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PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES IN MINING REGIONS



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CONTENTS

PREFACE 7

CHAPTER 1 **What Enables Participatory Community Engagement? Expert Insights on Solutions** 13
Elisheba Spiller, Tinzar Htun, Kriti Shah

CHAPTER 2 **Citizen Participation in the Just Transition of Stara Zagora Coal Region** 43
Plamen Peev, Remina Aleksieva

CHAPTER 3 **Cultural Planning as a Participatory Method for Resource Peripheries: The Case of Peat Extraction in Ilomantsi, Finland** 73
Simo Häyrynen, Juha Kotilainen, Larissa Huohvanainen, Jani Karhu

CHAPTER 4 **Introspective Reflections on Attempts at Deepening Collaboration, Strengthening Partnerships and Co-Constructing Shared Futures in Mining Regions in South Africa** 97
Mark Oranje, Elsona van Huyssteen, Engela Petzer

CHAPTER 5 **Bridging Citizens' and Institutions' Perspectives in Serbia: Participation in the Spatial Planning of Mining Regions** 125
Marijana Pantić, Dušanka Milosavljević, Milena Tošković, Tamara Maričić, Milovan Vuković

CHAPTER 6 **Concluding Remarks: Participation, Legitimacy, and the Governance of Extractive Transitions** 159
Tamara Maričić, Marijana Pantić, Ana Perić

EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS 167

WHAT ENABLES PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT? EXPERT INSIGHTS ON SOLUTIONS

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WHAT ENABLES PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT? EXPERT INSIGHTS ON SOLUTIONS

ABSTRACT

The global energy transition towards clean energy technologies depends on the successful development and deployment of technologies that require critical minerals such as lithium, copper, nickel, cobalt, graphite, and rare earth elements. The extraction of these minerals can have significant impacts on local communities, which, despite the potential to benefit from mining activities, often bear the greatest social and environmental costs, while much of the economic value generated flows elsewhere. Effective, equitable, and meaningful community engagement can help mitigate these adverse effects and ensure that the benefits of mineral extraction are shared more fairly with local populations. However, such engagement is rarely achieved in practice due to a range of barriers, including inadequate or misaligned incentives, limited governance capacity, and other institutional constraints. As a result, meaningful participation is often difficult to implement, ineffective in practice, or absent altogether, contributing to persistent conflicts in mining regions. Drawing on a literature review and expert interviews, this chapter examines participatory inclusion in the mining sector globally, identifies key barriers to the meaningful involvement of communities, and explores approaches that can help uphold three core dimensions of justice: recognition, distributive justice, and procedural justice. We propose systems–level solutions that can foster greater coordination both internationally and within host countries, creating conditions for more effective and meaningful community engagement. As global demand for critical minerals continues to grow, achieving equitable outcomes through participatory inclusion becomes increasingly important. This chapter outlines potential pathways for advancing this objective.

Keywords: critical minerals; participatory inclusion; community engagement; mining governance; environmental and social justice.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As renewable technologies have become increasingly prominent on the world stage, a spotlight has become ever more present on critical minerals – the building blocks for these technologies' batteries and magnets. These minerals are extracted in a variety of ways, depending on the mineral and its' location, and thus the environmental and social impacts of the extraction can vary widely. However, these impacts – whether large or small – will necessarily fall on local communities. This creates a disparity in which the benefits of the renewable technologies are spread globally, whereas the impacts of the extraction are localised. Ensuring that local communities are also able to benefit from the extraction – while being protected from negative environmental impacts – is therefore essential for achieving a just transition to clean energy.

A major keystone for achieving this goal is empowering local communities through participatory engagement in decision–making processes related to mining activities. In summary, this means providing the uncensored opportunity for communities to participate in decision–making on questions such as whether mining should take place in their community; mining approaches that will affect land use, water use, and emissions; benefit sharing; and infrastructure development. Without participatory engagement, the likelihood of companies achieving a social license to operate (SLO) is significantly decreased.

Unfortunately, companies rarely engage communities in participatory processes; as a result, conflict between communities and mining companies is common worldwide. There are over 36,000 conflicts across more than 4,200 locations worldwide, with the highest percentage being found in North America (Marin & Palazzo, 2024) (Figure 1). Though not all of these conflicts can be attributed to a lack of participatory community engagement, it is a known contributor (Conde, 2017).

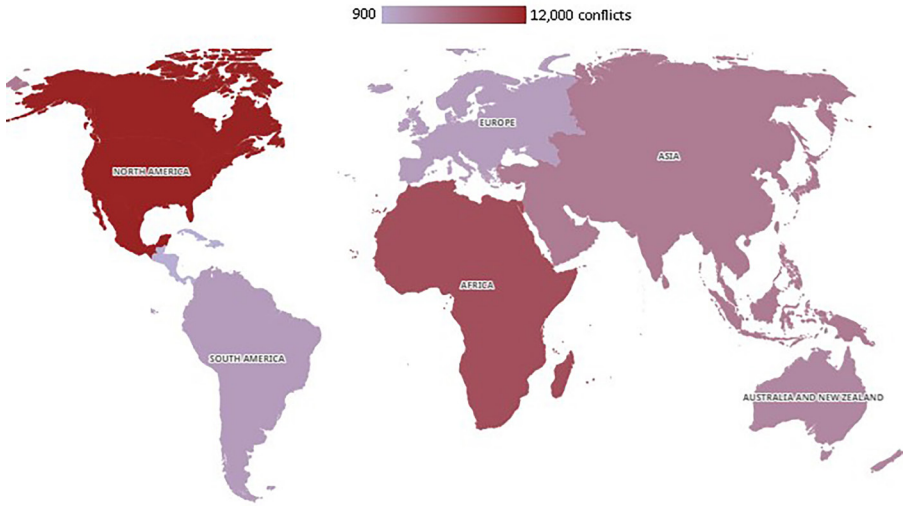

Figure 1. Number of mining conflicts by region (2015 – 2022)
*The map excludes 255 mining conflicts registered in the Pacific islands
Source: taken from Baptista (2025), adapted from Marin & Palazzo (2024).

