



RESEARCHER: KUNDAI CHIKONZO; ZIMBABWE

Name of group: INSIZA WOMEN IN MINING TRUST

**Name of
Research
Team(s)**

- KUNDAI CHIKONZO,
- AGRIPPER TONDERAYI MABHANDI,
- MEMORY MUSHAMBA,
- NOMSA CHIGUVARE

Country: ZIMBABWE

Community: AMAZON COMMUNITY

Assessment of the environmental impacts and health rights to women, children and women living with disabilities by small scale mining in the past 5 years, through community participatory. Case study Amazon community, Filabusi area, Zimbabwe.

Research Findings

The research finding is a conclusion made based on the data collected during our research process in Amazon area. We used both qualitative (stories, notes, testimonies) and quantitative data (statistics, survey responses).

1. Why do you choose this topic for your community-led research?

I observed land degradation and conflicts between miners and communities. Women in the community walk long distances to fetch water, early childhood pregnancies, Gender Based Violence and exclusion of women in Mining activities. When you moving in the communities you see women panning on river banks. With children playing near them. Pregnant women working as the same river they would want to drink water from and mother working with their children on their backs. There are a few pictures which I took while I was observing their community.



These women will be picking stones from the workings left by men and they grind them, manually .on average the recovery will be 4 grams a day which cost \$212usd. Thus on a good day. If it's not a good day they get 1 point which cost \$4usd



Husband and wife trying to earn a living from the precious metal. Gcwabayi River which used be the source of water for the community including the livestock. Now there is a lot of mining activities.

Exposure to land degradation was another observation which led to me deciding on the topic. Open pits all over the community.



Open pits that are all over the amazon mining community left by miners.

2. What connection do you see between your issues and global problems/trends?

The following SDGs are mainly connected to my area of study, these include:

- Goal 1: No Poverty- There is a strong bidirectional link between poverty and disability. Poverty may cause disability through malnutrition, poor healthcare, and dangerous living conditions and these have been noted on this research.
- Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. There is poor health in amazon community and its affecting from the unborn child to the elderly, which is a concern as most of these conditions can lead to disability
- Goal 5: Gender Equality- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls through community participation in all discussions.
- Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all and ensuring the community gets clean water in Amazon community
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all in Amazon community
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

3. What do you want people to know about the community and territory (land, nature, river, sea etc.) in this research?

Amazon community has an estimated population of 62 124 male and 60 700 female. From this, ward 10 where the research was carried has an estimation of 1133 male and 1055 female. It was a community for cattle ranching and goat rearing since 1988. In 2002 a miner registered and he started mining. Most mines were registered in 2016 and thus when the community started appreciating the mining activities. This has also been caused to by climatic changes which has affected the rain patterns and also economic hardships.

Mining activities worsen during the covid pandemic period, where restrictions were imposed. People from the community were not going to work but they wanted food, and all the basic needs. Also schools were closed as part of the measures taken by the government to stop the spread of the virus. This however led to child labor

Further the community has both legal and illegal miners who are all adults. The sources of river for both the people and the livestock is the same with those for miners.

The community is also characterized by erosion of exposed soils, extracted mineral ores, tailings, and fine material in waste rock piles which substantial sediment are loading to surface waters and drainage ways. In addition, spills and leaks of hazardous materials and the deposition of contaminated windblown dust which are leading to soil contamination. The waste products of mining, called mine-spoils are left in their place by the illegal miners moving to the next working area. This, among other things, cause serious environmental contamination. The waste products enters waterways and the groundwater, hence polluting water resources.

These legal miners uses timber for safety within their mine shafts which also leads to deforestation thus cutting of trees without replacing them.



Artisanal miners dig in the hills and enter narrow pits to mine for gold.



Some set up illegal milling plants in the middle of the bush to process ores. This leads to ground pollution and rise of water borne diseases within the community.



Illegal miners will be looking for gold samples .they do trenching to check the gold belt. After trenching, if they don't find the resource the abandon the pit. Most of the trees have been cut and the ground is exposed.



