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ZIMBABWE INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR COMPANY





Smart mining:

Transforming Zimbabwe's mining sector through connectivity

By Lorreta Songola, Regional Chief Commercial Officer, Central African Region, Liquid Intelligent Technologies

In the heart of Zimbabwe's mineral-rich landscape, a new chapter in mining is being written. For generations, mining has been a story of sweat and toil, where hands dug deep into the earth, seeking treasures that fuel economies. But today, a different narrative unfolds – one propelled by innovation and technology.

The shift from manual labour to smart mining marks a profound transformation, promising not just efficiency gains but a seismic leap forward in safety, productivity, and sustainability. At the heart of this transformation lies the evolution of communication networks, which is already redefining how mines operate in Zimbabwe and beyond. For instance, in the Middle East and Africa, although 77% of mining companies across the region are in the beginning stage of their digital transformation journey, most have already taken significant steps to introduce industrial internet of things and artificial intelligence into their operations. This in a region where the smart mining market is expected to grow to US\$ 1,664.30 million by 2028; a compound annual growth rate of 14.5%.

In recent years, Zimbabwe's economy has witnessed a significant shift, with the mining sector emerging as a key driver of growth, accounting for 80% of the country's exports, according to the 2024 Chamber of Mines state of mining survey report.

With numerous major international operators and smaller artisanal miners, the sector is poised for substantial growth. But safety concerns have also emerged. By its very nature, mining poses risks. Lives have been lost, and injuries recorded, highlighting the need for technological innovation to improve safety standards at the country's mines.

Connectivity is key

As a nation rich in mineral resources, Liquid Intelligent Technologies believes that the continued transformation of Zimbabwe's mining sector hinges on a crucial element: connectivity. By leveraging the cutting-edge technology that connectivity paves the way for, mines can enhance safety measures and operational efficiency, leading to substantial growth and output. In fact, the impact of connectivity extends far beyond the mines, rippling through communities and stimulating overall economic development.

Connectivity lies at the heart of Liquid's approach, with a focus on four key areas: remote monitoring, real-time data transmission, extraction and processing, and employee safety. By introducing private networks, smart sensors, and IoT devices, mining houses in Zimbabwe can monitor operations, detect hazards, and enhance communication, thereby improving safety and operational efficiency.

Harnessing the benefits of private LTE networks in mines

A key initiative that has already shown a significant impact is the deployment of Liquid's private LTE networks in mines. Across industries, these networks offer several advantages over traditional networks, but their benefits are especially evident in the mining sector:

- The high-speed, reliable connectivity provided by LTE networks, even in remote areas, enables mining companies to implement advanced technologies, such as real-time monitoring and autonomous vehicles, improving efficiency and safety.
- Private LTE networks offer greater security

and control over data transmission. This is a game changer in the mining sector, where operations can be complex and involve hazardous conditions.

- In terms of safety, private LTE networks play a crucial role in enhancing communication and monitoring capabilities in mines. In the event of an emergency, such as a collapse or gas leak, private LTE networks enable rapid communication and response, potentially saving lives.

- Private LTE networks can support the use of advanced technologies, such as drones and remote-controlled machinery, improving operational efficiency and safety with minimal human intervention in hazardous areas.

- By providing high-speed fibre connectivity and technologies like voice over internet protocol (VoIP), Liquid is enabling mining houses to enhance communication and streamline operations, leading to increased productivity.

Bespoke solutions for long-term success

The transition from traditional mining methods to smart, technology-driven practices is a testament to the industry's resilience and adaptability, and as the mining sector continues to expand, customised solutions tailored to the specific needs of the country's mines are vital.

Liquid Intelligent Technologies is playing a pivotal role in transforming Zimbabwe's mining sector through connectivity. By harnessing the power of technology, it is not only contributing to economic growth and development in Zimbabwe but also its own vision of a digitally enabled Africa that leaves no-one behind.

Mining

ZIMBABWE

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ABOUT PUBLICATION

Mining Zimbabwe is the premier source of unfiltered Zimbabwe Mining News. Our core focus is the Zimbabwe Mining Industry, trends, new technologies being developed and used to improve this crucial sector, as well as new opportunities and investments arising from it.

Mining Zimbabwe's sole purpose is growing and empowering the Mining Industry and highlighting all its challenges as well as putting forth expert solutions

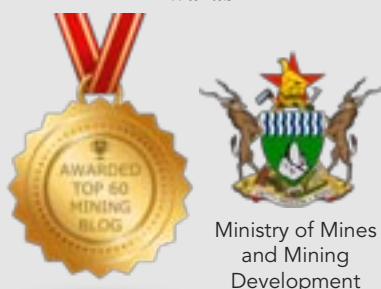
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Press Releases Fall Short: Why Media Invitations to CSR Projects Are Crucial for Transparency



Keith Lungiso

THE CLEAR PERSPECTIVE

Locally operating International mining companies tend to communicate, CSR issues, sustainability initiatives and new updates through international media to gain global recognition.

However, this approach overlooks the critical role of local press, which can foster deeper community relations and trust. Engaging local media is not only an acknowledgement of homegrown talent but also a strategic move that benefits both the community and the mining company.

Local media outlets, deeply embedded in their communities, understand local contexts, concerns, and cultural nuances better than international counterparts. When mining companies engage local Media Houses, they build trust and transparency by speaking directly to the community. It is next to impossible to get a simple comment from the majority of internationally-owned mining companies yet international Media appears to have easy access.

Surely what would a journalist sitting in a foreign country know about challenges being faced in the Chirasavana community deep in the rural areas of Hurungwe?

Stories told by local journalists resonate more

authentically, offering a balanced perspective that enhances the credibility of the company's CSR efforts. Furthermore, supporting local media contributes to the local economy by bolstering small media houses, thus giving back to the community.

Local media also provide a responsive feedback loop, relaying community feedback to mining companies quickly and effectively. This allows companies to address issues promptly and adjust their strategies to better meet local needs. Additionally, local journalists are more likely to hold companies accountable for their actions, ensuring a commitment to CSR promises and fostering a culture of responsibility and continuous improvement.

While international media can amplify a company's message globally, it often lacks a detailed understanding of local issues, potentially leading to a portrayal that misses crucial local elements. Relying solely on foreign media creates a perception of elitism and detachment, making companies appear more concerned with their international image than their local impact.

Happy reading, and may your ventures be prosperous!



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Sany's Strategic Expansion:

Leading Zimbabwe's Construction and Mining with Innovation and Excellence



Since 1989, Sany has consistently pursued the vision of creating a first-class enterprise, Foster first-class talents, and making first-class contributions.

This is also the origin of the name "Sany," which means three first-class. After 35 years of development, Sany Group has emerged as China's sole engineering machinery manufacturer listed on the Fortune Global 500, with a market value of \$57 billion, ranking third among global construction machinery manufacturers. In 2021, Sany excavator sales quantity surpassed 100,000 units, making it the global leader in excavator sales for the year. Sany's presence extends across over 180 countries worldwide, with factories established in countries including the United States, India, Germany, Indonesia, and South Africa.

Since entering Zimbabwe in 2012, Sany

Group has actively participated in constructing the country's major projects over the past decades, such as the Hwange Power Station, Harare International Airport, and Bikita lithium mine. Sany Equipment Zimbabwe was established in 2021, and over the past three years, Sany has deployed over 400 units of different equipment in Zimbabwe, holding nearly 35% of the excavator market share, solidifying its position as the market leader. Sany boasts nearly 30 after-sales service personnel distributed across various regions such as Bulawayo, Hwange, and Bikita, with parts warehouses and reserves exceeding \$2 million in Harare and Hwange. And now Sany's product lineup includes 20-ton-120-ton excavators, loaders, cranes, road machinery and 60-ton-130-ton mining truck, and various mining and construction equipment.

In March 2024, Sany Equipment Zimbabwe initiated the upgrade project

for its headquarters in Harare, covering an area of approximately 8,300 square meters. The facility will serve as a regional warehousing center, logistics center, and talent center, with a total investment of \$2.7 million and an expected completion date of one year. It will stock approximately 60 units of various equipment such as excavators, loaders, and graders, along with \$5 million worth of spare parts. The facility will feature a 2,500-square-meter parts warehouse and a 1,600-square-meter overhaul workshop.



Workers pose with Sany Machines at Bikita



Sany Harare HQ Preview

Simultaneously, Sany has established a 20,000-square-meter PDI center in Boksburg, South Africa, stocking over 100 units of excavators ranging from 20 tons to 120 tons, along with over 200 units of other equipment such as road machinery, cranes, and mining trucks. Sany leads with a \$15 million spare parts reserve and an 8,000-square-meter regional center warehouse supplying parts to all countries in Southern Africa, with deliveries reaching as far as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ensuring a delivery satisfaction rate and timeliness rate both exceeding 90%.

As a leading enterprise in the vast Chinese market, Sany is committed to bringing excellent after-sales service models and experiences to Zimbabwe, hence our dedication to realizing the "12125" service commitment: responding within 15 minutes, departing within 2 hours, arriving at the destination within a day, resolving general faults within 2 days, and resolving major faults within 5 days. We deeply understand the concerns of African customers and strive to make service a core competitiveness of Sany.

Today, Sany's vision is firmly set on the

future, with globalization, digitalization, and decarbonization shaping its new development direction. With innovations such as electric tractors boasting a single-charge range of 900 kilometers, wind turbines with a maximum capacity of 12GW, and advancements in photovoltaic and hydrogen storage technologies, Sany's strategic footprint for the future is becoming increasingly expansive and sustainable. Sany is committed to building a better Africa through these endeavors.



SANY SA New HQ Preview

Intrachem's Explosive Excellence



Boosting Mining Efficiency and Safety in Zimbabwe

Explosives are integral to modern mining operations, where they are strategically employed to break down hard rock formations and facilitate smooth ore extraction. In drilling precise holes and strategically placing explosives, mining engineers, or blasting experts can effectively fragment large rock masses into manageable pieces, making extraction more efficient. The controlled use of explosives in mining is essential for maximizing productivity while adhering to strict safety and environmental standards. Proper handling, storage, and detonation techniques ensure worker safety and minimize environmental impact, underscoring the importance of responsible explosives use in the mining industry.

Mining Zimbabwe went on a technical visit to Zimbabwe's largest explosives manufacturer, Intrachem, located near Kwekwe to understand the intricacies involved in the manufacturing of explosives which are a key aspect of mineral extraction.

Led by IntraChem's Managing Director, Darryn Brider, and his team, the visit provided a comprehensive understanding of the pivotal role of explosives in modern mining, emphasizing their strategic use to break down rock formations and enhance

ore extraction efficiency, while highlighting the critical importance of safety and adherence to environmental standards in the explosives manufacturing process.

These were some of the things we learnt.

Carmex Assembly Plant

Our first stop was the Carmex Assembly Plant. Operators in the assembly plant work in two shifts from 7 AM to 11 PM, aiming for high daily production targets, meticulously checking, and bundling units every 25 pieces to ensure proper crimping and assuring assembly quality.

Narrating the process, The Plant Manager, Mr Owen Mupomba, said, "In the assembly plant, we have two shifts with the first shift running from 7am to 3pm and the other from 3pm to 11pm. Production output per shift varies depending on the product length that is planned for production on that particular day."

"During the process of assembling, the operators check the crimping diameter, which is critical in our process and key to ensuring reliable product performance. The crimping diameter check ensures that both the detonator and the connector are properly coupled to the safety fuse so that

upon initiating they will not come off. There are stringent checks that are done to ensure product quality specifications are met. The crimping diameter is checked after every 500 units using a Vernier Caliper."

Explaining the process further, senior foreman for the Carmex Plant Mr Clarence Mlambo said,

"After crimping and verifying the unit count, the operator will also check the position of the crimp just to ensure that all the detonators and connectors are crimped in the right position. The clip that is intended to hold the igniter cord into position will also be inserted into the unit during the crimping process, these clips are used when the product is being primed, this is when an igniter cord will be inserted in this groove that you see here on the connector and the clip will secure the igniter cord into position."

Mlambo added, "And then as you can see, after every 25 units, the operator will count and bundle them, after which they move on to the next table where we have a packer who will be servicing two or more tables. The packer collects the units that have been bundled on the fixing table and takes them to the pack out table."

"Obviously, in line with our high safety standards, there is a maximum number of units that are allowed on each table as a safety precaution. This should not exceed 200 units at any given time. The packer will also verify and countercheck the unit count and ensure that the units are fully assembled, and each bundle contains exactly 25 units."

According to Mlambo, there is a 50/50



According to Mlambo, there is a 50/50 gender balance per shift which comprises 21 personnel.

"The gender balance between men and women operators here is 50-50. The number of individuals or staff per shift is 18 operators, a supervisor, a magazine master, and an artisan. So, all in all, we have 21 per shift."