2. EFFECTIVE AND EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective, equitable, and meaningful community engagement in mining can be defined as community–led engagement that takes place across all phases of mining, from the pre–exploration phase to the post–closure phase. This style of engagement requires companies to invest significant amounts of time, energy and money, and be non–transactional; specifically, communities must be brought in as partners to the development process (Fraser et al., 2019). The approaches and techniques that companies can take to do so have been well–documented, and many helpful resources exist (Natural Resources Canada, 2016).

At a minimum, effective and equitable community engagement requires that companies obtain consent from local communities before undertaking mining activities. In this regard, the United Nations adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007 to recognise and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to strengthen their participation in decisions affecting their lands, territories, and resources (UNGA, 2007). UNDRIP has subsequently been promoted and implemented through various educational, advocacy, and policy initiatives (Davis, 2007; Côté et al., 2025). By affirming rights to self–determination, equality, property, culture, religious freedom, health, and economic well–being (Native American Rights Fund, n.d.), the Declaration has contributed to the broader recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights in mining governance worldwide. These principles require project proponents to consider Indigenous Peoples throughout the planning and development process, ensuring that affected communities receive appropriate recognition, information, and opportunities to participate in decision–making.

Another international legal tool that works in coherence with UNDRIP is Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), also adopted by the United Nations in 2007 as a requirement for companies to obtain consent before executing any project (EarthWorks, 2024). The International Finance Corporation (IFC) requires its clients to obtain FPIC from affected Indigenous Peoples under Performance Standard 7 (International Finance Corporation, 2012), while the World Bank requires FPIC for relevant projects under its Environmental and Social Framework, Environmental and Social Standard 7 (World Bank Group, 2016). FPIC can be defined as consent that is given freely without any coercion, manipulation or bribes, and is obtained before starting any operations, while informing the community of all positive and negative impacts of the project, with full disclosure (regarding all aspects) in a manner that is accessible and understandable to the community. Although these frameworks have the capacity to give power to the community and reduce the power parity that currently exists between mining companies and communities, these frameworks are voluntary and not a part of international law. For example, the United States does not endorse UNDRIP, whereas Sierra Leone requires community consent for the approval of any project in their legislation.

At its core, effective, equitable and meaningful community engagement upholds three core tenets of justice: recognition justice (understanding the historical and

cultural context of the communities affected by mining), distributive justice (ensuring equitable sharing of benefits and costs across communities), and procedural justice (ensuring that the community has a say in the actions that affect them and their lands).

With regard to **recognition justice**, implementing this implies that companies are actively working to understand the cultural and historical context of the communities where they will be mining. Often, mining occurs in locations of historical significance to tribal lands. Two clear examples demonstrate this. The first is the destruction of the Juukan Gorge in Australia in May 2020, a 46,000–year–old Aboriginal historical cultural heritage site destroyed by Rio Tinto in direct opposition to the Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura peoples (Oliveri et al., 2024). The second is the ongoing clash over the potential destruction of Oak Flat, a Native American sacred site in the Tonto National Forest east of Phoenix, Arizona, due to Resolution Copper's proposed mine (Lovett, 2017).

Distributive justice in the setting of mining requires an equitable sharing of benefits and costs. On the benefits side, this implies seeking well–designed and transparent benefit–sharing agreements, developing appropriate mechanisms for tax/royalty funds to flow from central governments back to the community, and investing in the community's long–term economic development. Benefit–sharing agreements are often legally binding contracts between the company and the community, specifying how the company will provide benefits to the community, such as employment, direct payments, infrastructure investments, and so on.

Benefit–sharing agreements can be beneficial for the community, but it will depend on a variety of factors, for example: how the community participates in the creation of the agreement (such as the diversity of community stakeholder participation in the writing of the agreement), the strength of the language in the contract, governance structures within the country allowing for enforceability, and whether the agreement itself is confidential or publicly available. Confidential agreements in particular may be prone to corruption from the community side – for example, corrupt community stakeholders may transact with the company to capture more benefits for themselves. Confidentiality also reduces the ability for communities to hold companies publicly accountable for failure to uphold agreements, particularly when legal options are limited.

When it comes to sharing the costs, this requires cost mitigation – specifically, benefit–sharing agreements can also include impact mitigation agreements, whereby the environmental impacts of the mine are continuously monitored and mitigated through action.

Finally, **procedural justice** requires community members to have a voice in mining actions that affect them, and for companies to take actions that directly speak to this input. By doing so, companies allow communities to have participatory engagement in the mining process. An example of community–led consultation processes that demonstrate participatory engagement upholding procedural justice is in the Chirano mine in Ghana, where Chirano Gold Mine Ltd. held consultation meetings throughout the mining process and initiated conflict resolution when issues emerged surrounding community concerns related to the environmental and social impacts of mining (Devonshire Initiative, 2022).

Broadly speaking, although the mining sector includes institutional pathways for recognising community perspectives – such as environmental impact assessments, benefit–sharing arrangements, certification standards, and financing requirements – recognition through these mechanisms is often partial in practice. Community concerns about land, water, livelihoods, and cultural values are typically translated into technical assessments, legal categories, or performance indicators legible to regulators, firms, and financiers. Such translation can filter or simplify community perspectives, privileging claims that fit existing regulatory and auditing frameworks while marginalising relational, historical, or place–based concerns that resist codification. Consequently, communities may be formally included in consultation or governance processes while power asymmetries and misalignments between institutional definitions of impact and local lived experience persist. Institutional recognition, therefore, should not be equated with full integration or conflict resolution; participatory engagement may coexist with ongoing contestation and limits to institutional accommodation. Acknowledging these constraints clarifies that reforms to mining governance, while necessary, are not sufficient to ensure just and equitable outcomes for affected communities.