Miners in amazon uses hammer mills to process their ores which are powered by diesel. These milling plants produces **noise pollution** as well. Some uses stamp mills which a video of the sound produced is also shared.



Tailings from the milling plant will be like this when it rains all this flows to the river hence contaminating the drinking water.



Logs that are used by miners to protect their mine shafts. They balance the ndryer that is used to hoist out the resource also it takes them to the shaft.one they cut these trees they don't even

think of replacing them. Now the communities will have difficulties in accessing firewood. women in Amazon are forced to walk distances to fetch fire wood.



Air pollution caused by women as well doing the panning of gold. no safety clothing. in fact they don't even know which safety gear matches their work. They have their children with them .

The community is also characterized with child labour. Children as young as eleven years are working with their mothers and also within local mines and working long hours they crawl through tunnels too narrow and low for adults. They also worked as errand boys, crossing sweepers, shoe blacks, or selling matches, flowers, and other cheap goods.



Girl child assisting her mother



Boy aged 9 and the brother 11 doing illegal mining



Boys assisting their mothers

- Gender Based Violence.

Amazon community has 37 homestead with an average of 6 people serviced by one bore hole. The community travelling 20km to access clean water .this normally leads to conflicts between couples as the wife might take long to come back and fights arises.

Many men involved in artisanal mining are drug abusers and they are there in this community miners often rape women when they are under the influence of either drugs or alcohol. Hence walking long distances to access water and firewood has a negative impact on the women living in the mining communities as they are the most vulnerable, this also leads to high rates of people contracted with STIs,as no protection is used.

Lastly the community does not have ownerships over the land they stay. There is no title document towards these.

4. What methods and tools do you use to find answers to your research questions?

I used the following data collection methods and tools

TOOLS

- Questionnaire
- FGD guide
- Methods Observations
- Interviews
- Questionnaire
- Interviews
- Focus groups, to collect data.



5. Who is your research team?

i. KUNDAI CHIKONZO

- ii. **AGRIPPER TONDERAYI MABHANDI**, A policeman with 17 years' experience and he is currently staying and working in Bulawayo. He is a holder of a Professional Graduate Diploma in Risk and Security Management, an Honours Degree in Human Resource Management. Currently he is studying towards a Master of Business Leadership. He is the Human Resource and Administration Manager at Insiza Women in Mining Trust. Furthermore, he is an Advanced Driver. He was born and bred in Mhangura, a mining community and stayed there for 18 years. He offers security advice and provides security to the team, organizes community meetings, is the driver and was involved in preparing the questions for People Living with Disabilities, data collection and analysis.

- iii. **MEMORY MUSHAMBA**, She has a National Certificate in Systemic Counseling and currently staying in Bulawayo. She was born and bred in a small mining town in Bikita. She resided in Bikita for 16 years before moving to Bulawayo. Involved in administering the questionnaires, data analysis and collection. She's passionate in community involvement

- iv. **NOMSA CHIGUVARE**, A lecturer in Statistics and Operations Research at a National University in Bulawayo Zimbabwe. Holder of Masters in

Operations Research and Statistics, Bsc Hons (Applied Mathematics) and a Diploma in Training Skills. Family stays in Insiza District practicing small scale mining. Born and bred in the high density suburb of Highfield, Harare and stayed there for 26 years before moving to Bulawayo and Insiza. She was involved in problem formulation, coming up with the objectives, data collection and data analysis.

- **How or why did they become involved in carrying out this research?**

To look for solutions as they are part of the community. , since they have experience in working with community. All have gone up in mining communities.

AGRIPPER is a Policeman and he has vast experience in working with different communities. Secondly he grew up in a mining community, saw and experienced firsthand the challenges that are faced by people in these communities. In his line of work he deals with diverse individuals and he has a passion for assisting communities in fighting GBV, discrimination and violence.