Packaging and labelling

After successful assembly, the next process will be to package and label, Mupomba said. He emphasized that units produced on each table are not mixed to ensure traceability and other quality control purposes.

"After the above process, the next process is to package the bundle into a plastic sleeve and then stick a label to the sleeve. This label includes the date of manufacture, the batch number, the machine number, the operator's name, and the product length. In addition to the label on the sleeve, the box will also have the same information, each box holding 500 to 600 units depending on the product length."

"We also take the boxes to a scale where we weigh them, a further volume assurance check. We have an established set of parameters that goes with the expected weight of units in a box. After that, we seal the boxes, and they are ready to go to the storage magazines."

Emulsion plant

Our next stop was the Emulsion plant. According to Brider, two different types of bulk emulsions are used. One for surface/open pit application, namely the Hydrox S product and Hydrox U, which is for underground blasting.

"Here we produce two different types of bulk emulsions. One for surface or open pit blasting, which is our Hydrox S product. And Hydrox U, which is our emulsion product for application in underground blasting. We have the capacity to produce roughly four and a half thousand tons of bulk emulsions per month, with capacity soon to increase" Brider said.

"This is almost an entirely automated plant. We only require five operators to run the plant. We decided on automation at the design stage as it's the safest.

Adding on, the Emulsion Plant Foreman for the Intrachem plant, Mr Tinashe

Chibaya, said:

"We have four different stages to the emulsion manufacturing process which includes Ammonium Nitrate Solution (ANSOL) receiving, ANSOL preparation, Fuel preparation and then finally the production."

"We have four different stages to the emulsion manufacturing process which includes Ammonium Nitrate Solution (ANSOL) receiving, ANSOL preparation, Fuel preparation and then finally the production."

ANSOL Receiving & Preparation

"A key point to note at the ANSOL receiving point, is the importance of offloading a Tanker quickly after it arrives on site, ANSOL is imported from South Africa and because of the distance and time taken in transit, the temperature of the ANSOL drops down and can solidify below a certain temperature. Once it solidifies it will require the costly exercise of steaming it in the delivery tanker using a diesel boiler."

During offloading, the tanker is connected to a diaphragm pump. Which will then pump the ANSOL into our receiving tanks," he elaborated.

"So, from here in the receiving tank, samples are collected to get the product concentration, densities, etc. Thereafter it is transferred into a preparation tank. After preparation it is again transferred to a working tank which is then put online to start production, the ANSOL will be mixed with other prepared raw materials in the mixing room," Chibaya concluded. "

Fuel Preparation

Chibaya stated, "Here in the fuel preparation room, raw materials which make up the fuel blend are mixed together before being pumped to the production room."

Production room

"This is where we mix everything together, as you can tell from the different colour coded pipelines coming into the production unit. Here all the raw materials are mixed at a certain temperature to produce unsensitized emulsion product. From here the product passes through a heat exchanger, thus cooling the product before it is pumped up into Storage silos. You will have noticed throughout the plant so far, we have various safety devices in our process equipment, since safety is our top

priority. These include temperature sensors, pressure sensors and flow rate sensors, just to name a few. All these safety features assist in preventing any unwanted incident. Our plant is one of the best explosives manufacturing plants in Africa. It produces 250 kgs of emulsion per minute," Chibaya summarized.

Finished Product Loading

We then proceeded to the loading zone. This is where the finished product emulsion is loaded onto trucks.

"This is our loading zone. This is our finished product emulsion above us, where we store 72 tons in each silo pumped directly from the production room. The tanker is driven underneath the silos and is loaded via gravity through grated filters," Brider said.

Showing us some of their horse and tanker fleet, Brider continued, "Those are the tankers we use for transporting emulsion. V-shaped tankers are used as it's more conducive to ensuring we offload the entire product load upon delivery. As you can imagine, given the nature of the product carried, we operate our fleet under stringent maintenance programs with regular review of SOPs and extensive driver training programs".

Storage

Intrachem has two storage magazines at the manufacturing facility Brider said.

"We've got two storage magazines here at the plant. These magazines are where we store our Capped Fuse finished products, as well as the components used to make them, separately of course. We are licensed to store other blasting accessories here as well." said Brider.

"The two are the same size, and they've got the same capacity as well in terms of storage. But when you specify the way they're licensed for storage magazines, it's per product and various types of products. There are different classes of explosives, and each different class has a varying quantity you can store in a certain size magazine building and has different safety circle radius. There are multiple other safety requirements for magazines including features such as this earth mound, this will make sure that if there is an explosion, most of the energy caused by the explosion will be forced to travel upward rather than outward, limiting damage to the surrounding areas" concluded Brider.

Interview: Intrachem's Managing Director Darryn Brider



Intrachem's Managing Director Darryn Brider

Who is Darryn Brider and what is your role at Intrachem?

I'm a Zimbabwean born and bred, with my career starting in finance focused roles and then working my way up, eventually, to Managing Director at Intrachem. First and foremost, my role at Intrachem is being the custodian and promoter of the company's values, with safety as our first priority. I'm incredibly proud being a Zimbabwean leading the only major local explosives manufacturing company, particularly with our achievements to date, while up against foreign powerhouses of the industry.

What sets Intrachem apart from other suppliers in terms of product quality and service offerings?

As a Zimbabwean business, Intrachem offers the best of both worlds when you combine our local mining industry knowledge and understanding with the technology partnerships we have with industry leaders such as Austin Powder, Sasol Dyno Nobel, Enaex and Famesa, just to name a few. Add in our local footprint, skilled resources and capabilities and you end up with an offering of world class, safe and reliable products and second-to-none services from a highly trained, customer focused local technical support team

around the clock.

How does Intrachem address the affordability of explosives and related products for artisanal and small-scale miners, who may have limited financial resources compared to larger mining companies?

Intrachem prides itself on being the **ONLY EXPLOSIVES SUPPLIER** in Zimbabwe that **GUARANTEES THE SUPPLY** of quality capped fuses and igniter cords, among other products.

At Intrachem we cater for the entire industry, including small-scale miners, and while fair and affordable pricing is always a key consideration, one we generally achieve, our primary focus is always providing safe and reliable products to ASMs. Artisanal miners often work under challenging conditions with limited resources.

How does Intrachem support these miners in adopting best practices for explosives handling and blasting techniques?

As mentioned already, safety is our first priority and we try incorporate this value to all stakeholders we reach within the industry. For the last 18 months we have implemented outreach programs whereby we host safety awareness open days for ASMs, at which we hold presentations from our trained and qualified professional team on safe storage, transportation and usage of explosives. Soon we shall also be releasing videos with similar content to social media platforms in the hopes of

reaching and educating a wider ASM audience.

Tell us five reasons why Miners/ Mining Companies should consider Intrachem Explosives

Safety, quality, reliability, value and efficiency, although these five attributes alone don't sum it up, we're not just suppliers; we aim to be partners in progress and want to translate these attributes into quantifiable benefits to our customers.

Intrachem prides itself on being the only explosives supplier in Zimbabwe that guarantees the supply of quality capped fuses and igniter cords, among other products.

How do you manage to maintain this unique offering in the market?

Again, this comes down to our local mining industry knowledge and understanding and linking up with technology partnerships with global explosives industry leaders. Through our experience over many years in the market, we've managed to zero in on the best quality products from around the world, including capped fuses and ignitor cords, and add them to the local market offering. Thereafter, our adherence to safe, sustainable and lawful handling of explosives has aided Intrachem in standing the test of time as the local industry leader.

There have been reports of laxity in explosives controls and explosives ending up getting into the wrong hands and some ending up being smuggled to neighbouring countries. What role can explosives suppliers play in curbing this practice and what is Intrachem doing to assist the government efforts?

This is a major concern within the explosives industry worldwide and the solution should always lie, in part, with the explosives manufacturers and suppliers. Intrachem adheres to the laws and regulatory requirements outlined in the Explosives Act and explosives regulations, this includes selling only to permitted and licensed buyers, mitigating the risk of unauthorized access to its explosives, thereby safeguarding both public safety and regulatory compliance. We also maintain regular engagement with the

relevant Government Departments in an effort to proffer any assistance we can by way of our expertise and wide-reaching industry footprint.

What are some of the strategies for managing risk and ensuring the safety of your employees and customers?

Holding safety as a first priority in everything we do has developed a culture within the business, which is a huge part of our strategy to “create and maintain a safety culture”. At Intrachem we start every task, meeting or project with safety as the first topic addressed. Regular safety training and reporting form a large part of all job descriptions within the company and we ensure that everyone within the Intrachem family is adequately equipped to tackle required tasks safely and effectively.

Could you elaborate on Intrachem's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship in the context of manufacturing and supplying explosives? What initiatives or practices has the company adopted to minimize its environmental footprint?

Our Company Mission is “To improve the world we live in through the safe and responsible use of explosives,” which is exactly what we aim for in the areas of sustainability and environmental stewardship. In conjunction with one of our shareholders and global industry leaders, we have just commenced our journey on an ESG (environmental & Social Governance) plan, which will be sure to see us ever improving in the way we manufacture and use our products, impact the communities in which we work and hopefully have this rub off on anyone

within the industries and sectors we work with.

Please tell us about the relationship with Austin Powder and how it has helped your company and the Zimbabwean Mining Industry. With Intrachem's history of partnership with major industry players like Sasol Dyno Nobel, Enaex, and FAMESA, how does the company leverage these partnerships to drive innovation and product development?

Austin Powder is one of the leading companies globally within the explosives industry and through their shareholding in Intrachem, they've provided us with the additional skills, technology and mentorship to reach the next level within the Zimbabwean industry. Partnering with Austin Powder and the other global industry giants you mentioned has helped Intrachem massively in keeping abreast of the newest and best innovations and technology in explosives and explosives applications, thereon helping us bring more value and efficiencies to the local mining and blasting community.

Looking ahead, what are Intrachem's strategic priorities and growth plans for the next five years? How does the company plan to capitalize on emerging opportunities in the mining, quarrying, and manufacturing sectors in Zimbabwe and beyond?

In the immediate term, growing our footprint in the Zimbabwean market is our top focus, with our major goal being to penetrate the underground market by way of one of the large PGM mines. We are fully confident we are equipped on all levels to

fulfill any of their requirements and are relishing the chance to do so! In the medium term, we are looking to imminently expand our portfolio of locally manufactured products which is incredibly exciting. Then looking further ahead, in conjunction with Austin Powder, we are assessing ways in which we can get footholds across our borders and into the sub-Saharan regional market.

How is the local community benefiting from your operations?

The major impact we've had to date is through employment of people from local communities in which we operate, most pertinently within our Kwekwe Manufacturing Plant where the entirety of the team complement are born and raised in the surrounding area. Looking ahead though, we're developing a more comprehensive strategy within the scope of our progressing ESG plan, whereby we aim to assist local communities surrounding our operations more directly.

If you are made Mines and Mining Development Minister today what will you immediately change (add or remove) in the Explosive Act?

Speaking purely from my perspective within the explosives industry, enhancing safety would be key on my agenda for immediate impact, resourcing the authorities to improve enforcing compliance among explosives companies and ensuring the rules and laws of the Explosives Act are upheld for the betterment and safety of the industry as a whole. At the end of the day, safety is our first priority.



Cyber Risks: A growing exposure for mines

Mining productivity is increasingly integrated with sophisticated computer and cyber based automation systems. With the growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) this could also result in further cyber integration for mines. Globally, Cyber related attacks and losses in the mining space have increased over the years from the 2010 combined attack on Rio Tinto Group, BHP Billiton Ltd. and Fortescue Metal to more recently the 2023 Fortescue Metals Group (one of the largest iron exporters) cyber-attack.

The mining sector continues to increase automation with self-driving haulage systems, vehicle monitoring through command and control systems, collision avoidance mechanisms, drones for aerial surveys, and remote operations centers for hazardous environments which also increase the cyber risks companies face.

Cyber risks are varied and attackers can be your own employees, third parties exploiting your systems directly or through contractors with access to your systems. Breaches in the cyber arena can be caused by local or international attackers. Although mining entities have invested in monitoring, maintaining and upgrading

their IT and digital systems, the fast-paced nature of developments in this space poses a risk that they may be unable to prevent all cyber-threats.

The main effects of such attacks on mining operations include:

- Disruption of supply chains
- Loss of financial and commercial data
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- Disruption to autonomous mining operations
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- Disruption to production and subsequently loss of revenue

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Dandemutande: Empowering the Mining Sector with Digital Solutions

As the mining industry continues to evolve, the need for reliable and innovative ICT solutions has never been more critical. Dandemutande, a leading Zimbabwean ICT solutions partner, is at the forefront of this digital revolution, providing cutting-edge solutions tailored to meet the unique needs of the mining sector.