In sum, truly providing a space for communities to participate in decision–making processes is challenging for many reasons. There are systemic challenges and issues that communities, companies, and governments face that can block this engagement from moving forward, or that can result in performative engagement that does not truly allow for communities' wants and needs to emerge. In Spiller et al. (2025), these challenges are detailed by stakeholder groups, as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Barriers and Challenges to Community Engagement by Stakeholder

COMPANY	COMMUNITY	GOVERNMENT
• Lack of market incentives to engage with communities. • Engagement extends timelines for development. • Engagement relinquishes control over decisions. • Engagement requires a holistic approach; training and skills are required internally. • Cultural barriers between the community and company hinder engagement. • Local history of environmental damage from mining can erode trust.	• Power imbalances relative to companies reduce their ability to advocate for themselves. Internal power imbalances can also lead to corruption within the community. • Differing objectives within the community can hinder alignment and, in turn, the power of negotiation. • Lack of negotiation training. • Limited funds to pay for technical and legal advice. • Limited technology can hinder the ability of communities to be aware of company decisions.	• Capacity constraints reduce the ability to enforce environmental laws or adequately distribute funds. • Interests in developing mining can undermine community needs. • Lack of transparency. • Corruption within government agencies. • Investor-State Dispute Settlements incentivise decisions against communities.

3. IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT

Despite challenges in stakeholder engagement and coordination at the mine level, hurdles to effective community engagement should be addressed by both the company and the government sooner rather than later to avoid worsening existing relationships. Rushed engagement can result in misunderstandings amongst stakeholders. In addition to worsening grievances and the mistrust of mining companies, it can also lead to long–term consequences such as the reversal of SLO previously granted by the community in the form of mass violence, protests, roadblocks, and other social upheaval (Bose, 2023; Lindt, 2023). Peru's Las Bambas copper mine is an example of how long–standing protests caused existing projects to shut down and forced the declaration of a state of emergency in 2015 (BBC News, 2015; Reuters, 2023).

Because of their history with land ownership, local government, and mining companies, mining communities often have complicated relationships with the mining industry. Large–scale mining has been an established part of the culture in some regions of the world, such as the Salar de Atacama in Chile, and in some places, because mines have provided significant employment to local communities, Indigenous populations may associate extraction with economic opportunity (Carrasco, 2020).

Table 2. Systems-Level Solutions from Spiller et al. (2025)

SOLUTION	DESCRIPTION
Tackling Corruption and Improving Transparency	Targeted towards the government in an effort to improve governance; international solutions such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) play a role here.
Improving Revenue Transfers from Central Government to Local Communities	Ensuring that communities are able to receive the funds that would otherwise be socialised nationally.
Leveraging Multilateral Organisations to Improve Governance	Organisations such as the World Bank could help improve the regulatory power of governments; the Minerals Security Partnership can prioritise engagement; voluntary, multi-stakeholder international standards, such as the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA), can also require community engagement.
Funding R&D and Technological Innovation to Reduce Mining Impacts	Reducing mining impacts goes a long way in improving outcomes for communities.
Eliminating or Improving Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS)	Eliminating pressures on the government to side with companies.
Tracking Information on Conflict and Community Engagement for End-Consumer Transparency	Providing information to consumers of end-products (such as electric vehicles) about whether the minerals in the batteries were sourced ethically can create market signals, aligning incentives.
Preparing Communities to Negotiate on Their Own Behalf	This would provide communities with greater bargaining power to achieve their objectives.

However, historical experience continues to shape community responses. Disputes and large–scale mobilisations can still occur, even in post–conflict contexts following a peace agreement, due to communities' experiences with colonialism, as was the case in the North Cauca region of Colombia (Arbeláez–Ruiz, 2022).

Achieving a just transition to clean energy worldwide requires more than just expecting companies to "do the right thing". Rather, it will be necessary to create an environment in which this type of engagement is supported and can emerge. To that end, in Spiller et al. (2025), based on an extensive literature review, seven systems–level solutions were identified that can help create this environment. Table 2 presents the solutions with a brief description; more information can be found in Spiller et al. (2025).

However, an open question remains as to whether these identified solutions are effective in practice in developing a conducive environment for effective and equitable community engagement, and whether additional approaches are needed. The research conducted in this chapter seeks to answer this question.

4. METHODOLOGY

To better understand whether the identified solutions could be effective in practice, we conducted virtual semi–structured interviews with nine experts from academia, international NGOs, and industry who are working on community engagement in the mining sector. The interviewees were identified through existing contacts and their work on community engagement, and then additional participants were selected using a snowballing method. Information on the interviewees can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Information on Interviewees

INTERVIEWEE CODE	COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE	SECTOR	TRAINING/ BACKGROUND
N1	USA	International NGO focused on mining sustainability	Attorney
N2	Canada	International NGO focused on mining conflict resolution	Sustainability
A1	USA	An academic at a university	Political Science
A2	Canada	An academic at a university	Political Studies
A3	Canada	An academic at a university	Mining Engineering
R1	UK	Research institute	Economics
I1	USA	Industry (Mining)	Retired executive
I2	USA	Industry (Mining)	Engineer
I3	Canada	Industry (Consulting)	Sustainability services

In terms of global coverage, it is clear that our interviewees are heavily skewed toward North American residence; however, their research scope is global. For example, although the two NGO interviewees are based in North America, both organisations operate internationally, and the interviewees have broad expertise in mineral extraction and community engagement across countries worldwide, with a strong focus on the Global South. Similarly, although A1 is located in the USA and R1 in the UK, both academics have roots in South America and have studied issues related to mineral extraction in the region extensively. Although A2 and A3 both reside in Canada, their expertise in community engagement focuses on African countries and on Asian and South American countries, respectively.

