakeholders. Across the continent , the AMI has hosted the following virtual and hybrid meetings in 2020:

- Webinar on Extractive Sector, Inequality and Tax Justice
- 9th ZAMI
- Webinar on Exploring opportunities of EITI in the Governance of the Extractive Sector

The virtual meetings were adopted in response to the new reality of lockdowns and physical distancing to ensure that AMI constituencies remained in active contact - the new norm. Social media, community radio stations and other innovative tools offer exciting opportunities to inject an adrenaline shot into the movement and through ongoing virtual engagement, AMI was able to continue participating in such key processes as the review of the AMV. The AMI, its stakeholders and partners have played a key role in these deliberations, and will continue to do

so, with increasing demand for a people-centred approach ensuring that this blueprint guides how the continent can make its mineral wealth work for its people.

The AMI now attracts over 600 delegates annually from more than 22 African countries and beyond, participants from countries such as Switzerland, Belgium and the USA also partake in this process. With its continental and global reach, the AMI seeks to address violation of human rights by multinational corporations among other issues. It advocates for equity and fair distribution of profits derived from natural resource exploitation. The goal of the AMI is to capacitate and amplify the voices of mining affected communities and strive to promote full participation and rect involvement of mining affected communities in struggles for social and economic justice. It values the voices and needs of member organisations and communities as they play a pivotal role towards the achievement of these goals. To date the platform has successfully grown into a space for honest and robust engagement with policy makers such as African Union Auxiliary Structures, the SADC, ECOWAS and EAC, as well as National Governments. The platform which brings together different stakeholders and partners values diversity of views is now a process that emphasizes critical, joint and comprehensive monitoring by Extractives Industries, host Countries, and most importantly host communities with support of faith-based Civil Society Organisations to safeguard preservation and care of the environment for future generations. (12 countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe host VAMIs, DAMIs and NAMIs with an average of 300 people reaching out to over 4500 people annually).

The AMI work, over the past decade was aimed at improving the living conditions of those impacted by mining activities, increased transparency and accountability by stakeholders in the sector such as national governments and mining companies as well as sufficient engagement with communities and beneficiation from mining/extractive activities in and around their communities. While great inroads have been made, we have had varied success in achieving these complex goals, the Coronavirus threatens these developments. The AMI remains committed to being a learning and growing space, where lessons learned inform future programming. The Coronavirus has effectively shut down the global economy, having negative ripple effects on all citizens in terms of financial stability, food security and access to health. In the extractives sector, mining and mining-related activities have been categorized as essential in many SADC countries, however the slowdown of the global economy has had devastating impacts on mineworkers and the global value chain it is attached to. The fallout has been felt by many sectors, in particular mining, with artisanal small-scale mining disproportionately affected.

The Coronavirus is set to change the way business is done globally, with the mining sector forced to adapt, and the AMI too, has to critically question what this means for mining communities. Thus it is important to also take stock of the work the AMI has done over the past decade and where it needs to go next.

The social and economic impacts of the Coronavirus will be the most profound we will know in our lifetime. As the world experiences the second-wave of Coronavirus infections, the Alternative Mining Indaba remains resolute in ensuring continued contact with its constituencies through being adaptive to the COVID-19 environment and using a variety of means to maintain active engagement. We will take all necessary and available precautions to ensure maximum participation and engagement by community members while observing all COVID-19 safety protocols. The 2021 AMI will be held using a hybrid approach during our first virtual AMI between 08-12 February 2021 meeting. The following elements will be prioritized: support to participants to join virtually; local meeting localities for areas with low connectivity; ZOOM platforms for the AMI & its multiple forums and breakaway rooms for forums for the thematic issues. Podcast and Radio stations will also be utilized as platforms for wide engagement.

Themes:

- COVID19 : Challenges, opportunities and progress for Community engagement
- addressing socio-economic inequalities to confront the challenges of COVID-19
- The Shrinking Civic Space
 - Environmental and Community Human Rights Defenders
 - Civil Society Organizations Voices muted
- Gender Justice & Extractives
- Domestic Resource Mobilization
 - Strengthening Tax Linkages and Curbing IFFs in Extractives
 - Towards Access to Health For All Beyond Vaccination
 - Bridging the Digital Divide in the Education Sector
 - Investing in Social Nets to Address Inequality
- Artisanal Small-Scale Mining
- Debt & Extractives
 - Resource Backed Loans
 - Multinational Corporations as Responsible Social Actors
- Conflict in Mining

- Cabo Delgado and other hot spots
- Climate Change
- Fracking

General objectives:

1. To promote sharing, learning and strengthening of Solidarity at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels
2. To Dialogue with duty bearers

Specific Objectives:

1. To strengthen the platform for analysing the impact of COVID19 on the extractive industries and in particular communities impacted by mining.
2. To create an opportunity for sharing experiences on how to deal with and mitigate COVID19 impacts on mining communities and civil society organizations
3. To strengthen learning, exchange, sharing and solidarity between and amongst mining impacted communities, faith based and civil society organisations at local, national, sub-regional and international levels for holding governments and industries accountable
4. To bolster the AMI as multi-stakeholder engagement platform for key topical policy and practice issues affecting the governance of the extractive sector and sustainable development in Africa such as the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), AMGF, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights and global tax reforms
5. To co-create the way forward on new ways of working and adapting to the new COVID19 reality for mining communities, faith based and civil society organisations

Expected Outcomes:

1. A Vibrant and inclusive space for multi-stakeholder engagement that repovits participation of communities impacted by mining, faith and civil society organisations during formulation and implementation of mining and sustainable development policies
2. Strengthened platform under the AMI that is effective with clear markers of achievements
3. Clear Documentation and showcasing of the positive changes that have happened because of the AMI as well as the challenges facing communities with extractive industries

4. A concise strategy that is in place with plans on our immediate and future engagements in response to emerging issues in the mining sector in Africa

Expected Outputs:

1. Country, sub-regional and continental level AMIs
2. Number of delegates and stakeholders reached by the AMI to increase via virtual connection during five days
3. Case studies, reports, presentations and video clips on the impact of COVID-19 on the Extractives industries
4. Documented engagements by the AMI and her structures on policy reform in the continent
5. Declaration