With over 25 years of industry experience, Dandemutande has developed a reputation for embracing innovative technologies that serve the needs of its growing clientele base. The company's recent investment in deploying a robust fibre backbone network from Beitbridge to Harare is a testament to its commitment to deliver superior connectivity to Zimbabwe and reliable cross-border connectivity to neighbouring countries.

Superior Connectivity and Infrastructure Expansion

Dandemutande, with its fibre network constructed along the diverse railway \ servitude, offers high-performance, cost-effective connectivity to the undersea cables, thereby enhancing customer experience. This expanding fibre network footprint has not only propelled Dandemutande into the Wholesale IP Transit and Backhaul business but also positioned it as a new alternative Wholesale services provider in Zimbabwe.

Moreover, Dandemutande has made significant investments in its infrastructure to ensure it offers diverse and reliable backhaul connectivity to hyper-scalers and multinational companies. This entails the activation of a 100Gbps of capacity on the link, catering to undersea cable providers, Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), and Cloud Services. The current capacity is easily scalable to over 400Gbps, positioning Dandemutande as the ideal partner for the delivery of carrier-grade backhaul services from South Africa into Zimbabwe. This robust infrastructure and superior connectivity underscore Dandemutande's commitment to driving digital transformation in the mining sector.

Transforming the Mining Industry through Digital Solutions

Dandemutande's entry into the Wholesale market marks an exciting development for

the mining industry. With its agility and innovative tailor-made ICT solutions, Dandemutande offers solutions that align with the industry's digital transformation goals.

The company's product portfolio includes Cloud Solutions, Cybersecurity Solutions, ICT Hardware, and Software, IoT Solutions and Managed IT Services, among others. These solutions are designed to improve operational efficiency, enhance security, and drive innovation in the mining sector.

Empowering Mining Companies with Technological Solutions

Mining companies stand to gain a multitude of benefits from various technological solutions:

- **Comprehensive Cybersecurity:** As mining becomes more digital, robust cybersecurity services are essential. These include continuous monitoring, threat detection, incident response, and compliance management, along with endpoint security to safeguard all devices on the network. This proactive approach protects critical systems, data, and infrastructure from cyberattacks.

- **Cloud Solutions for Mining:** Migrate data storage, applications, and even specialized mining software to the cloud for streamlined operations, improved collaboration, and greater scalability. Cloud platforms empower real-time data analysis from sensors for informed decision-making, optimized production, and enhanced safety protocols.

- **IoT for Mining:** Integrate Internet of Things (IoT) devices with equipment and infrastructure to gather real-time data on equipment health, environmental conditions, and safety metrics. This data empowers optimized maintenance, predictive failure prevention, improved safety protocols, and deeper operational insights.

- **VOIP Communication:** VOIP systems provide reliable and cost-effective communication in remote locations where traditional landlines are limited. Seamless voice and video calls connect dispersed teams, contractors, and stakeholders, improving coordination, safety protocols, and emergency response.

- **Asset Tracking:** Track both laptops and vehicles using GPS technology and remote monitoring for swift recovery in case of loss or theft. This safeguards sensitive information and ensures regulatory compliance.

- **ICT Hardware for Mining:** Specialized ICT hardware designed for the harsh mining environment is crucial. This may include ruggedized tablets for field data collection, industrial-grade sensors for equipment monitoring, and high-performance computing systems for complex data analysis.

- **Custom Software Development for Mining:** Develop or implement tailor-made software solutions to address specific mining needs. This could include fleet management software, ore processing optimization tools, or real-time safety monitoring applications.

In essence, these technological solutions empower mining companies to navigate the complexities of modern mining operations, mitigating risks, optimizing productivity, and driving sustainable growth.

A Vision for the Future

Dandemutande's vision is to be the most admired technology solutions partner in Zimbabwe and Africa. The company's driving force is to transform African industries through cutting-edge digital solutions. This vision aligns perfectly with the needs of the mining industry, which is increasingly relying on digital technologies for its operations.

In line with its expansion drive into Africa, Dandemutande has plans to enter the Zambian, Malawian, and Namibian markets over the next 12 months. This expansion will further enhance its ability to provide robust cross-border connectivity and superior ICT solutions to the mining industry.

As the mining industry continues to embrace digital transformation, Dandemutande stands ready to be its preferred partner, providing innovative and reliable ICT solutions that drive operational efficiency, enhance security, and foster innovation. With Dandemutande, the future of mining is digital.

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Gold Production Ramp-Up, Responsible Sourcing to Strengthen ZiG, Says Chitando



Minister of Mines and Mining Development Hon Winston Chitando

Zimbabwe's mining sector is making significant strides in ramping up gold production, a critical measure aimed at bolstering the newly introduced Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) currency.

By Rudairo Mapuranga

Backed by gold reserves, the ZiG currency is the government's latest effort to stabilize an economy plagued by inflation and currency devaluation over the past 25 years.

The Minister of Mines and Mining Development, Hon. Winston Chitando, speaking at the gold mobilization program held at Cresta Jameson Hotel in Harare, emphasized the importance of maximizing the potential of Zimbabwe's gold resources. "As you are aware, the ZiG currency is anchored on gold reserves. It then becomes very critical to ensure that we unlock the full potential of our gold resources and our gold sector. This will be reinforced through a number of initiatives. Firstly, we need to capacitate artisanal small-scale miners to produce more gold. Secondly, we must support medium to large-scale miners to continue investing and increasing their gold production," Chitando stated.

The Minister highlighted recent improvements in gold production, noting, "The production from medium to large-scale miners for the first quarter and the first four months was higher than the same period last year." He also underscored the importance of responsible mining practices and the government's commitment to ensuring that gold reaches the correct channels. "Today, we are gathered here for a gold mobilization program to ensure that gold finds its way to the right channels. Additionally, we must ensure that the ethos of responsible mining, as announced by His Excellency the President, are observed," Chitando added.

The Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF) is also playing a crucial role in this initiative. ZMF CEO Wellington Takavarasha highlighted the significance of gold reserves in strengthening the ZiG currency. "As you are aware, 10 percent of gold revenue is put in reserves to ensure the ZiG is strengthened and has gold backing it. The improvement in gold deliveries to FGR by artisanal and small-scale miners (ASM) will strengthen the ZiG. We are happy that the government is taking the gold mobilization exercise seriously, which ensures miners are taught the benefits of

taking their gold to Fidelity Gold Refinery," Takavarasha explained.

Dru Edmund Kucherera, Vice Chairman and Spokesperson for Miners for Economic Development, reiterated the commitment to formalizing gold production processes and preventing leakages. "Our miners are ramping up gold production, and we train them to formalize the process and ensure all the gold goes to Fidelity Gold Refinery (FGR). We are working with mining groups to track the areas they are mining and avoid leakages. We believe that responsible sourcing and mining will strengthen the ZiG currency, and we will support the government by ensuring mining is done properly and professionally," Kucherera said.

The Association of Junior Mining Professionals of Zimbabwe (AJMPZ) also emphasized the need for part of the exported gold to be sold in ZiG currency.

AJMPZ Secretary General Hazel Karoro stated, "We also want our government to ensure that a portion of the gold they export is sold in ZiG currency so that the international community will come here with their money, deposit it in our banks, and then buy the gold. This will strengthen our currency. The position of the association is that 10 percent of gold produced should be exported in ZiG currency to give value to the currency."

The introduction of the ZiG currency in April is a strategic move by the government to stabilize the economy. The central bank governor, John Mushayavanhu, assured that the ZiG would be set at a market-determined exchange rate and backed by gold reserves to prevent the hyperinflation that plagued previous currencies. The government is focused on ensuring that the amount of local currency in circulation is matched by equivalent value in precious minerals or foreign exchange.

This robust approach, combined with increased gold production and responsible sourcing, aims to create a stable and valued currency, ultimately driving Zimbabwe towards economic recovery and growth.



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Caledonia Records 6% Production Increase, gets +137% Profit Increase



The Headgear at Blanket Mine - Picture by Keith Sungiso

Victoria Falls Stock Exchange-listed gold-focused miner Caledonia Mining Corporation Plc posted a remarkable 6% increase in production and a substantial rise in operating profit.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Its gross profit increased by approximately 137.9% from \$5.8 million to \$13.8 million during the first quarter of 2024 compared to the same period in the previous year.

Chief Executive Officer of Caledonia Mining Corporation, Mark Learmonth, expressed optimism about the company's performance, stating,

"The first quarter of 2024 got off to a strong start with an increase in production and profit, supported by a favourable gold price." He further added, "We were highly encouraged by the results from the under-

ground exploration program, indicating better-than-expected grades and widths at depth. This will significantly increase the life of the mine at Blanket," Learmonth hinted.

Learmonth also highlighted the ongoing efforts to optimize capital allocation and maximize shareholder value, particularly with the Bilboes project. He expressed anticipation in updating investors with the results and subsequent steps in the coming weeks.

The Caledonia CEO said the gross profit surged to \$13.8 million in Q1 2024, a significant rise from \$5.8 million in Q1 2023. This increase is attributed to higher gold revenue of \$38.5 million and reduced production costs.

The EBITDA for the period reached \$9.9 million, compared to \$2.3 million in Q1

2023. Blanket Mine contributed \$17.5 million to the EBITDA, up from \$11.3 million in the previous year.

Learmonth said On-mine cost per ounce remained stable at \$993 at Blanket, nearly identical to Q1 2023, with All-in sustaining cost (AISC) per ounce decreased to \$1,296 from \$1,412 in Q1 2023, representing an 8.2% reduction. This decline is mainly due to lower production costs at Bilboes and the absence of advisory costs related to the Bilboes acquisition in 2023.

Learmonth said despite the positive performance, the accelerated devaluation of the Zimbabwe currency led to a foreign exchange loss of \$4.1 million in Q1 2024, compared to a \$1.5 million gain in Q1 2023, with Adjusted earnings per share (EPS) amounting to 26.9 cents, a significant improvement from a loss of 29.1 cents in Q1 2023.

He said Net cash from operating activities stood at \$4.9 million, a notable improvement from a net cash outflow of \$0.9 million in Q1 2023.

The company produced 17,476 ounces of gold in Q1 2024, marking a 6% increase from the 16,141 ounces produced in Q1 2023. This boost in production is attributed to higher tonnage, grade, and improved gold recovery at Blanket.

Blanket Mine alone contributed 17,050 ounces to the total gold production, while the Bilboes oxide mine contributed 426 ounces.

Learmonth said the company will report encouraging results from the deep-level drilling program at Blanket, providing promising insights into the mineralized zones, indicating better-than-expected grades and widths at depth. These results are expected to significantly extend the mine's life.

In its outlook, Caledonia Mining Corporation maintains its production guidance for Blanket for the year 2024, expecting to produce between 74,000 to 78,000 ounces of gold, with cost guidance for Blanket remaining steady, with on-mine costs expected to range between \$870/oz to \$970/oz and AISC between \$1,370/oz to \$1,470/oz.



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Diamond production increases by 5%

Diamond production in Zimbabwe saw a notable increase of 4.99% in 2023 compared to the previous year, according to statistics provided by ZIMSTAT.

Diamond production in Zimbabwe saw a notable increase of 4.99% in 2023 compared to the previous year, according to statistics provided by ZIMSTAT.

Rudairo Mapuranga

In 2023, the country produced a total of 5,107,931 carats, marking a significant rise from the 4,865,011 carats produced in 2022. This upward trend reflects the ongoing growth and development within Zimbabwe's diamond mining industry.

During the first quarter of 2023, the country witnessed a remarkable surge in diamond production, totalling 1,637,554 carats. This represented a substantial 54.8% increase from the 1,057,710 carats produced during the same period in 2022. Similarly, the second quarter of 2023 saw a

significant uptick in production, with 1,204,805 carats produced, marking a notable 26.8% increase from the comparable quarter in 2022, which recorded 949,921 carats.

However, the third quarter of 2023 experienced a slight decline in production, with a decrease of 22% to 1,035,905 carats compared to the same period in 2022, which saw 1,329,805 carats produced. Likewise, the fourth quarter of 2023 saw a decrease of 19%, with production totalling 1,229,677 carats, down from 1,527,573 carats in the same quarter of 2022.