Our human subjects research protocol was approved by Colorado School of Mines. The interviews were conducted virtually between September and November 2025 over Zoom. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed using Otterai software. In these virtual conversations, we had five questions, which we tailored depending on whether the individual worked for a mining company or not. We began by asking interviewees to provide examples of positive company–community relationships and to reflect on the factors that contributed to these outcomes. We then explored the seven proposed solutions, presenting each in detail and inviting participants to assess their potential effectiveness, offer critical reflections, and suggest alternative approaches. Finally, we asked interviewees to identify any additional strategies that had not been considered but could also prove useful.

Specifically, for the non–industry interviewees, we asked the following questions:

Q1. Can you share examples of mining projects where the company has successfully built strong, long–term relationships with host communities?

Q2. What specific factors or circumstances contributed to the success of these relationships?

Q3. In our past research, we identified seven systems–level solutions that we hypothesise would support effective and equitable community engagement:

- Tackling corruption and improving transparency
- Improving revenue transfers from central governments to local communities
- Leveraging multilateral organisations to improve governance
- Funding R&D and technological innovation to reduce mining impacts
- Eliminate or improve ISDS (Investor–state dispute settlement)
- Tracking information on conflict and community engagement for end–user transparency
- Prepare communities to negotiate for themselves

Q4. How would you rate those solutions? Are there other systems–level solutions you think would be as or more effective than the ones we have proposed?

Q5. Is there a different way to think about these systems–level solutions than we have identified?

For the industry interviewees, we asked the following:

Q1. How do you view your company's relationship with the local community?

If the answer was positive:

Q2. What tools, approaches, or frameworks have made this relationship successful?

If the answer was negative or not entirely positive:

Q3. What have been the main challenges and barriers to bringing about a positive relationship?

Q4. In our past research, we identified seven systems–level solutions that we hypothesise would support effective and equitable community engagement (see below).

- Tackling corruption and improving transparency;
- Improving revenue transfers from central governments to local communities;
- Leveraging multilateral organisations to improve governance;
- Funding R&D and technological innovation to reduce mining impacts;
- Eliminate or improve ISDS (Investor–state dispute settlement);
- Tracking information on conflict and community engagement for end–user transparency; and
- Prepare communities to negotiate for themselves.

Q5. *For those who responded positively to Q1*

- Have any of these solutions helped in facilitating a positive relationship?
- Do you see a role for companies like yourself in advocating for systems–level changes or affecting mine–level policymaking to support both local communities and consequently the social stability of your long–term projects?

Q6. *For those who responded negatively to Q1*

- Would any of these solutions have helped your company in facilitating a positive relationship?

Q7. How would you rate those solutions? Are there other systems–level solutions you think would be as or more effective than the ones we have proposed?

From these conversations, two new solutions emerged: strengthening protection for human rights defenders and using financing tools as a lever for effective community engagement.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we will discuss each of these (now nine – including the two new ones listed above) systems–level solutions in light of what we learned from our interviews.

5.1 TACKLING CORRUPTION AND IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY

Across the interviews, experts consistently emphasised transparency as a key component of developing systems–level solutions. Many recognised progress made through international initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) (n.d.) and certification programmes and noted that the spread of transnational norms has reshaped expectations for governments, companies, and communities. For instance, EITI member countries saw a roughly 50% increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) between 1990 and 2019 (Dosmaganbetov & Nanovsky, 2025). In some countries, EITI adoption has changed expectations on decentralised governance, revenue allocation, and local oversight. EITI membership and compliance have also been linked to stronger tax revenue mobilisation across multiple tax categories (Kinda, 2025). As one interviewee said,

> *Just something like the EITI [being] in a country sort of changes the accountability culture – International NGO Interviewee N2.*

However, some interviewees[1] stressed that its implementation is uneven, and deeper structural and political–economic dynamics often constrain its effects.

Some interviewees[2] argued that "tackling corruption" and "improving transparency" should be separated conceptually, as these terms are often conflated. Although transparency standards have gained meaningful traction globally, not all countries or companies have adopted them, and their scope remains limited. For example, EITI can strengthen public information and accountability norms, but in situations with weak institutional capacity and low public salaries, it cannot eliminate the fundamental cause of corruption. Actors who intend to engage in corrupt behaviour may still find ways to do so even in a fully transparent system. As one interviewee put it,

> *Transparency can make corruption harder, but it does not eliminate it... if certain actors want to engage in corrupt behaviour, they'll find a way" – Academic Interviewee A2.*

Indeed, Kolstad & Wiig (2025) find that EITI exposure does not improve corporate conduct and may even facilitate greenwashing among companies with histories of misconduct.

One of the interviewees pointed out that the mining sector is particularly prone to corruption because mineral deposits are location–specific (Academic Interviewee A1). Unlike many other industries, mining companies must operate in a jurisdiction where the resource is found. When the governance and regulatory frameworks

[1] Academic Interviewee A1, Research Interviewee R1, International NGO Interviewee N2.

[2] Academic Interviewee A1 and International Academic Interviewee A2.

of that location are weak, the immobility of the resource can increase incentives to resort to corrupt practices in order to resolve regulatory delays or operational challenges to continue extracting the resource. Multiple risk points for corruption are created by the state's control over resources and permitting, and project immobility. Across national, provincial, and community levels, these corruption risk points create opportunities for informal payments or preferential treatment. Once a mining project is operating, corruption pressures may increase, as companies with high sunk costs try to avoid disruptions and delays. Such practices reflect not only individual behaviour but also structural relations between capital investments at the mine and the level of state involvement in ensuring continued legal compliance and reducing community conflicts. Therefore, the political and financial environment can potentially support corrupt practices if systemic and external changes are not made. Such an environment is unlikely to be addressed by anti–corruption measures that only depend on voluntary corporate commitments or disclosure mechanisms such as EITI.

