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SARW

Southern Africa Resource Watch

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MAY 2024 HIGHLIGHT



MALAWAI JOINS PAMOJA

Civil Society in Mining host communities have joined the Pamoja critical minerals Alliance, this was arrived at during the training of stakeholders Women and Climate change in the context mining. The initiative was led by Foundation for Community Support Services (FOCUS). The meeting attracted participants from the Ilomba mining committee, representatives from mines operating in Chitipa, government officials, CSOs and Media. 25 members attended this meeting {6 women and 19 men}.

What is Pamoja?

Pamoja Critical Minerals Alliance (PCMA) is a membership-driven movement that aims to promote sustainable and accountable management of critical minerals in Africa. It was established in November 2023 by civil society organizations from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zambia, with the goal of ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are shared equitably among African countries and communities.

Section 1: May Momentum

Capacity-Building Initiative for the SADC Parliamentary Forum Standing Committee

The recent capacity-building initiative for the SADC Parliamentary Forum Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources was a pivotal moment for addressing the critical need for an energy transition in the Southern African region. The event focused on the urgent challenges posed by climate change and the necessity of updating policies and legislation to ensure a just and inclusive transition. Emphasizing social inclusion, poverty eradication, and equitable access to resources, the initiative also reaffirmed the region's commitments to international agreements like the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2063.

Participants began with an in-depth look at the current energy landscape in Southern Africa, highlighting the region's heavy reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation. This dependency has significant implications for energy access and affordability, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where energy poverty remains a severe issue. The discussions underscored the need to diversify energy sources to enhance energy security and support sustainable development.

Renewable energy emerged as a beacon of hope, with discussions revealing the vast untapped potential for solar, wind, hydro, and biofuels in the SADC region. The economic and environmental benefits of investing in renewable energy were clear, promising sustainable growth and a reduced carbon footprint. Notable projects and partnerships were showcased, highlighting ongoing efforts in green hydrogen production and sustainable aviation, which could transform the region's energy landscape.



The critical role of minerals like lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements in renewable energy technologies was another key focus. The forum stressed the importance of responsible mining practices to protect human rights and ensure the long-term viability of mining operations. Transparent governance and the need for policies that promote investment in renewable energy were strongly advocated.

Investment and governance in the extractive sector were examined, emphasizing the need for transparency and the distinction between legitimate and questionable investments. The discussions highlighted challenges faced by local authorities in managing mining operations and the necessity for transparency in the disclosure of beneficial ownership and control.

Energy poverty and off-grid solutions were extensively discussed, with billions of people globally lacking access to electricity and safe cooking facilities. The initiative called for a clear definition of energy poverty to inform effective policies. Successful off-grid projects in Africa were shared as practical solutions to this pervasive issue.

The initiative concluded by emphasizing the need for robust policy capacity, monitoring, and evaluation systems at both national and regional levels. Concerns about unfair competition from foreign currencies and their impact on local economies were raised, highlighting the need for long-term planning and economic diversification.

Overall, the capacity-building initiative highlighted the essential steps needed for a just and sustainable energy transition in Southern Africa. By focusing on renewable energy potential, responsible mining practices, and transparent governance, the forum outlined a clear path towards achieving sustainable development goals, providing a solid foundation for future efforts to drive positive change in the region's energy and natural resource sectors.



Webinar: State of Implementation of Business and Human Rights within the Critical Minerals Value Chain in Southern Africa

On the 9th of May 2024 SARW led an online webinar titled “The State of Implementation of Business and Human Rights within the Critical Minerals Value Chain in Southern Africa. The webinar comprised of panellists from the DRC, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The discussions led by the panellists regarding the implementation of business and human rights principles within the critical minerals value chain in Southern Africa is crucial, given the region's rich mineral resources and the increasing global demand for these materials. This initiative has unveiled both progress and persistent challenges in ensuring that human rights are respected and protected throughout the mining process.

The webinar highlighted Southern Africa's wealth of critical minerals, including cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements, which are essential for renewable energy technologies and high-tech industries. The discussion did, however, point out that the extraction and processing of these minerals often involve significant human rights issues. These include unsafe working conditions, child labour, environmental harm, and the displacement of local communities. Addressing these concerns is vital for sustainable and ethical business practices.

Panellists focused on evaluating and improving the current state of human rights within the critical minerals value chain. Key findings in the discourse were that companies operating in this sector are increasingly aware of the importance of human rights due diligence. Many have implemented policies and procedures to identify and mitigate human rights risks, such as conducting thorough risk assessments and engaging with stakeholders.