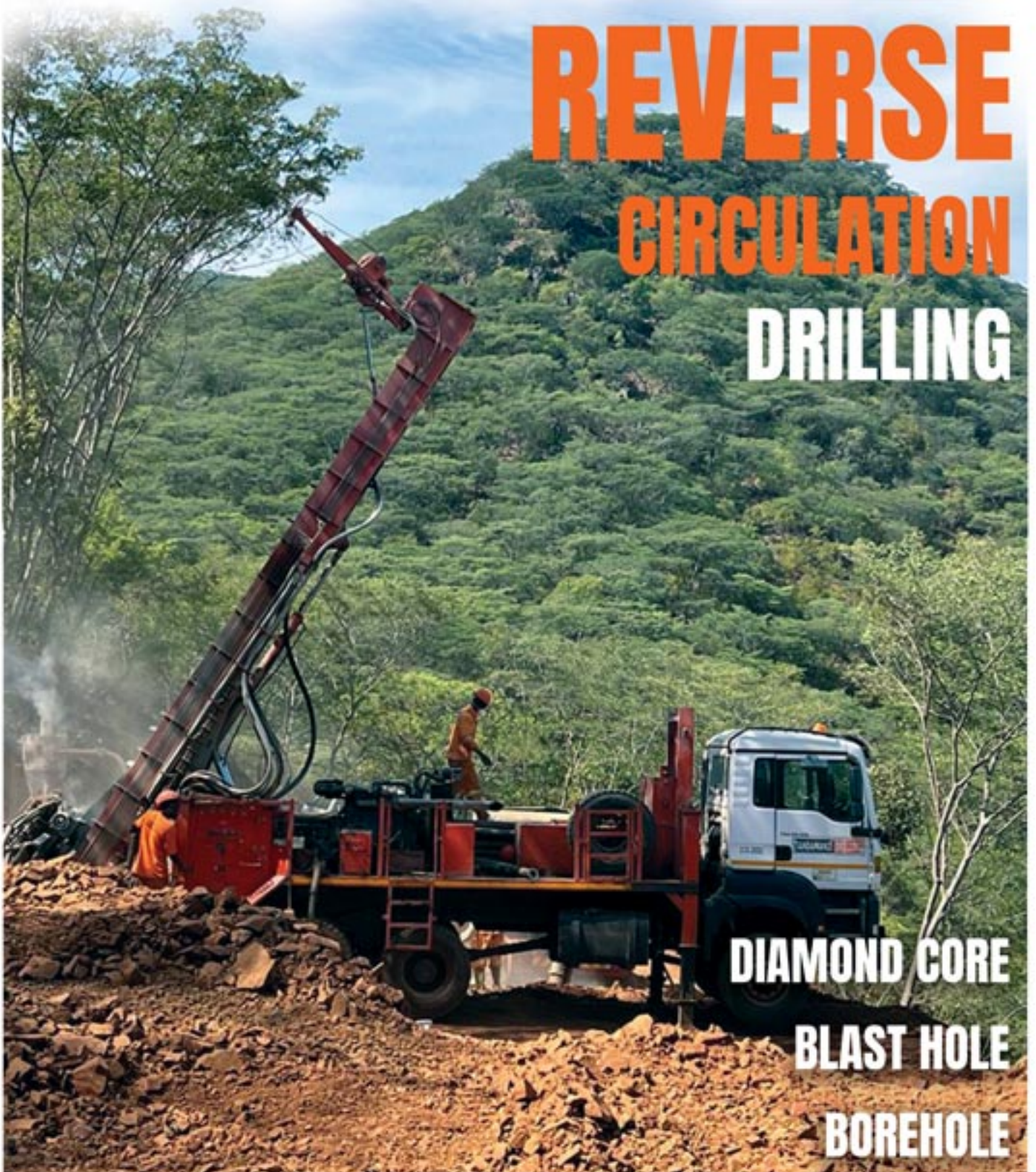
The history of diamond mining in Zimbabwe dates back to the late 19th century, with the discovery of significant diamond deposits in the country. Over the years, Zimbabwe has become renowned

for its rich diamond resources, attracting investment and fostering growth in the sector. As Zimbabwe progresses towards its Vision 2030, which aims for sustainable economic development and prosperity, the diamond mining industry is poised to play a pivotal role. By leveraging its abundant diamond reserves and implementing strategic initiatives, Zimbabwe can further enhance its position as a key player in the global diamond market, contributing to the country's vision of achieving socio-economic transformation and prosperity for its citizens.



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Dokwe Gold Project Acquisition: A Transformative Deal for Ariana and Zimbabwe



Workers inspecting Core samples at the Dokwe gold project

London Stock Exchange-listed mining and exploration junior Ariana Resources plc is set to revolutionise its portfolio through an exciting merger with Rockover Holdings Limited for a significant acquisition of the Dokwe Gold Project in Tsholotsho, Matabeleland North province

Dr Kerim Sener, Managing Director of Ariana, expressed confidence in the venture, highlighting its potential to elevate the company's stature and positively impact Zimbabwe's mining landscape.

According to Dr Sener, the Dokwe Gold Project, owned by Rockover Holdings Limited, presents a compelling investment opportunity. The interim revision to the Dokwe Pre-Feasibility Study underscores its value, projecting a post-tax Net Present Value (NPV10) of US\$160 million and an Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of 41% at a gold price of US\$2,000/oz. This revision, focusing solely on Dokwe North, demonstrates the project's robustness, with a mine life estimated at approximately 13 years and an annual gold production rate of around 60,000 ounces.

He also said that the project boasts favourable economics, with an all-in-sustaining cost (AISC) of US\$1,144 per ounce, further cementing its viability. With a peak capital funding requirement of

US\$82 million and an expected payback period of 2.7 years from the start of production, making it a compelling prospect for investors seeking promising returns.

Dr Sener emphasized the potential for additional value creation, hinting at further optimisations and exploration opportunities within the Dokwe Project. The inclusion of Dokwe Central in future studies holds promise for even more robust economics and resource expansion, positioning Ariana for sustained growth and market recognition.

He said the significance of this merger extends beyond Ariana's corporate strategy, it carries profound implications for Zimbabwe's mining sector. Located in the Tsholotsho Communal Lands, the Dokwe Project represents the largest undeveloped gold project in the country, presenting a valuable asset for economic development and job creation in the region.

"This substantial update to the Dokwe Project PFS further underscores our assessment that the Project represents a major value-accretive opportunity for the proposed enlarged Company once we complete our merger with Rockover. Notably, the revised PFS only includes the Dokwe North area and there is significant

scope to enhance the economics further if Dokwe Central is included.

"As it stands, Dokwe represents a significantly de-risked, advanced project development opportunity containing established Reserves, which has been sufficiently well drill-tested to enable its immediate advance to the Feasibility stage. On completion of the merger with Rockover, the project will propel Ariana towards mid-tier company status, as we continue to build on our mine development strategy and gain enhanced market recognition.

"Finally, we anticipate positive developments through further project optimisation studies of the Dokwe Project, which require ongoing assessment, along with similar studies being undertaken across the rest of our project portfolio. Such project developments are communicated to the market via our regulatory announcements at the earliest feasible time. We continue to work hard to expand the opportunity at Dokwe and we will keep the market informed of our progress," he said.

Chinyemba leaves Kuvimba for Mutapa Investment



Soaring - Simba Chinyemba

Former Kuvimba Mining House (KMH) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Simba Chinyemba has now joined Mutapa Investment as Chief Investment Officer (CIO), Mining Zimbabwe has learnt.

According to sources Chinyemba was head-hunted for the Chief Investment Officer position and will be overseeing state-owned enterprises that include Net One, National Railways of Zimbabwe, Air Zimbabwe, TelOne, Cottco, Zupco, Defold Mine, Kuvimba Mining House, Silo Investments, National Oil Company of Zimbabwe, Cold Storage Commission Limited, Petrotrade, People's Own Savings Bank, ZESA, Fidelity Gold Refinery, Homelink, Arda Seeds, Zimbabwe Power Company, PowerTel Communications, Allied Timbers, Telecel, Industrial Development Corporation and Hwange Colliery Company.




Chinyemba was Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Kuvimba where he oversaw the creation of the mining group before he was promoted to be its CEO taking over from David Brown in 2021.




He was tasked with overseeing the company's large array of assets either as 100% owner or as a



majority shareholder. These include top gold producer Freda Rebecca Gold Mine, Bindura Nickel Corporation, Shamva Mining Company, Jena Mines, Elvington Mine, Sandawana Mine, Zimbabwe Alloys Limited, Great Dyke Investments and Homestake Mines.

Under his leadership, KMH has seen a notable turnaround from a company burdened by negative perceptions and struggling assets to becoming a leading force in the mining sector.








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Eureka mine aerial view: Image source Dallaglio

Dallaglio's Gold Production Surges by 39 Percent

Padenga Holdings Limited, listed on the Victoria Falls Stock Exchange, has announced a remarkable 39 percent surge in gold production during the first quarter of 2024 compared to the same period last year, according to the company's trading update for the first quarter (FY2024).

Operated by its subsidiary Dallaglio Investments, Padenga's mining operations oversee the Eureka Gold Mine in Guruve and the Pickstone Peerless Mine.

"The gold sales in the three months to 31 March 2024 surpassed the prior year's comparative period by 39 percent (751.6 kg vs 541.4 kg). This was achieved on the back of an increase in tonnes milled and mill feed grade," stated Padenga company secretary A.D. Lorimer in the trading update.

Tonnes milled increased by 7 percent to 457,440 Mt compared to 427,702 Mt recorded for the same period last year. This increase stemmed from optimized plant throughput at the Eureka Mine and the

addition of a new mill plant at the Pickstone Peerless Mine.

Mill feed grade also saw a 2 percent increase (1.47 g/mt vs 1.44 g/mt). The initial phase of the Pickstone Peerless underground (PUG) project was officially commissioned by H.E. Emmerson Mnangagwa on 10 April 2024. Meanwhile, ore hoisting from PUG continued parallel to phase 2 of the underground development.

Market Outlook

According to Lorimer, the gold price appears firm for the remainder of the year, with record prices recorded to date.

The Group has embarked on further capital expenditure at the Pickstone Peerless Mine for Phase 2 of the underground project in line with the budget. Other projects earmarked for 2024 include the Pre-Leach Thickener and Solar Project at the Eureka Mine.

Looking forward, the Group remains on track to increase gold production by expanding the Pickstone underground mine. The Group remains focused on initiatives to enhance grade, reduce operating costs, and improve recoveries.



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extensive distribution network ensure that your operations remain powered without interruption. From bulk fuel deliveries to on-site refueling services, we prioritize reliability at every step of the process.



RioZim in 1 Percent Production Increase Despite Major Shareholder's Death

Zimbabwe Stock Exchange-listed diversified mining company RioZim, despite the loss of the company's major shareholder's representatives and four executives in a fatal plane crash, recorded a 1 percent increase in gold production during the year ended 31 December 2023.

In a statement released on Tuesday, 14 May 2024, Chairman S.R. Beebeejaun noted that the year began on a positive note, with an upward review of the foreign currency retention from 60% to 75%, which was a welcome boost to the group as this partially alleviated the foreign currency shortages. The increased nostro retention was complemented by favorable gold prices that experienced an upward trend from the beginning of the year, contributing to the revenue growth for the year.

The RioZim chairman, however, said that the period was characterized by rising production costs driven by inconsistent power supply and spiraling exchange rates, which persisted throughout the year. As a result, the group recorded a net loss for the

year.

"The group's financial year was marked by the sad loss of the company's major shareholder's representatives and four of the company's executives in a fatal plane crash involving one of RZM Murwa Aviation's planes. This unfortunate accident cast a dark cloud over the 2023 financial year for the company, and we continue to mourn these dear departed colleagues.

"Production for the year was 940 kg, which was a slight 1% increase from the prior year's production of 928 kg. The subdued production volumes were due to persistent plant breakdowns largely experienced at Cam & Motor Mine, which struggled with breakdowns in its milling section resulting in reduced throughput," Beebeejaun said.

According to Beebeejaun, Renco Mine adopted a strategy of maximizing milled throughput, resulting in a commendable 10% increase in production to 441 kg. Despite power supply challenges, investments in additional generator capacity are underway to mitigate

production obstacles.

He said Cam & Motor Mine faced setbacks due to mill section breakdowns, leading to a 5% decline in production to 499 kg. Efforts to refurbish mills and address delayed pit development are ongoing.





Workers At one of Riozim's mines Pose For A Picture

Dalny Mine remained under care and maintenance, focusing on regulatory approvals for small-scale operations to alleviate cash flow impacts.

Base Metals Business

The refinery, under care and maintenance, contributed revenue partially funding its costs. Efforts are directed towards revitalizing the oxygen generation section to generate additional income.

Chrome Business

Legal disputes concerning chrome claims in Darwendale persist, with the company committed to pursuing an amicable

resolution.

Diamond Business

Production at RZM Murowa declined by 3% to 414,000 carats, attributed to suspended mining activities. Despite challenges, the group remains dedicated to finding solutions.

Energy Business

Energy projects, notably the 178 MW Solar Projects, are in the funding stage after obtaining regulatory approvals. Engagement with potential funding partners is ongoing to achieve financial closure.