Moreover, one interviewee warned that "transparency" has become conceptually stretched:

> *A lot of people think this is important, which is interesting in and of itself, because mining is very contentious and divisive at all levels and in all and in many ways. So, I actually hit pause when everyone says they agree, because if everyone agrees on what transparency means, they just cannot mean the same thing. It's not meaningful when actors that are otherwise in antagonism with one another all say they want this thing, what transparency means, what it entails – Academic Interviewee A1.*

Governments, companies, communities, and certification bodies frequently invoke the term, but its meaning varies, and the existence of disclosure rules does not guarantee meaningful oversight.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) illustrate this gap as they are meant to provide communities with information and a voice, yet are often technical, inaccessible, and difficult to contest without specialised expertise. Research shows that EIAs can be deeply embedded in unequal power relations, used to justify coercive enforcement and rent extraction (Spiegel, 2017). Existing sustainability frameworks also often overlook key social dimensions such as land use and demographic change (Mancini & Sala, 2018). In addition, project rejections in EIAs are extremely rare. The need for more transparent and stringent decision–making criteria in EIA processes is highlighted by the fact that when rejections do occur, government agencies that review such EIAs often justify their decision on the sensitivity of the location and community values instead of location–specific data which can underrepresent the true nature and context of environmental impacts such as air quality, health impacts, or water pollution for the local community (Fonseca & Gibson, 2021). EIAs may therefore satisfy procedural transparency requirements without facilitating informed participation or substantive accountability.

Another setting in which transparency was important was in relation to benefit–sharing agreements. As noted in the introduction, these are frequently confidential agreements, which can lead to corruption within the community. One interviewee stressed this point, stating that if the agreement is confidential,

> *Community members themselves can't make sure they're getting their fair share if they don't know what's in an agreement, and they don't know who to hold accountable for what – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

Finally, interviewees[3] agreed that while transparency is a necessary tool for tackling corruption, it alone is not sufficient because it runs the risk of becoming disclosure without accountability in the absence of institutional reform. Supplemental requirements should be included, such as improving public sector capacity, strengthening mining and environmental regulators, and addressing structural incentives that influence business–state relations, which are all necessary for long–lasting reform.

5.2 IMPROVING REVENUE TRANSFERS FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Because central governments collect royalties and taxes from mining companies, one of the solutions to achieve distributive justice identified in Spiller et al. (2025) was to ensure that a meaningful portion of these funds is allocated to local communities. Our interviewees agreed that this solution was very important but raised concerns about its feasibility due to a variety of challenges. One of the largest challenges is that central governments often view the collected funds as revenues to be used for broad economic development; thus, reallocating funds back to the mining communities would defeat that purpose. Indeed, one of the interviewees pointed out the challenge that:

> *Revenues are often quite limited. Central governments may have difficulty collecting income or corporate taxes... So, you're looking for other sources of revenue ... the easiest way to gain access to regular flows is in natural resource sectors. If you're asked to divert some of that to local communities, that could be a big ask – Academic Interviewee A2.*

At times, the federal government may believe that allocating investments, rather than direct financing, is the appropriate way to compensate these communities; yet, the central government may not know exactly what the communities need the most:

> *There could be a disjuncture in terms of what local communities need, as perceived by the central government, versus those local communities or the local district government – Academic Interviewee A2.*

Furthermore, a lack of transparency and corruption issues can create even further challenges to sending funds to the community.

> *Whenever there's an economic downturn, and especially, you know, during COVID, the central government generally stops making those transfers, and no one says anything about it, because they don't really know – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

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[3] Academic Interviewee A1, International Academic Interviewee A2, International NGO Interviewee N1, International NGO Interviewee N2.

> *It doesn't work very well... the tax or royalty money goes into the central government, and it doesn't come back out... it stays there, or a little bit comes out. You send... 10% to a regional or state government, and then, hopefully, that gets dispersed within that region or state to the local communities, because it might not, it might stay in the regional capital – Industry Interviewee I1.*

In order to improve outcomes with regard to money flowing back to communities, interviewees were aligned with the need for two things: 1) having an established pathway through which the funds can flow; and 2) ensuring that the communities are ready to manage the funds that come their way.

> *It is much better if you already have some modicum of financial devolution or decentralisation, such that there are already institutional pathways for revenues to flow from the central government to local governments. And then on the flip side, that you already have the participatory institutions at the local level, where community members have a say in project development – Academic Interviewee A1.*

One interviewee (International NGO Interviewee N2) presented an example of where a pathway has been established – specifically, in Guyana, where the existing Low–Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) provides a framework for communities to receive funds from sustainable development activities (Government of Guyana, 2024); 15% of carbon revenues are being directed to Indigenous communities who opt in to the programme, and they are organised to receive these funds through an existing planning mechanism. This provides not just a pathway for the communities to receive the funds, but also creates plans whereby the communities are ready to receive and invest the funds for their future benefit.

On the second point of ensuring that communities are ready to manage the funds that arrive, an interviewee said:

> *How are [communities] spending [funds] and to what ends... it really takes having an organised community, a good structure for understanding what our objectives are... How do we monitor, manage, and report on these funds? How are we investing for future generations? – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

5.3 LEVERAGE MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE

When we spoke with experts about multilateral organisations (MLOs) and their role in improving governance, they highlighted that funding organisations such as the World Bank, USAID, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) can improve outcomes in mining countries through regulations and standards tied to their operations. However, they also highlighted the role that international non–profits and multi–stakeholder international standards, such as IRMA, EITI and (now defunct[4]) The Minerals Security Partnership (a multilateral agreement) can play in creating regulations and standards not tied to funding.

[4] On 4 February 2026, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the creation of the Forum on Resource Geostrategic Engagement as the organisation that will replace the Minerals Security Partnership (U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, 2026).