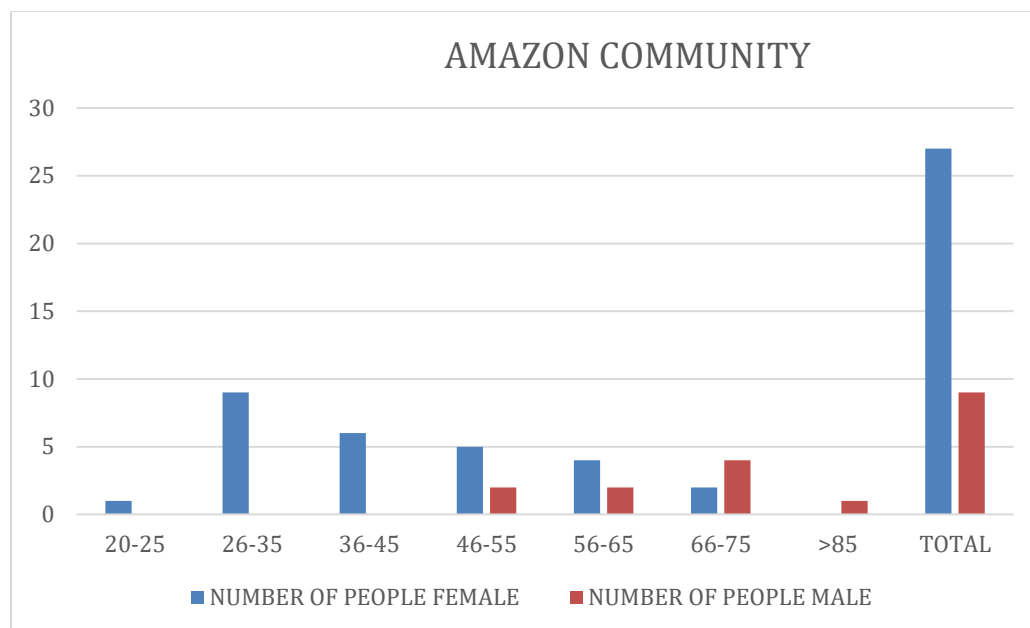
NOMSA she has a family in Insiza hence the challenges her family faces is what made her to be interested in the research.as she hears her family complains.

MEMORY is a social worker she has been trying to assist in counselling on child marriages as a volunteer .hence also highlighted the causes which we noted she can be part of the research team and assist.

6. How many research participants?

- Breakdown of: the total number of participants, number of women, youth, indigenous peoples.

AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	
	FEMALE	MALE
20-25	1	
26-35	9	
36-45	6	
46-55	5	2
56-65	4	2
66-75	2	4
>85	0	1
TOTAL	27	9



7. How were those affected by your research topic involved in the research process?

The community assisted in identifying Problems to do with GBV, identifying the victims, they identifying and pointing out areas that had suffered serious land degradation, identified women who had fallen victim to violence (physical and sexual), victims of early marriages, the images above shows those whom we have been taking pictures doing their work. We could chart with them freely and they could respond.

What are their roles in designing the research and designing the aims?
Collecting, analyzing, and validating the data?

- They assisted in designing the research objectives Agripper came up with the security plan, guiding principles and plan of action.
- In data collection and data presentation, NOMSA did the analysis with her expertise on statistics. Validating and analyzing the statistics
- MEMORY as a social worker ,she assisted in understanding the community and approach to use to gather data

8. How did you analyze your research data?

- Through Qualitative and quantitative data analysis. I used the stories being told also through focus group presentation.

Who was involved, and how?