Outlook

RioZim remains optimistic about stabilizing production and returning to profitability through strategic initiatives. Efforts at RZM Murowa focus on extending the life of the mine, while Cam & Motor Mine prioritizes improving plant uptime. Addressing power supply challenges at Renco Mine is imperative, with a focus on alternative sources and capacity expansion. Despite adversities, RioZim's future looks promising as initiatives are set to stabilize production and drive profitability.

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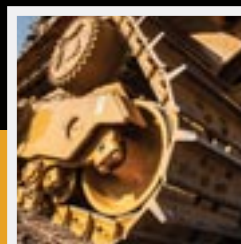
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Zimplats Delivers Year-on-Year Growth

The country's biggest platinum group metal (PGM) producer, Zimplats, maintained stable production levels while achieving significant year-on-year growth.

By Patricia Rwafa

During the quarter ended 31 March 2024, the group saw a 9% increase in mining output compared to the same period last year, driven by successful pillar reclamation efforts and continued development of the Mupani Mine. Metal production also saw a positive trend, with a 12% year-on-year improvement.

In a report released on 30 April 2024, Zimplats stated it had spent US\$789 million during the quarter on major capital

projects, including the development of the Mupani and Bimha mines upgrades as the platinum group metals miner expands operations.

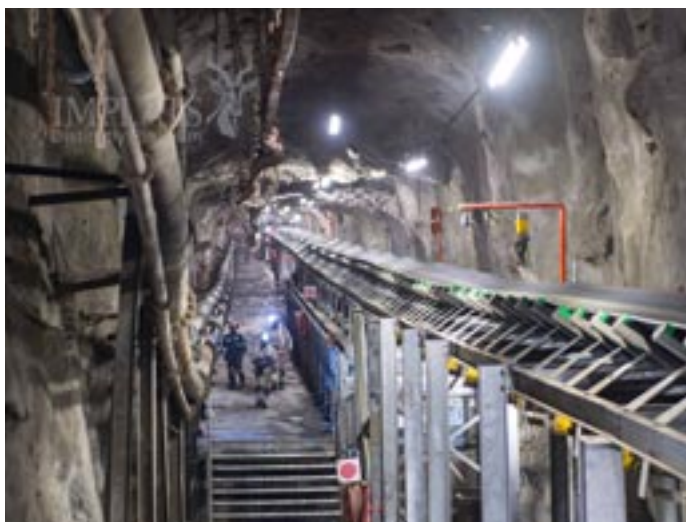
Mining volumes were unchanged from the prior quarter but increased by 9% year-on-year, benefiting from the pillar reclamation operations at Rukodzi Mine and the continued ramp-up of production from Mupani Mine, which is under development.

Pillar reclamation activities also benefited the 6E head grade, which was 2% higher year-on-year. The 1% reduction in grade from the prior quarter was due to an increased contribution of lower-grade Mupani Mine development ore and dilution from mining across geological structures.

Milled volumes increased by 7% and 3% from the comparative and prior quarters, respectively. A scheduled reline of the mills at the Selous Metallurgical Complex (SMC) was deferred to the fourth quarter of FY2024. These volumes also benefited from improved milling rates and running time, in line with higher ore supply.

Concentrate recoveries were stable versus the prior quarter and increased by 5% from the comparative quarter, resulting in a 2% quarter-on-quarter and 14% year-on-year increase in the volume of 6E in concentrate produced.

6E metal in the final product improved by 12% year-on-year and was 1% higher than the prior quarter.





Cost containment initiatives implemented in the prior quarter progressed in the period under review, resulting in a 2% reduction in total operating cash costs from the prior quarter. Operating cash costs increased by 7% year-on-year, primarily due to the 9% and 7% increase in mining and milling volumes, respectively, benefiting from cost mitigation efforts that helped contain the impact of persistent input inflation.

Transfers from stocks to operating costs amounted to US\$2.8 million during the period, in line with the movement in inventory across the value chain.

Cash costs of metal produced increased by 5% and 1% from the comparative and prior quarter, respectively. The operating cash unit cost of US\$821 per 6E ounce was

marginally below that of the prior quarter and declined by 6% year-on-year, benefiting from volume gains that offset inflationary pressures experienced on electricity.

In light of the softer metal pricing environment, management has implemented various cash preservation measures, including labor rationalization and capital project re-scheduling within cash constraints. In April 2024, 67 employees, 1.6% of the total permanent workforce, were retrenched.

The Bimha and Mupani mine development and upgrade projects will replace production from Rukodzi Mine (which was depleted in FY2022) and Ngwarati and Mupfuti mines (which will be depleted in FY2025 and FY2028,

respectively).

Cumulatively, US\$395 million has been spent on these projects as of 31 March 2024, against a total project budget of US\$468 million.

A total of US\$340 million has been spent to date on the smelter expansion and SO₂ abatement plant against a total project budget of US\$521 million.

US\$27 million has been spent on the implementation of the 35MW solar plant project to date, against a budget of US\$37 million.

A total of US\$27 million has been spent to date on the execution of the Base Metal Refinery refurbishment project, against a total budget of US\$190 million.



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MMCZ Seeking Phosphate Mining and Fertilizer Investors



Dr. Nomsa Moyo

The Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe (MMCZ) is actively seeking an investor to venture into phosphate mining and subsequently fertilizer production, MMCZ Acting General Manager Dr. Nomsa Moyo has said.

By Rudairo Mapuranga

Despite conveying the importance of this endeavor to the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, no interested investors have come forward, prompting speculation about the profitability of such ventures.

Speaking at a stakeholders' engagement meeting between the MMCZ and the parliamentary portfolio committee on Mines and Mining Development recently, Dr. Nomsa Moyo emphasized the organization's commitment to advocating for the exploration of phosphate resources in Zimbabwe. However, the absence of investor interest, whether domestically or internationally, has hindered progress in this area.

"We've advised the Ministry that there's a need to tap into phosphate mining. But so far, we haven't had an investor who has come in to invest, whether locally or internationally. But the Ministry is aware that we could benefit as a nation. But until such time, we have somebody who is prepared to come and invest. Whether it's because the profit is minimal or the business is not so lucrative, nobody so far has shown interest in investing in phosphate mining and going further to producing fertilizers. But as an institution, we are aware of that, and we continue to advise the Minister on that issue," Dr. Moyo

reiterated.

The global demand for phosphate ore is steadily increasing due to an ever-growing population and, thus, an unrelenting food supply. The production increase is directly linked to the availability of phosphate fertilizers.

The potential of phosphate mining in Zimbabwe remains untapped, with the prospect of utilizing it for fertilizer production still unrealized.

What is the Government Doing?

The Government is giving priority to the national policy of expanding Dorowa Minerals Phosphate Mine and processing plant in Buhera to boost local production, create employment, reduce the cost of fertilizers, and substantially reduce imports.

Dorowa Minerals is wholly owned by Chemplex Corporation, which falls under the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), an investment vehicle under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. It is the only producer of phosphate in Zimbabwe and sits on large reserves of phosphate ore, making it a strategic player in the country's economic development. The phosphate produced at Dorowa is used in the production of phosphate fertilizer blends such as Compound D fertilizer at Zimphos in Harare. The mine produces 150,000 tonnes of phosphate concentrate per year.

According to the country's Vice President, Dr. Constantine Guvheya Chiwenga, the Government elevated the fertilizer value chain as one of the priority sectors in the National Development Strategy (NDS1) to ensure Zimbabwe achieves an upper-middle-income economy by 2030, with fertilizer production being important in the agricultural sector.

"The development of the value chain is a key driver for industrialization and is a fundamental import substitution strategy, which results in job creation, expansion of the industrial base, economic growth, poverty reduction, luring of new investments and technologies, as well as

improved incomes and revenues into the treasury. These macro-economic impacts are important as they are in line with the aspirations of the NDS1 as we strive to achieve Vision 2030. The fertilizer value chain players are already implementing the five-year Fertilizer Import Substitution Roadmap in support of local production of fertilizers. This is testimony to private sector support of Government policies. The five-year roadmap targets to boost productivity and production of fertilizer, save foreign currency, ensure food security, and create employment," said VP Chiwenga.

Profitability of Phosphate Mining in Zimbabwe

The potential of PHOSPHATE MINING in Zimbabwe remains untapped, with the prospect of utilizing it for FERTILIZER PRODUCTION still unrealized.

The country has an estimated potential reserve of phosphate totaling 197 million tons (ore) at an average grade of 13% P₂O₅. Based on the P₂O₅ content, three phosphate grades can be distinguished: low-grade ores (12–16% P₂O₅), medium-grade ores (17–25% P₂O₅), and high-grade ores (26–35% P₂O₅). The phosphate ore

enrichment processes allow the gangue minerals to be separated from the economically valuable phosphate. Several methods are used to upgrade the low-grade phosphate ore to a marketable-grade product, such as crushing, grinding, screening, scrubbing, heavy media separation, washing, roasting, calcination, and flotation. Phosphate deposits, which after mining and processing yield a raw material containing 28–38% P₂O₅, are considered economically viable, and the grades in Zimbabwe can surpass 30% after processing.

Fertilizer Production

The production of P-fertilizers requires an intermediate step: the production of phosphoric acid, which is one of the most important intermediates in the inorganic chemical industry. Phosphoric acid is manufactured from phosphate ores using thermal and wet processes. In industry, the wet process is more commonly used due to its lower energy requirements compared to the thermal process and thus greater economic viability.



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RETENTION JUST NOT FEASIBLE

It is crucial to protect miners from losses stemming from the nation's unstable monetary policies, which expose them to foreign exchange risks.

By Rudairo Mapuranga

The current 75/25 foreign currency retention policy is impeding the growth of the mining sector and fails to meet the demand for an 80% retention rate, which seems to be a better option for miners to sustain their growth.

Recently, the volatile exchange rate ate into Caledonia Mining Corporation's profits. The company reported a foreign exchange loss of US\$4.1 million in the quarter ended 31 March 2024, compared to a foreign currency gain of US\$1.5 million in Q1 2023.

What is the Foreign Currency Retention Threshold in Zimbabwe?

Last year, the central bank raised the foreign currency retention threshold for exporters to 75%. Previously, exporters were only allowed to retain 60% of their foreign currency earnings, leading to challenges in accessing forex for vital capital expenditures and operational financing.

Is the Forex Retention Feasible for

Miners?

Miners argue that the forex-deprived economy forces exporters to convert a portion of their earnings into local currency at an official exchange rate, which often results in losses due to the significant disparity with the black market exchange rate. With over 70% of transactions in Zimbabwe now in USD, meaning suppliers are now charging in forex, mine executives had expected the central bank to either raise the retention threshold more or drop it entirely.

An industry report published by Zimbabwe's Chamber of Mines says the sector will experience a slower 7% growth in 2022, down from a projected 8% last year. Mining costs are projected to increase by 15% in 2023, with energy being the main driver, the report said. ZESA tariffs for miners, paid in USD, went up by 40% last year, increasing forex pressure on the industry.

Gladys Mutsopotsi-Shumbambiri, an economist with extensive experience in monetary policy, emphasizes the importance of understanding the dynamics at play. She said the demand for forex can lead to inflation, resulting in miners losing their local currency portion to inflation.

"Lower forex retentions mean reduced inflows of foreign currency into the economy. This places the burden on the RBZ to source local currency to fulfill its obligations, potentially leading to increased money supply and inflationary pressures," she explained.

What is Sustainable for Miners?

Last year, the Chamber of Mines, which represents the country's major mining firms, lobbied for retention levels to be moved to at least 80%.

"Given that the multicurrency system was embedded into law, we are of the view that there is a need to review the foreign exchange retention framework in line with the new policy changes. We are proposing an upward review of the minimum retentions from 60% to 80%.

"Information gathered from mining houses shows that mining companies now require at least 80% of their foreign currency earnings to meet the increased demand for forex and fund their operational requirements and expansion projects," the Chamber of Mines said in proposals to the Ministry of Finance.



The Gold Miners Association of Zimbabwe CEO, Irvine Chinyenze, commented on how the introduction of the 75/25 percent policy to the artisanal and small-scale gold miners was going to affect the economy. He said the 75% forex retention was going to incentivize smuggling.

"There was a danger that smuggling was

going to be rampant as miners were going to look for more lucrative markets where they get value for money rather than lose value in the process.

"This was going to reduce production at an alarming rate as miners were going to diversify to other sectors that wholly give earnings in US\$. Though we can't quantify criminality, the country was going to lose over US\$2bn in revenues if the current policy direction was not reversed," he said.

"This was going to see a great deal of forex being externalized beyond the country's borders, thereby losing massive revenues along the way. This was going to create an influx of gold mafia gangs as the authorities created a thriving environment for them to smuggle and externalize United States dollars through illicit deals."