Despite these advancements, challenges remain. Enforcement of existing regulations is often weak, and transparency in reporting on human rights practices is lacking. Small-scale and artisanal mining operations, which are widespread in the region, frequently operate outside formal regulatory frameworks. These informal operations are particularly prone to human rights abuses and need greater oversight to ensure compliance with international standards.

Collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society, and international organizations were outlined as essential to address these challenges effectively in the webinar. Frameworks such as the African Union's African Mining Vision (AMV) and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) offer valuable guidelines for promoting responsible and sustainable practices in the mining sector.

Technological innovations also hold promise for enhancing transparency and accountability. For example, blockchain technology can help trace the origin of minerals, ensuring they are sourced responsibly. Additionally, capacity-building programs aimed at strengthening local institutions and empowering communities can mitigate the negative impacts of mining activities and support more inclusive development.

SARW PARTICIPATES IN THE NRG Partners' Learning eXchange Dialogue



SARW was part of the Partners Learning exchange Dialogues hosted by BHP which took place from the 27th to the 29th of May 2024 at Protea Hotel Lusaka Tower in Zambia. The BHP Foundation's 2024 Natural Resource Governance (NRG) Partner's Learning eXchange Dialogues (PLxD) is a collaborative learning journey for the BHP Foundation partners working on Natural Resource Governance across five streams: Community Consultation and Consent, Citizen Data Access and Utility, Governance Hubs for Locally Led Initiatives, Open Contracting, Beneficial Ownership Transparency, and cross cutting theme of Global Collective Action. The PLxD brings together the Foundation's NRG partners, regional and local stakeholders working on NRG into a collective conversation and learning pipeline that channels knowledge and emerging insights from practice. The PLxD uses Zambia as a venue and conversation space for BHP Foundation partners to learn from and with each other and other stakeholders (invited partners) and as a learning canvas with Zambia as a case study around locally led collaboration across the Foundation's NRG intervention areas.

SARW shared its experience regarding movement building and regional solidarity initiatives and the power of numbers. The PLxD is a space for critical reflections and learning on challenges and emerging breakthroughs around building collaboration platforms between multiple stakeholders in natural resource governance.

Shibuyunji Mining Community Awareness



SARW between the 10th and 12th May 2024 conducted Community Awareness and Collection of Complaints on grievances in Shibuyunji district of Zambia as part of the Mott Foundation supported project titled “Development Finance for Community Environment and Justice Defenders in Southern Africa “. SARW has developed a tool kit on grievance redress mechanism for community-based stakeholders. The community awareness was based on the usage and application of the tool kit. SARW adopted the use of drama and dance for this activity. This engagement reached out to a total of 635 community members in Shibuyunji.

SARW amplifies Women’s Voices in Climate Change and Mining in Malawi



As part of the documentation strategy to amplify women voices and climate change, just transition, and natural resources governance, SARW in partnership with FOCUS conducted some activities to produce a country documentary. The objective of the activity was to document real time stories from the identified mining communities in Malawi with special emphasis on impacts of climate change on women. This activity took place at Ilomba granite mine in Senior Group Headman Mbilima in Chitipa District. Before the actual documentary, three activities were conducted from 20th to 24th May 2024.

DRC Update

In May 2024, SARW focused on preparations for the upcoming June activities in Kolwezi and Lubumbashi, the AMI (Alternative Mining Indaba) 2024 preparations, and research initiatives related to the DRC's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. Additionally, the SARW Executive Director visited Kinshasa for several key meetings.

AMI 2024 Preparations

In anticipation of the AMI 2024, SARW met with the Principal Technical Advisor of the GIZ's DISM project, which is the main funder of AMI/RDC. The discussion centred on preparatory work for the AMI and explored opportunities to extend the partnership to other activities aimed at improving mineral resource governance and the living conditions of local communities.



Meeting with EITI-DRC

The SARW Executive Director had a productive exchange with the Coordinator of the National Secretariat of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in DRC (EITI-DRC). The discussions focused on renewing the SARW-EITI partnership and exploring the potential for joint studies on transparency in mineral resource management at the regional level.

Engagement with Civil Society Partners

The Executive Director also engaged with four civil society organisations—CENADEP, AFREWATCH, ACIDH, and LITRASE. These discussions aimed at formalising partnerships to collaborate on organising the AMI 2024, which continues to be an open platform for dialogue and advocacy for the entire Congolese civil society.