- The research team. We grouped our participants from the community through age groups and gender

9. What are your main findings and supporting data/evidence?

Findings	Supporting Data
1.land degradation (no backfilling ,deforestation, loss of livestock)	1 60% of their grazing land has open pits and many trees have been cut there is no evidence of tree planting
2.water degradation (water contamination, mercury use, cyanide use)	2. 70% of women in the community goes as far as 20km to access clean water. As most of the women in the community are doing these women will be panning using mercury with their open hands
3.loss of in fracture(destruction of bore hole ,windmill,	3. There is one borehole servicing a community of 37 families with an average of 6 people per household.
4.destruction of heritage sites(destruction of heritage science)	4. Heritage sites have been destroyed and the place no longer has one.
5.child labour(the labour on mines is of between 13yrs and 9yrs at most	5. On average 15 years old, is the labor being employed by the miners? This is evidence that 50 % didn't go back to school after the uplift of Covid 19 panic restrictions.
6.early child marriages and gbv(community is characterized with your marriages from school drop outs	6. Most of the girls are getting married at the age of 13years which 60% of these girls their marriages are lasting 2 years 1 marriages. Gender based Violence has increased by 30%in these mining communities
7.susbtance abuse and sti(use of drugs which leads to sex without protection)	7.Prostitution has risen by 30% due to increase use of substances drugs and this leads to sexual exploitation and rise on STIs and HIV

8. Fencing (working areas are not fenced).	80% of the work areas are not fenced
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10. What are some interesting stories or powerful statements from your research participants you wish to share with targeted audiences?

- STORIES FROM YOUNG WOMEN GIVING CREDIT TO COVID that it helped them realize life is good and sex is good at a tender age

11. How does this research support or complement community-led development plan?

Disembarking from the car, we came face to face with a group of inquisitive miners. We silently counted around fifteen people, among them women, and boys of around fifteen years of age. Their clothes were splashed with creamy soil, their faces caked with mud. A radio hung around the neck of one of the miners. We could see holes that had been dug up along the stream banks.

We exchanged pleasantries with the miners in Ndebele, and were peppered with questions.

“Lizodingani?” “What do you want here?” one of the miners asked.

“Why are you taking pictures; are you journalists?” asked another.

“Go away!” said a third.

Painstakingly, we explained we had come to report on the life and work of artisanal miners and your community so that we can help each other to come up with solutions to the environmental issues facing your sister and mothers.

The fear and apprehension of the miners was understandable. Their activities are not sanctioned. They could be arrested and jailed for illegal mining without warning. It was apparent that there were no safety measures at the site, and that mining was being done in a rudimentary manner with homemade tools.

Community participation can be loosely defined on this research carried out as there was involvement of people in a community in projects to solve their own problems. People were not forced to 'participate' in the research which affect their lives but could share information openly .reason being that they could see Nomsa and Memory who are always with them in the community. The intended beneficiaries were expected to participate, their voices were heard. This research therefore by invested its research analyses the participation trends, forms of participation, self-exclusion and non-participation. It adopted a qualitative research approach and data was collected via focus group discussions with the community participating in the research.

Key informant interviews with the village development workers, miners both legal and illegal.

Participant observation was undertaken during a community meeting and also during the interviews. Community-based planning is a local voluntary planning process that is designed to build, strengthen and support local communities.

12. What systemic changes are needed, according to the findings of the research?

- Environment should take precedence over mining
- Community has to come first
- Solar boreholes

What policy recommendations would you propose to a specific person or entity who has the power to bring about change?

- There is a gap between compensation
- Fencing off
- Ensure community share ownership
- Consider employing the locals
- On consultations of the EIA local views are needed
- Community should be in a position to monitor the proposed EIAs

13. What are key lessons learned from the community-led research process?

- Only victims are in the community.
- Lack of information
- Lack of training on safe handling of chemicals
- Lack of knowledge on impacts of environmental sustainability practices
- Lack of knowledge on mitigation measures

14. Please share any pictures, videos or other visuals about your research.



Focus group meetings

Focus group with people with disabled



land degradation



Water degradation, woman panning



women miners at a mine site using their bare hands



Deforestation by illegal miners using gold detectors



Community bore hole destroyed by miners

15. How many people with disabilities did you interview?

- 3 people

And what are challenges you faced

- We had to do physical visit and the other one challenges were hearing each other

16. what challenges did you face with elderly people during data collection

- Speech challenges and they needed breaks in between.