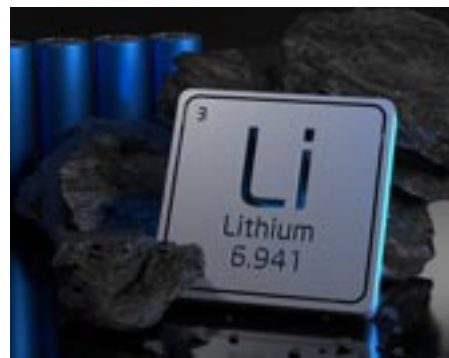
What Should the Government Do?

The repercussions of lower forex retentions extend beyond the realm of monetary policy, permeating various sectors of the economy. A decrease in the availability of foreign currency can hinder import-dependent industries, leading to supply shortages and price hikes. Furthermore, the depreciation of the local currency against major currencies can erode purchasing



power and diminish consumer confidence.

In response to these anticipated challenges, the government must adopt a multifaceted approach that addresses both short-term exigencies and long-term structural reforms. Enhancing export competitiveness and fostering a conducive business environment is essential.



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Lithium beneficiation to carbonates requires smooth export flaws



While the government has been pushing for the beneficiation of lithium to lithium carbonates, the ball should not only be in the hands of miners but the government should also make straight-forward export laws based on research.

Rudairo Mapuranga

The government of Zimbabwe has been accused of having a complex and tiresome export policy where it can take exporters over a month to complete all required export documents.

Exporters have been calling on the government to ease the export process to enable exporters to take their consignment even in a day.

In the case of lithium, it will be a gross business violation if the government forces miners to set up lithium carbonate or sulphide processing plants without revis-

ing the export process requirements.

Lithium hydroxide and Sulphides have a shorter shelf life of around 3-6 months, while carbonate's shelf life of 0.6-1 years can throw miners in serious losses when the product expires.

Speaking to Mining Zimbabwe, Association of Junior Mining Professionals of Zimbabwe (AJMPZ) Secretary General Hazel Tsungai Karoro said the government of Zimbabwe is using a popular political approach to come up with policies instead of research.

She said that the mining industry is a research industry and therefore its policies should be based on research and not conspiracies.

She said the government was ill-advised to implement the lithium beneficiation strategy without proper research that not

only affects lithium producers but also government revenue.

She said the strategy should follow the country's investment in energy and railway structures to reduce operation costs.

"There is no research when it comes to policies. It's only about conspiracy theories. Mining is a research industry and the policies should be based on research, not feelings and conspiracies. There is no research whatsoever, that's why as the AJMPZ we are conducting various technical research projects aimed at policy implementation. There are no structures to support beneficiation, the country has low-power structures to support beneficiation plants. We also have infrastructure challenges. Beneficiation to carbonates also requires investments of up to billions, and there is a need for the government to set up railways," she said.



Hazel Tsungai Karoro



Tapuwa Nhachi

Natural Resource Governance expert Tapuwa Nhachi said there is a lack of consistency in policies due to the gap in research when it comes to policy drafting. Nhachi said the failure of the government to have a research centre has resulted in corruption and sometimes a lack of accountability.

Nhachi said the country will never achieve the full benefit of its resources whether minerals are exported raw or beneficiated.

"The challenges we have had in Zimbabwe over some time with the mining sector has been the lack of consistency of policy when regarding mining. This has in turn resulted in corruption, lack of transparency and accountability within the sector. The country has failed to maximise its resources and comparative advantages in the past. Thus, whether we export as raw or concentrate, we will never realise full revenue due to the underlying challenges I have mentioned above," Nhachi said.

The Need to speed up the export process

Magnus CEO Tanaka Solomon Nyabadza said there was a need to digitalise the export to speed up the process.

He also said that local miners should be allowed to export raw minerals while foreign-owned companies made to process them.

"To speed up the export process they need to digitalize the whole process 1st and put in place a self-service system. Everything has to be electronic. They need to up with a strategy that allows scale mine owners to export a certain % or tonnage of ore of their produce once a month for 2 years so that they can generate easy capital to mechanize the operations," Nyabadza said.



Payne Kupfuwa

Young Miners Foundation (YMF) CEO Payne Kupfuwa said miners should be allowed to export concentrates rather than ores while the export process is made quicker.

"The export process should be quicker so, that returns are realised in time. The lead time should be shorter to bolster efficiency gains. The country should benefit from its natural resources by exporting concentrates with more value than ores," the YMF CEO said.

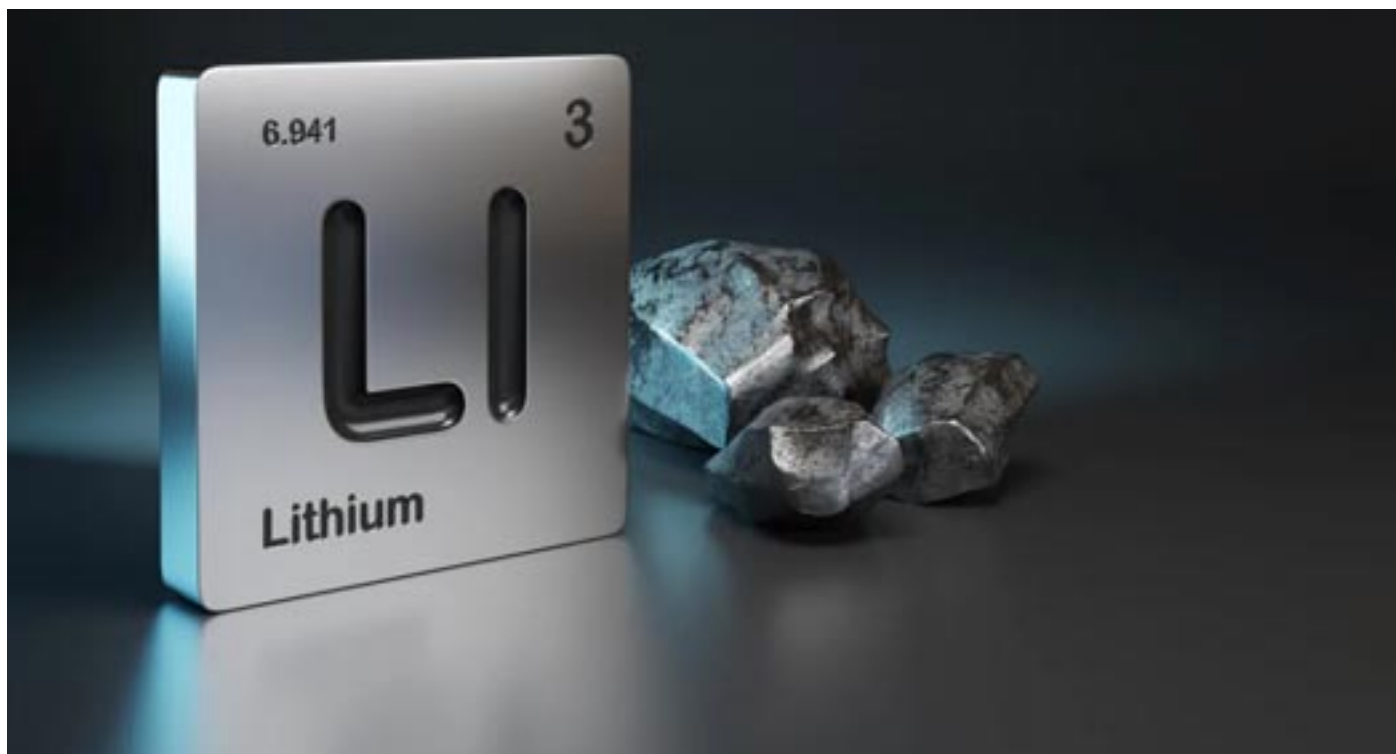
Conclusion

The government should graft policies which are based on research and should be supported by a case study.

There is no reason for the government to push lithium miners to process lithium ores to lithium carbonates or sulphides if there is no plan from their side to manufacture lithium batteries in the country.

There is no harm if the country exports lithium ores, the process should be reserved only for Zimbabweans who will receive the proceeds directly from the country's banks.

In the 2023 financial year, Australia exported iron ore to China amounted to around 105 billion Australian dollars this shows that the country can benefit from extraction without shifting focus to beneficiation. Due to the softening of lithium prices, the government of Zimbabwe can still benefit through exporting lithium ores or concentrates.



Certificate of Competency, Examinations, and the Role of ZSM Among Key Discussions at AMSZ One-Day Symposium



From left to right: AMSZ SG Takunda Mubayiwa, AMSZ President Gabriel Mwale and AMSZ spokesperson Stewart Gumbi

The Association of Mine Surveyors of Zimbabwe (AMSZ)'s one-day symposium held in Bulawayo this month successfully highlighted the importance of adapting to technological changes, updating educational curricula, and ensuring that legislative frameworks adequately reflect the evolving needs of the mining industry.

By addressing these key areas, the symposium set a clear path for the future development of the mine surveying profession in Zimbabwe.

The Role of ZSM

The one-day symposium organized by the AMSZ featured significant discussions on the pivotal role played by the Zimbabwe School of Mines (ZSM) in the mining industry. Linton Mapasure, Acting Training Operations Manager and Head of Survey Department presented a comprehensive overview of ZSM's evolving curriculum and its alignment with industry demands.

"By 2004, the department had improved its curriculum and equipment without

altering the core competencies of its graduates. In 2014, the curriculum was revamped to include advanced mathematics and survey methods, aligning with the Mine Survey Certificate of Competence," Mapasure explained.

Mapasure highlighted that the ZSM's curriculum now spans 20 subjects, equipping graduates to ensure regulatory compliance, obtain permits, and analyze data for operational efficiency. He also emphasized the incorporation of modern technologies like RTK GPS, the Mavic 2 Pro drone, and various 3D survey software to enhance students' skills.

Looking ahead, ZSM plans to include virtual and augmented reality, robotics, and drone surveys in its curriculum. Mapasure assured the symposium participants of ZSM's preparedness for new candidates, though additional resources for specific survey papers were still needed.

He concluded by advocating for exemptions for ZSM diploma holders

based on the merit of their curriculum when obtaining a Certificate of Competence.

Examiners Meeting Brief

Mr. C. Dick provided a brief yet insightful discussion from the perspective of the Association of Mine Surveyors on the Ministry of Mines Examination Board. He addressed recent resolutions concerning the Certificate of Competence examinations and highlighted several key observations.

"Reviewing the recent examinations from November, we noted some information shared on social media within our group can lead to miscommunications," Dick stated.

He stressed the importance of adhering to the revised syllabus from 2016 and discussed the proposal for allowing trial surveys post written exams, which requires statutory amendments.

The symposium set a clear path for the future development of the MINE SURVEYING profession in Zimbabwe.



Some of the delegates at the symposium

Dick also mentioned the necessity for candidates to pass all eight subjects to obtain the certificate, indicating that some subjects have become outdated. He emphasized the need for a balanced approach between academic and professional qualifications, underscoring the practical skills essential for mine surveyors.

The examination board's discussions also touched on international recognition, urging for amendments to regulations and active involvement in professional development to enhance the professional standing of mine surveyors in Zimbabwe.

Status of Mine Surveyors' Certificate of Competence

Mr. Shelton Mpinyuri delivered an in-depth presentation on the development and current status of the Government Mine Surveyor's Certificate of Competence. He traced the evolution of the certificate from its inception to its current form, highlighting significant milestones and technological advancements.

"The first examinations for the Government Mine Surveyor Certificate of Competence were set in June 1947. Since then, up to 2024, the Office of the Chief Government Mine Engineer has issued 171 certificates, averaging about two per year," Mpinyuri noted, expressing concern over the low qualification rate.

Mpinyuri emphasized the need for a syllabus review due to technological advancements and changing industry needs. He called for updates similar to those made in 1997 when Mine Planning Management Principles were introduced to shift the focus from mine valuation to mine economics.

He also stressed the importance of effectively utilizing mine surveyors in the industry, noting their critical role in optimizing and enhancing the profitability of mining operations. Mpinyuri concluded by advocating for higher qualifications and modern standards to ensure the

continued relevance and respect of the survey profession.

Mining Bill Submissions

AMSZ President Gabriel Mwale highlighted the symposium's significance in addressing the pressing issues facing mine surveyors, particularly in the context of the Mining Bill. In an interview following the symposium, Mwale praised the collaborative efforts and the progress made in aligning the interests of various stakeholders.

"This symposium was very, very beneficial, especially to us in the Executive Committee of the Mine Surveyors," Mwale stated. He emphasized the integration of new members with diverse educational backgrounds, leading to the formation of a Curriculum Development Committee to harmonize the different qualifications.