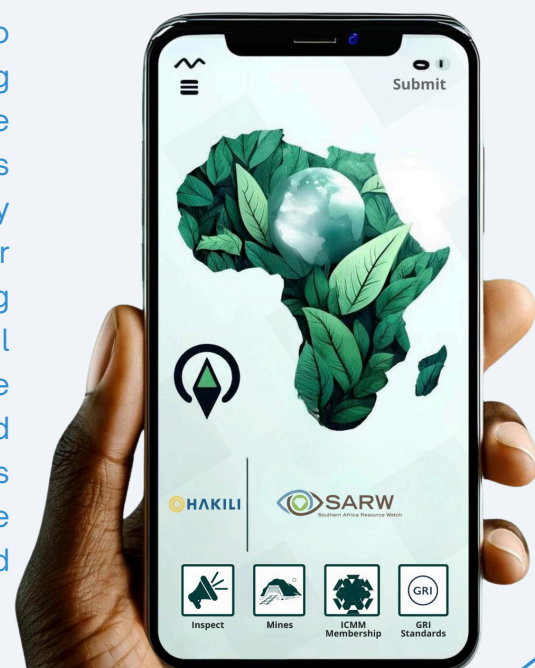
Section 2: Innovation Spotlight

Revolutionizing Mining Sector Accountability with the Corporate Accountability App

SARW, in collaboration with cutting-edge partners, is set to revolutionise the mining sector with the launch of the Corporate Accountability App. This groundbreaking platform harnesses digital technology to champion transparency, accountability, and sustainable practices within Africa's mining industry. Designed to monitor and report on the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices of mining companies across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region—and with a vision for continent-wide expansion—this app is poised to become an indispensable tool for stakeholders.

Imagine a platform that offers unprecedented insights into corporate behaviours previously shrouded in opacity. The Corporate Accountability App achieves this by integrating comprehensive ESG metrics, empowering community advocates, regulatory bodies, and investors to make informed decisions. Developed with input from technology experts, environmental watchdogs, and local communities, the app ensures a robust, relevant, and community-driven approach to accountability. It's not just about technology; it's about creating a united front for a more responsible mining sector.

The potential of the Corporate Accountability App to transform the mining industry is immense. By equipping policymakers and industry leaders with detailed, verifiable data, it facilitates the drafting of more effective regulations and the adoption of best practices that prioritise sustainability and social welfare. Communities can now advocate for their rights and engage in meaningful dialogue with mining companies. Future enhancements, including artificial intelligence for predictive analytics, promise to further refine the app's capabilities, fostering a culture of transparency and accountability that sets a new global standard. Join us in this ground-breaking initiative and be part of shaping a future where mining contributes positively to societal and environmental well-being.



Section 3: Events Horizon

Spotlight: Unveiling CASA Ghana: A New Chapter in Advocacy and Empowerment

The launch of CASA Ghana will mark a pivotal moment in the country's advocacy landscape, empowering communities to amplify their voices in the corridors of power. CASA Ghana emerges in response to growing demands for transparent governance and community participation in national decisions that affect local livelihoods and environments. This initiative is built on strengthening community advocacy by equipping local leaders and activists with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively engage with authorities and stakeholders. Through strategic partnerships with local and international NGOs, government bodies, and the private sector, CASA Ghana aims to create a sustainable advocacy framework that ensures marginalized voices are heard in policy formulation and implementation.

Innovation is at the core of CASA Ghana's approach, using technology and new media to reach wider audiences, particularly the youth. The initiative will incorporate the Anti-SLAPP Toolkit into its training programs, equipping environmental rights defenders with essential knowledge and strategies to combat legal intimidation. As CASA Ghana unfolds, it aims to influence policies, foster a culture of accountability and transparency, and become a critical tool in shaping Ghana's advocacy landscape. This launch is more than an event; it is a promise of empowerment and change, setting the stage for a stronger, more engaged civil society in Ghana.



Section 4: Future Reads Forecast

1



Bikita Report

An in-depth analysis of the critical minerals sector in the Bikita region, focusing on its economic and social impacts.

2



China Report

This report examines the influence of Chinese investments in the Southern African minerals sector.

3



SLAPP's Toolkit for HRD with CALS

A comprehensive toolkit developed in collaboration with (CALS) to help (HRD) counter SLAPP suits and other forms of legal intimidation.

4



Issues Paper on Business and Human Rights

This paper reviews the state of implementation of business and human rights principles in Southern Africa.