Separating these two types of international organisations by whether they provided funding or not did seem to matter quite a bit. For example, funding from MLOs is often short–term, which makes it challenging for effective engagement and governance at the mine–level in the long–term. In one interviewee's experience (International Academic Interviewee A2), some communities in Africa and South Asia, especially those with a history of mining, could perceive the top–down nature of MLO funding projects as if they are talking to them in a "heavy–handed way", creating hurdles in establishing long–term engagement effectiveness.

Furthermore, during the neo–liberal era when large funding MLOs went into developing countries and prioritised development, the MLOs were not focused on improving governance locally, as one interviewee describes,

> *Given the reigning economic ideology at the time at the World Bank that governance focus was really not focused enough on state capacity, because the state was still seen as an impediment to development. When we look at the origins of the IMF and the World Bank... they were institutions designed to prevent market failures... during the neoliberal revolution... [they] became institutions that fetishise markets – Academic Interviewee A1.*

This doesn't mean, however, that these funding organisations cannot be changed to focus more on governance. In fact, some interviewees stated that these organisations have helped create a culture of responsibility and accountability, along with translating national and sub–national priorities at the local level. For example, one of the interviewees (International NGO Interviewee N2) mentioned that the World Bank funded US$ 41.1 million in Sierra Leone for the establishment of an accessible land administration system. This system is a core aspect of their National Land Tenure Policy from 2015 (FAO, n.d.), making it valuable funding for the implementation of this policy. Because a lot of conflict in Sierra Leone is about land rights, such multilateral funding can be immensely valuable to increase the effectiveness of community engagement at the local level.

On the other hand, international standards such as IRMA and EITI, and non–profit institutions such as Natural Resources Governance Institute (NRGI) and Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI) were identified by interviewees[5] as international initiatives that work specifically on improving governance – either at the mine site or more broadly across government. An interviewee mentioned that such standards place pressure particularly on larger mining companies, leading to investments for sustainability and community engagement at the mine level (Industry Interviewee I2).

5.4 FUNDING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION TO REDUCE MINING IMPACTS

Our interviewees agreed that this was an important solution to improving outcomes and could pave the way to improved engagement by aligning incentives: innovation can reduce company costs, environmental impacts and safety concerns.

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[5] International NGO Interviewee N2, International Academic Interviewee A2, Industry Interviewee I1, Industry Interviewee I2, and International Researcher Interviewee R1.

> *There's business benefit there, from a safety perspective, and it's also been cost-effective for them too, right, shifting off diesel onto forms of green energy, whether that's hydrogen haul trucks, as Anglo America has implemented in one of its mines in South Africa. I think mining companies are highly motivated to do so. It's sort of doing well by doing good, right? It delivers a social benefit, but it saves them money too – Academic Interviewee A3.*

Universities can play a large role in helping companies push this forward – for example, Colorado School of Mines partnered with Caterpillar to provide hands–on training for students (Colorado School of Mines, 2018). This can help support R&D at the company level. For example, Industry Interviewee I1 described how mining companies work with manufacturers and universities to advance research and development:

> *You have large mining companies working with the large equipment suppliers or manufacturers working with the universities to create an environment where the universities can pose really innovative things and test things at the small scale. You get the equipment manufacturers involved early, so that if there's a change, they can be thinking and planning for how they might be able to incorporate that into their haul trucks or their underground shovels. And then you have the mining companies involved to also understand what's possible.*

The interviewee went on to give an example of how Caterpillar partnered with Rio Tinto to test out new electric vehicles on site in order to reduce the environmental impacts of their vehicles, while also ensuring that these vehicles improved efficiency:

> *We have too much fine particulate matter in the underground mines, because diesel engines are nasty, and when you put filters on them, it reduces efficiency, and they don't last very long, and it takes more maintenance. So, we need vehicles that are able to do really big jobs and emit no or very little particulate matter. So that's the need. And then you have the university and the manufacturers trying to figure out, okay, how do we meet that need in a way that's cost-effective, and that hopefully, then the mining companies will actually spend the money to buy that new equipment when they need to replace equipment. So, it works better when it's a collaborative effort – Industry Interviewee I1.*

5.5 REFORM INVESTOR-STATE DISPUTE SETTLEMENTS (ISDS)

ISDS is an international legal system for foreign investors to resolve claims against hosting governments. In the setting of mining companies, if a country decides to reverse a permit for a company due to the loss of SLO, the company can sue the country in the ISDS system. Generally, the company will win these cases, often resulting in multi–million–dollar settlements against the hosting country.

Though only some of the interviewees were aware of ISDS, those who were aware of it generally considered it to stand in the way of equitable and effective community engagement. One criticised ISDS because communities are unable to go to the ISDS for relief or to argue their case against the company.

> *I don't think highly of investor-state dispute settlement, because communities don't have a direct way to bring a claim. Where can communities go? If this isn't where they go, and it's definitely not, then what are the other avenues? – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

Similarly, another argued that ISDS is problematic due to *regulatory capture and insufficient public capacity and insufficient legal teams on the side of the government – Academic Interviewee A1.*

On the other hand, interviewees also suggested that ISDS does provide some stability for the firms and communities. For example, one academic interviewee said:

> *On the flip side, if [firms] don't have some of these provisions, they feel that they could be unfairly taken to court in a foreign jurisdiction, right? – Academic Interviewee A2.*

Even an NGO interviewee who generally was opposed to ISDS stated that,

> *Once the company's already been given a permit, pulling it later is going to have a negative outcome, and that costs taxpayers' money, and that can exacerbate the negative impact on the community – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

This statement reinforces the need for increased communication between companies, local and central government and communities prior to permitting in order to ensure that communities are not harmed by backtracking.