Mwale also underscored the importance of defining and regulating mine surveying within the Mining Bill. "These statutory instruments, the regulations are going to be revised, but they are going to find their footing from the bill. What we want to try and do now is to make sure that the survey is also defined in the bill," he explained.

The symposium served as a platform for AMSZ to provide submissions to the bill and address regulatory issues, ensuring that the profession's interests are well-represented in the legislative framework.

Current Industry Needs, Trends, and Analysis

The symposium also delved into the current needs, trends, and analysis of the

mining industry. Discussions highlighted the ongoing technological advancements and the critical role of continuous professional development in keeping pace with industry demands.

Linton Mapasure emphasized the need for ZSM to stay ahead of industry trends by incorporating advanced technologies into their curriculum. "We are currently training our staff and students in these technologies to stay ahead of industry needs," Mapasure stated, referring to the use of RTK GPS, drones, and 3D survey software.

The need for modernized training was echoed by other speakers, who pointed out that traditional methods of mine surveying are being rapidly replaced by more efficient and precise technological solutions. This shift necessitates a comprehensive review and update of the current syllabus to ensure that new graduates are well-equipped to handle the latest industry challenges.

Future Prospects

The symposium concluded on an optimistic note, with AMSZ President Gabriel Mwale outlining the future prospects for mine surveyors in Zimbabwe. He mentioned the possibility of organizing another symposium soon to discuss other critical issues affecting the profession.

"This symposium has been the best. We want also to be organizing another one very soon, so that we can talk about other things affecting the mine survey," Mwale concluded.



Images from the AMSZ's one day symposium



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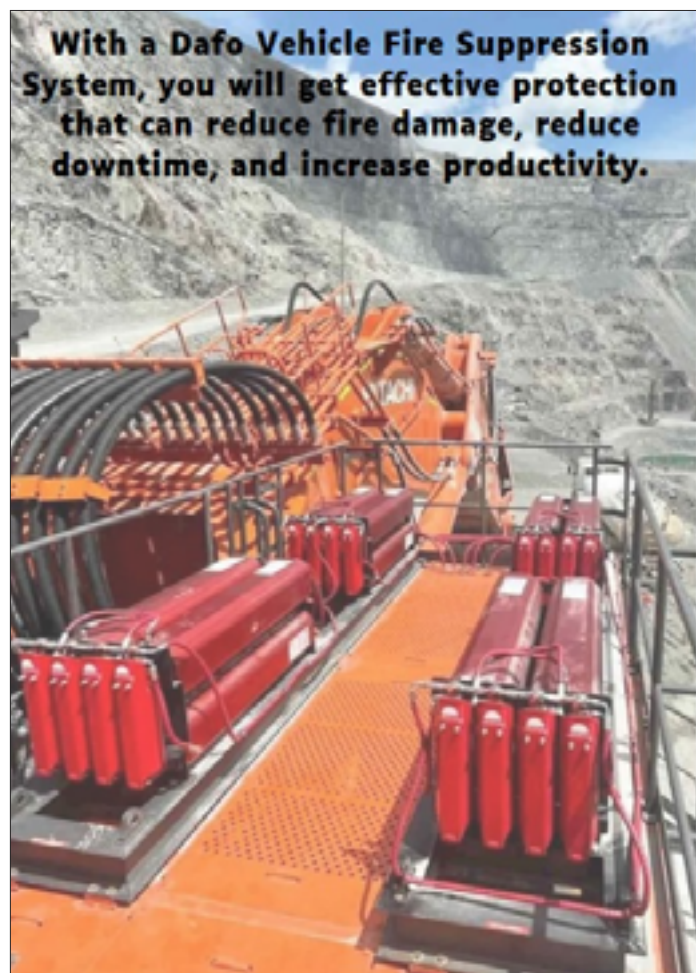






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ZIMSHEC Advances "Zero Harm" with Major Training and Empowerment Initiatives



Philemon Mokoete

In January this year, the Zimbabwe Mining Safety, Health, and Environmental Council (ZIMSHEC) saw the first batch of 36 students complete their First Aid and Rescue training course in Zvishavane. The training aligns with ZIMSHEC's motto, "Zero Harm is Achievable," a guiding principle that emphasizes safe mining practices to protect human life, animal life, and the environment.

Executive Director Mr Makumba Nyenje and Director admin and projects implementation Mr Philemon Mokoete were among the graduates, signaling the organization's commitment to embedding these principles within their leadership and operations.

A New Era of Responsible Mining

ZIMSHEC's mission is to promote responsible mining across Zimbabwe, with

a specific focus on small-scale and artisanal miners. The training held at the Zimbabwe School of Mines in Bulawayo covered critical topics, including Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Ground Control, Respiratory Protective Equipment, and Mine Rescue Operational Procedures.

"We are committed to ensuring that our mining practices do not harm human life, animal life, or the environment," said ZIMSHEC Executive Director Makumba Nyenje. "Our training programs aim to equip miners with the knowledge and skills needed to work safely and responsibly."

Empowering Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners

Artisanal miners play a significant role in Zimbabwe's economy, contributing approximately 60 percent of the national

gold output and providing direct employment to about 1.8 million people. However, this sector often faces numerous challenges, including unsafe working conditions and environmental degradation.

"Improving the artisanal mining sector is crucial for our economy," noted Deputy Director Philemon Mokoete. "These miners can become a powerful economic force if we provide them with the necessary tools and training."

ZIMSHEC's empowerment drive includes pilot projects in Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, and the Midlands, where miners have been randomly selected for training. This initiative aims to improve safety standards and promote environmentally friendly mining practices.

Zero Harm is Achievable

The "Zero Harm is Achievable" campaign underscores ZIMSHEC's commitment to reducing mining accidents and fatalities to zero. This involves not only improving safety protocols but also fostering a culture of responsibility and care among miners.

"We must ensure that there is no loss of human life in our mining operations," Mokoete emphasized. "Every stakeholder in the mining industry has a role to play in achieving this goal."

The recent mine accident at Redwing Mine in Penhalonga, Manicaland province, highlighted the need for stringent safety measures. Although no lives were lost, the incident served as a stark reminder of the dangers miners face.

"Our mining should uphold all safe mining practices," Mokoete said. "We must learn from incidents like the one at Redwing Mine to improve our safety precautions."

Collaborative Efforts for Sustainable Mining
In collaboration with ActionAid Zimbabwe, ZIMSHEC is implementing the Zimbabwe Accountability and Citizen Engagement Management (ZIMACE) Programme to enhance transparency and accountability in the ASM sector. The program aims to ensure that miners are educated about environmental preservation and sustainable practices.



"The activity has been about getting a buy-in from all key stakeholders," Nyenje explained. "We need a collective effort to leave a positive legacy for mining communities after the extraction of minerals."

The ZIMACE programme has garnered support from various stakeholders, including government agencies, mining associations, and environmental sustainability organizations. These partnerships are crucial for promoting responsible sourcing and ensuring that mining activities adhere to international standards.

Training and Awareness Initiatives
ZIMSHEC's environmental, safety, and health awareness programs target artisanal and small-scale miners in Zimbabwe. These initiatives are conducted in collaboration with government ministries, departments, and other organizations. The goal is to educate miners about proper equipment use, protective clothing, and environmental restoration.

"Neglecting health, safety, and environmental protection can have dire consequences," Mokuele pointed out. "Our training programs aim to instill a sense of responsibility and adherence to regulations among miners."

Addressing Broader Issues in the ASM Sector

Beyond safety and environmental concerns, ZIMSHEC's programs also address broader issues such as sexual and reproductive health. This holistic approach ensures that miners' overall well-being is considered, contributing to a healthier and more productive workforce.

"By training registered miners, we hope to influence unregistered miners to formalize their operations," Mokuele stated.

"Formalization brings numerous benefits, including access to training, resources, and better working conditions."

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals
ZIMSHEC's efforts align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to decent work, economic growth, and responsible consumption and production. By promoting responsible mining, ZIMSHEC aims to create sustainable economic opportunities while protecting the environment.

"The market demands responsibly sourced minerals," Nyenje noted. "Adhering to international standards not only benefits

the miners but also enhances Zimbabwe's reputation in the global market."

Conclusion

ZIMSHEC's "Zero Harm is Achievable" campaign is more than just a slogan; it is a commitment to transforming Zimbabwe's mining sector into a safe, responsible, and sustainable industry. Through training, awareness programs, and collaborative efforts, ZIMSHEC is empowering artisanal and small-scale miners to adopt best practices that protect human life, animal life, and the environment.

"We believe that by working together, we can achieve zero harm in our mining operations," Nyenje concluded. "Our vision is a mining sector where safety and sustainability are at the forefront of every activity."

As ZIMSHEC continues its empowerment drive, the future of Zimbabwe's mining industry looks promising. With the right support and dedication, zero harm is not just achievable; it is inevitable.



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Zimbabwe makes us\$20 billion from Mineral exports



Former Mines Minister Hon Zhemu Soda

The mining industry in the last five years realised a total of US\$20 billion from mineral exports, former Minister of Mines and Mining Development Hon Zhemu Soda said.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Speaking at the Kamativi Mining Company's spodumene mine and phase one processing plant official commissioning by President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Soda said Zimbabwe's

mining industry is, without doubt, a key industry that contributes significantly to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

"A cumulative of more than USD 20 Billion has also been realised from the export of various minerals that include gold, platinum and lithium from 2018 to date. It is pleasing to announce that despite the regulations that were instituted to control the export of lithium minerals in Zimbabwe, the stakeholders in the subsector were able to surpass their set

target for exports," Minister Soda said.

In 2023, according to Minister Soda lithium exports despite the US\$12 Billion vision by 2023 stimulating that lithium will fetch half a Billion annually, the lithium sector realised US\$600 million in exports.

"Lithium exports were set at half a Billion US dollars but a total of over USD 600 Million was realised from the export of Spodumene, Petalite and Lepidolite despite export bans that were effected in 2023 underscoring the importance of these lithium minerals to our economy," Minister Soda said.

According to Hon Soda, the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development will continue to work on strategies to help the country realise more gains from its mineral resources. These strategies include coming up with Special Purpose Vehicles for mineral exploration, new mines opening, re-capacitation of dormant mines, expansion of current mining projects, curbing mineral leakages, increased capacity utilization, and ultimately value addition and beneficiation across the whole sector.

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Sinomine Resources Unveils Groundbreaking 132kV Power Project at Bikita Mine



The Tokwe-Bikita Powerplant

On March 21, 2024, Sinomine Resources Group held a grand electrification ceremony for the 132kV power transmission and transformation project at the Bikita mine in Masvingo Province.

The ceremony was attended by the Minister of State for Masvingo Province, Mr. Ezra Chadzamira, chiefs, and several members of Parliament.

Mr. Wang Pingwei, Chairman and President of Sinomine Resources, delivered a speech, while Mr. Gong Xuedong, Assistant President of Sinomine Resources and General Manager of Bikita Mine, represented the company.

The 132kV power transmission and transformation project, featuring 112 kilometers of power lines and the Bikita substation, was invested in and

constructed by Sinomine Resources. It connects Zimbabwe's Tokwe 330kV substation with the Bikita mine.

Construction began in May 2023, and the project successfully transmitted power on March 17, 2024, marking a record-setting 10-month completion time. This achievement was recognized as the fastest and highest-quality project of its kind in the past 20 years by the Zimbabwe Power Transmission and Distribution Company, establishing it as a model project.

Chairman Wang highlighted the strong support from the Zimbabwean government, the power sector, and the community. He emphasized that the new transmission line would significantly improve power supply to Masvingo, Bikita, Nyika, Zaka, and surrounding areas, alleviating local power shortages.

For the Bikita mine, the project enhances power security, reduces dependence on fossil fuels, and significantly lowers production costs. It is also a key component of Sinomine Resources' commitment to carbon emission reduction, following their photovoltaic power generation project.

This initiative underscores Sinomine Resources' dedication to ecological environmental protection and responsible business practices. The company looks forward to continued collaboration with the Zimbabwean government and society to further develop the Bikita mine and strengthen the bond between the people of China and Zimbabwe.





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Taking on Too Many Projects Too Quickly Will Lead to Failure in Mining



In the mining industry, the temptation to rapidly expand and develop multiple projects simultaneously can be overwhelming. However, history shows that such aggressive growth strategies often lead to operational challenges, financial difficulties, and, ultimately, failure.

Several major mining companies have faced significant setbacks after taking on too many projects too quickly, serving as cautionary tales for others in the industry. This lesson is particularly pertinent for Zimbabwean miners who are eager to capitalize on the country's rich mineral resources.