NGO Interviewee N1 also mentioned that the United Nations is actively trying to reform the ISDS. Indeed, this is a major effort, which has been ongoing since 2017, by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Working Group III (UNCITRAL, 2026). This reform process has focused on identifying systemic concerns within ISDS and developing options to address the regime's legitimacy (Bonnitcha et al., 2023; UNCITRAL, 2026). In particular, the working group identified six core concerns with the ISDS process: costs (ISDS cases are expensive for governments and investors), duration (the proceedings take a long time to resolve), consistency (different tribunals result in unpredictable outcomes), correctness (concerning issues with a limited or uneven review or appeal mechanism, and concern about flawed fact–finding in arbitration), lack of diversity of arbitrators, and arbitrator independence/impartiality (ibid.). For community engagement, these reforms matter because when governments fear expensive, prolonged, and unpredictable arbitration, they may face pressure to keep permits in place or avoid regulatory changes – even in response to community opposition – rather than investing in participatory processes that can surface conflict early and steer projects towards consent–based outcomes.

5.6 TRACKING INFORMATION ON CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR END-CONSUMER TRANSPARENCY

With increasing consumer awareness about the social impacts and conflicted reality of mining for electric vehicles (EVs), a question we posed to our interviewees was: "Would consumer demand for battery traceability, specifically noting the use of conflicted minerals, make it imperative for companies to invest more in effective community engagement?" Overall, experts expressed limited support that this approach would likely make a large difference in consumer choice and company performance, even if some interviewees believed that it was an important piece of information that should be shared.

First, the tracking of the information can be difficult – for example, conditions at a mine change over time, and voluntary certifications and assessments only review or assess the situation at the mine at a specific point in time. And, while some standards, such as IRMA, were seen as reliable, others were not; as one interviewee said:

> *The challenge with these types of systems is a kind of garbage in, garbage out issue – we can make all kinds of information transparent, but the quality of that information and the timeliness of it really matter. So, for example, if we take data from an IRMA audit report, that is going to be information that is based on a third-party assessment, and that's really terrific, but if I'm critiquing that data, it may be based on an audit that was conducted a year ago. So, what does that say about what's happening at that mine site right now? – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

Second, one interviewee felt that it is difficult to accurately identify whether the provision of information actually leads to changes in demand. Rather, they suggested that governments could take a more active approach to reduce demand for products produced unethically:

> *We should leverage government procurement, government enforcement. Within Europe, we wouldn't allow a commodity to be sold that was made with child labour. So, we shouldn't let it be up to the end-user. Oh, your battery was made with child labour. Will you buy it or not? It shouldn't be a legal thing to be sold, right? – Academic Interviewee A1.*

Third, another interviewee even expressed doubt that the car manufacturers or consumers would be willing to pay more for ethically sourced minerals:

> *Most people don't want to pay more. The big car companies... squeeze every last dime out of their suppliers, and they will say they want to be green, but yet they don't want to reward somebody for having conflict-free cobalt, or having low energy emission lithium, or having green copper – Industry Interviewee I1.*

Here's the challenge: if consumers are not willing to pay more for batteries that have ethically–sourced minerals, mining companies will not have the incentive to invest time and energy (which in turn costs money) to ethically engage with the surrounding communities. Instead, they will have the incentive to produce their

minerals as quickly and as cheaply as possible. Certainly, there will still be an incentive to achieve some social license to operate; however, achieving effective and equitable community engagement will not be a fundamental priority for the company because they will be unable to recover their investment in the marketplace. Thus, even if the market is able to track the sourcing of minerals from the mine to the battery, and demonstrate whether the minerals were sourced from a mine that engaged in effective and equitable community engagement, *unless consumers are willing to pay a premium for these batteries, tracking alone will not align incentives for participatory engagement with communities*. Whether consumers are willing to pay, and by how much, is still an open question.

Finally, one interviewee (Academic Interviewee A2) discussed the inherent difficulty of tracking where minerals come from, even if they have the best intentions to purchase from mines which equitably engaged with local communities. The challenge is greatest when artisanal mining exists close to legal mining. In the case of cobalt, the interviewee discussed how specific automakers wanted to ensure that their supply chains were conflict–free, and so they focused on acquiring conflict–free cobalt from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Even when the companies intended to purchase from sustainable sources, cobalt is *often artisanally mined right around the large-scale mining concessions. And then often you'll have trucks from the large-scale mine. Can we come and buy their artisanal production nearby? It's not tracked, and then [the cobalt is] taken on to the large-scale mining concession [and] counted as their production*.

Given the human rights abuses present at artisanal cobalt mines, the challenges of tracking minerals as demonstrated here call into question the ability of auto manufacturers to be able to accurately identify whether or not their minerals come from mines where communities are equitably engaged.

5.7 PREPARE COMMUNITIES TO NEGOTIATE ON THEIR OWN BEHALF

Interviewees agreed that this solution is excellent but often overlooked in practice. In order to participate effectively in EIA processes, corporate social responsibility initiatives, or legally binding agreements such as community benefit agreements (CBAs), community members must be prepared technically, institutionally, and politically. Without such capacity, engagement may become symbolic rather than meaningful. However, a number of interviewees[6] cautioned that there are major barriers for communities to negotiate with mining companies, such as systemic power imbalances, lack of funding, and limited access to legal or technical expertise. For example, EIA documents are often very long and complex, requiring specialised expertise in hydrology, geochemistry, environmental law, and engineering to identify key risks, as Academic Interviewee A1 describes:

[6] Industry Interviewee I2, Academic Interviewee A1, Academic Interviewee A2, Academic Interviewee A3.

> *These [EIAs] are... 500 pages long... really long and really technical... you need an expert to say, 'Whoa, this is not a dry stack tailing space, and this is a wet stack...' ... you need... a really topical expert on hydrology, on the specific techniques that are being used.*

Furthermore, negotiating against teams of lawyers and technical consultants can increase feelings of powerlessness. Similarly, empirical studies in Ghana and Canada have shown that even formal benefit–sharing arrangements often fail to deliver intended outcomes when communities lack institutional capacity or technical knowledge (Kasimba & Lujala, 2022; Szoke–Burke & Werker, 2021; Hitch et al., 2025).