Examples of Overreach in Mining

Barrick Gold Corporation: Pascua-Lama Project

Barrick Gold, one of the largest gold mining companies in the world, encountered severe difficulties with its Pascua-Lama project on the Chile-Argentina border. Initially heralded as a major breakthrough, the project quickly became a nightmare due to environmental concerns, regulatory issues, and strong community opposition. Costs soared from an estimated \$3 billion to over \$8 billion, leading to its indefinite suspension in 2013. The failure stemmed from a rushed approach to development without adequately addressing environmental and social complexities.

Rio Tinto: Simandou Iron Ore Project

The Simandou project in Guinea, containing one of the world's largest untapped high-grade iron ore deposits, has been a major

challenge for Rio Tinto. The project has been plagued by legal disputes, infrastructure challenges, and political instability in Guinea. The complexity of the project, combined with the hurried expansion, resulted in delays and significant financial losses, with Rio Tinto struggling to deliver on its promises despite substantial investments.

Anglo American: Minas-Rio Project

Anglo American's Minas-Rio iron ore project in Brazil is another example of overreach. Acquired for \$5.5 billion in 2007, the project faced numerous obstacles, including permitting delays, construction issues, and cost overruns. The project's costs escalated from an estimated \$3.6 billion to over \$8.4 billion, and production started almost a decade later than planned. The rapid push to develop the project without fully understanding the technical and logistical challenges was a critical error.

Insufficient Human Capital to Sustain Mining Project Life Cycle

Zimbabwean mining projects often suffer from a lack of skilled labor and technical expertise. Insufficient human capital can lead to operational inefficiencies, safety issues, and project delays. Investing in training and development programs for local workers and attracting skilled professionals from abroad are essential steps to ensure projects are executed effectively throughout their life cycles. However, the Zimbabwe School of Mines and other tertiary Institutions are creating world class mining professionals. The only problem or challenge would be their

inexperience.

Unable to Secure Mining Project Investors & Fiscal Support

Securing sufficient investment and fiscal support is a significant challenge for many Zimbabwean mining ventures. Investors are often wary due to a perceived political instability, regulatory unpredictability, and economic risks. Building investor confidence requires transparent regulatory frameworks, stable economic policies, and assurances of return on investment through reliable project management and risk mitigation strategies. Due to the removal of economic sanctions on the country, it is becoming increasingly safe and sustainable to invest in the mining sector in Zimbabwe with countries like the UK and US looking forward to reinvest in the country they had blackmailed for investment opportunities.

Declining Resource and Ore Body Quality

The quality of Zimbabwe's mineral resources is declining in some areas, making extraction more costly and less economically viable. Miners must invest in advanced exploration technologies and methods to accurately assess resource quality and extend the life of existing mines. Additionally, focusing on sustainable mining practices can help mitigate the impact of declining ore quality. Companies should have enough to invest in exploration otherwise taking to come concessions can hinder growth.

Insufficient Energy, Logistics, and Infrastructure

Energy shortages, inadequate logistics, and poor infrastructure are major impediments to the success of mining projects in Zimbabwe. Frequent power outages and a lack of reliable transportation networks increase operational costs and cause delays. Significant investment in energy projects, infrastructure development, and efficient logistics is crucial to support mining activities and enhance project viability.

Five Reasons Why Zimbabwean Miners Must Avoid Overextending

1. Regulatory and Environmental Compliance

Zimbabwean miners must ensure



Minas-Rio Project

thorough compliance with regulatory and environmental standards. Skipping these steps to expedite project development can lead to costly delays, fines, and legal battles, as seen with Barrick Gold's Pascua-Lama project.

2. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging with local communities and stakeholders from the beginning is essential. Ignoring their concerns can result in opposition and project disruptions. Building strong relationships and maintaining open communication can help secure the social license to operate.

3. Accurate Cost and Time Estimation

Underestimating project costs and timelines can strain financial resources and damage investor confidence. Zimbabwean miners should invest in detailed feasibility studies and realistic budgeting to manage resources effectively and avoid unexpected financial burdens.

4. Operational Capacity and Expertise

Rapid expansion without sufficient operational capacity and expertise can lead to inefficiencies and project failures. It is crucial for Zimbabwean mining companies to build robust operational frameworks and hire experienced professionals to manage

multiple projects successfully.

Conclusion

The pitfalls of taking on too many projects too quickly are evident in the experiences of major mining companies like Barrick Gold, Rio Tinto, and Anglo American. These examples highlight the importance of meticulous planning, stakeholder engagement, realistic budgeting, risk management, and operational expertise. For Zimbabwean miners, avoiding the temptation to overextend is vital. By learning from past mistakes and adopting a measured approach to growth, they can achieve long-term success and contribute to the sustainable development of Zimbabwe's mining sector.



Simandou Iron Ore Project

Bikita Minerals: Over US\$30 Million Invested in CSR, Committed to Sustainable Growth



Children in rural Bikita now have access to computers

Bikita Minerals, has demonstrated its long-term commitment to Zimbabwe through substantial investments in the country through an impressive Environmental Social and Governance stance.

Zimbabwe's mining sector plays a crucial role in the country's economy, attracting significant foreign direct investment.

"To date, more than US\$200 million has been invested (by Bikita Minerals) towards exploration work, mine expansion and other strategic projects (in the country)," confirmed managing director Xuedong Gong.

He outlined the company's multifaceted expansion strategy, which includes the development of new mining areas and the construction of a state-of-the-art tailings' storage facility.

"The new facility was designed to handle mine waste materials for the next 20 years and any future expansions the mine may embark on," he explained.

A significant US\$200 million investment has fueled the construction of new plants, significantly boosting production capacity.

"The Gravity separation plant is expected to produce 300,000 tons of petalite annually, while the Flotation plant is expected to produce 270,000 tons of high-quality chemical grade spodumene concentrate annually," Gong detailed.

Bikita Minerals champions sustainable practices with a focus on renewable energy and reliable power supply.

over US\$200 million has been channeled into **EXPLORATION, MINE EXPANSION, AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS**, reinforcing Bikita Minerals' commitment to Zimbabwe's economic growth.

The company completed a 12 MW photovoltaic solar plant in 2024 and played a pivotal role in the construction of the US\$22 million Tokwe-Bikita powerline.

"By harnessing solar power, Bikita Minerals contributes to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and promotes sustainable energy sources," Gong emphasized.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a cornerstone of the company's operations in Zimbabwe.

In 2023 alone, Bikita Minerals invested over US\$2 million in community initiatives, including borehole drilling, skills development, road maintenance, school programs, and health clinic support.



Newly constructed road in Bikita



The school feeding program

Gong also confirmed the company's pledge of US\$14 million for works at Birch-enough Bridge.

"Our commitment to corporate social investment reflects the dedication to creating positive impacts beyond mining operations," he affirmed.

Bikita Minerals has completed the construction of the Tokwe-Bikita Powerline at a cost of US\$22 million.

The powerline will address power supply for Bikita, Gutu, and Zaka communities and businesses. The company also drilled 33 boreholes in Bikita West (16), Masvingo North (12), Masvingo West (5).

Over 20,000 people now have access to clean water in the communities, contributing to one of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The company spent US\$600,000 towards construction and maintenance of Nyika-Kamungoma, Bikita to Gutu, and surrounding roads linking the community to clinics, schools, and administrative centers.

Additionally, a school feeding program for eight primary schools cost US\$14,520. This program has helped reduce school dropouts and increased school attendance.

Bikita Minerals also constructed two class-

room blocks and a staff quarter at Mara Primary at a cost of US\$120,000, benefiting 3,000 children and reducing their walking distance to 2 km.

Furthermore, Bikita Minerals donated building materials at Makwirivindi clinic in Gutu South, US\$30,000 to the Marozva community fund, and supported a local football club with US\$80,000, leading to the team's promotion into the league.



The company employs 80% of its workforce from the local community and recently won an award for the best ESG Best CSR investment and Community Impact award. "We prioritise employee well-being and pay competitive wages including a monthly production bonus. Bikita Minerals vision is to promote the mining sector in Zimbabwe and provide opportunities for local community," Gong noted, highlighting the company's compliance with local content policies and regulations.

Looking ahead, Bikita Minerals has ambitious plans to establish a smelter for further lithium concentrate beneficiation. "Feasibility studies are ongoing;

establishment plan is on the cards. Key deliverables are optimized extraction, improved beneficiation, and economic growth," Gong stated.

Gong praised the government for creating a conducive investment environment in Zimbabwe. "The current investment license is from August 2022 and Zimbabwe Investment Development Authority has served as a one-stop-shop for Bikita Minerals," he said, highlighting the agency's support in streamlining processes and eliminating bureaucracy.

Bikita Minerals operates with a strong sustainability focus encompassing compliance, resource management, environmental impact mitigation, and community engagement.

"At Bikita Minerals, we recognize that responsible mining involves not only economic success but also social and environmental stewardship," Gong asserted.

Despite challenges such as infrastructure constraints and regulatory complexities, the growing focus on sustainable and responsible mining practices offers opportunities for companies like Bikita Minerals to position themselves as leaders in the industry.



Under construction: Classroom blocks



School children in a lab at Bikita



A student using a Microscope in a class



Community borehole



Vim program for the community



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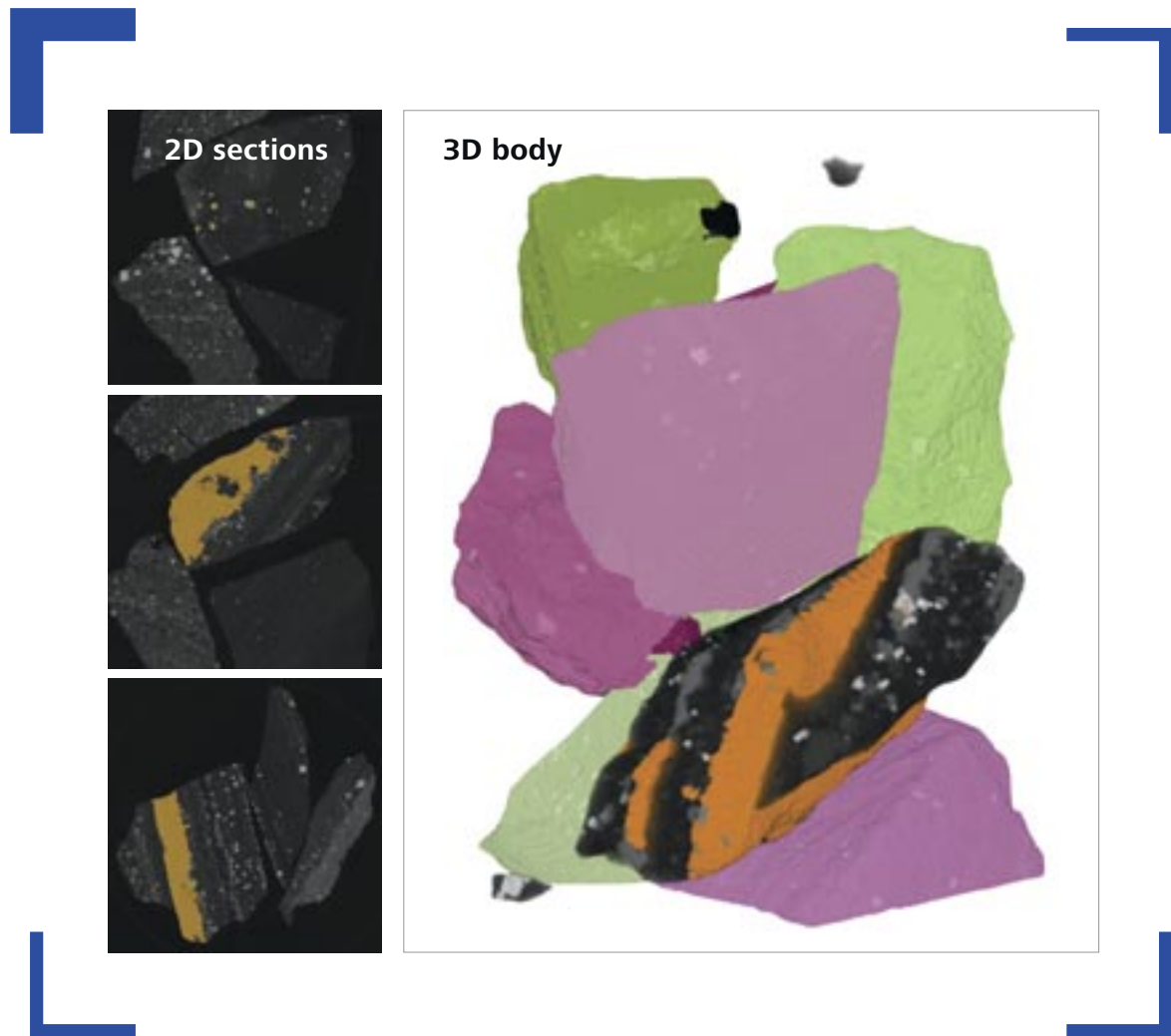
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