Moreover, an industry interviewee (I2) cautions that community development efforts reflect more of a corporate strategy to maintain a positive image where their operations generate the most value. The interviewee stated that resources allocated to community development and engagement in mining operations were closely tied to the productivity and profitability of individual mines rather than addressing impacts on communities or long–term development.

Some of the interviewees contend that NGOs and MLOs can play an important role in filling these gaps. By facilitating access to expert advice, NGOs can help ensure that community representatives are adequately prepared for meetings. In addition, other interviewees suggest that networking across communities and civil society organisations further improves preparedness, allowing communities to access information and develop strategies.

An interviewee suggested that preparing communities can leverage existing social structures, such as cooperatives, religious groups, or clan networks, and the principles of the UNDRIP (UNGA, 2007) to strengthen the negotiation process and outcomes.

> *Every community has its own leadership and communication structure... it may look like a church... a soccer team... but there's already some type of network, and it's figuring out where that already exists, and we can build on it, instead of creating something new and expecting the community to come... It's discussed in UNDRIP. It's reflected in the IRMA standard as well, this... But really looking at where those mechanisms exist already, and having respect for those and building on those structures that exist is important – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

However, the same interviewee cautioned that internal dynamics, local corruption, or elite capture can undermine negotiation processes and outcomes even when mining companies act responsibly.

Another idea emerging from our conversations is legal reforms, which can further institutionalise community preparedness. Jurisdictions such as Canada legally require mining companies to negotiate an impact benefit agreement – a legal contract between the company and an affected Indigenous community, founded on Indigenous rights and addressing a wide variety of impacts and benefits to the community (Cascadden et al., 2021). Embedding these resources into law ensures predictability, autonomy, and avoids reliance on voluntary contributions from companies (Kasimba & Lujala, 2022). As Academic Interviewee A1 states:

> *We should not just be requiring community benefit agreements (CBAS), whoever is initiating the CBA process, the government, the company, to provide resources for this and in ways that are truly objective and autonomous from the company, but we should pass laws to this effect.*

Overall, preparing communities to negotiate for themselves requires a multi–layered approach: technical capacity–building, legal and financial support. Only through these combined efforts can communities move from symbolic participation to empowered negotiation, addressing the structural inequalities that otherwise constrain their agency in mining development.

5.8 FINANCING TOOLS AS A LEVER FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

During our conversations with experts, a new systems–level solution that emerged was to link community engagement to financing through mechanisms such as sustainability–linked loans (SLLs). While SLLs require companies to meet certain sustainability thresholds or requirements as specified in the loan, and the borrower is measured in terms of the achievement of certain key performance indicators (KPIs) tied to sustainability outcomes (such as greenhouse gas emissions), the idea would be to structure this requirement around community engagement rather than sustainability. In this setting, the terms of the loan would thus be affected by the borrower's KPI. For example, the interest rate may be discounted if the borrower achieves the KPI (Auzepy et al., 2023), which in this case, would be some measure of effective community engagement – an organisation such as IRMA could provide an audit to identify whether the company is achieving appropriate levels of engagement.

Interviewees supported this idea due to the importance of financing in bringing forward new mining projects. This is apparently not new to mining, as Academic Interviewee A3 mentioned that there are already some efforts underway to include sustainability KPIs in mine financing. For example, in 2021, Newmont Corporation, an American gold mining company, implemented a $3 billion sustainability–linked revolving credit facility, meaning that the company faces positive or negative pricing adjustments on drawn balances depending on its performance on certain sustainability measures. However, it is not clear whether participatory community engagement is one of the measures.

Similarly, the International Finance Corporation established the Equator Principles, which are part of a framework for financing sustainability, that have been adopted by 130 global financial institutions. Principles 5 and 6 (out of 10) focus specifically on stakeholder engagement, detailing significant interaction with local communities and stakeholders throughout the mining process and requiring the creation of a grievance mechanism for affected communities and workers.

However, several interviewees showed caution about the use of these types of instruments, noting that enforcement and monitoring can be difficult, and financial institutions will often rely upon voluntary certifications or audits to ensure compliance with sustainability KPIs. As mentioned earlier, certifications can be problematic, given the

fluid and often changing nature of community relationship building and maintenance over time. With third–party auditing, the mine company can box check without ensuring sustained participatory engagement. Indeed, banks have been accused of using the Equator Principles to greenwash operations in developing countries (BankTrack, 2005), and the effectiveness of the programme remains an open question (Schepers, 2011; Weber & Acheta, 2014). For example, one interviewee stated:

> *The Equator Principles reflect the IFC performance standards to a broader set of financial institutions, and that's really important. But... community engagement is an ongoing process. Is it being done in an ongoing way? Are the procedures and mechanisms in place? What evidence [is there] of that? How can we do spot checks to ensure it's ongoing? – International NGO Interviewee N1.*

From a systems perspective, the voluntary nature of the Equator Principles limits its effectiveness (Scholtens & Dam, 2007; Weber, 2017), suggesting a role for broader policy to require these arrangements. For example, the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2024), an EU–wide policy aimed at improving the sustainability of EU supply chains, originally included financial institutions in the regulated companies, which likely would have led to much wider adoption of these types of instruments; however, an Omnibus bill proposed in 2025 exempted financial institutions (Linklaters, 2025).

One interviewee (Academic Interviewee A1) suggested extending the focus of financing from banks and private project finance to other financial arrangements – including multilateral financing, community benefit agreement financing, and even monetary flows from the central government to local institutions. For example, the interviewee suggested that communities could be involved in participatory budgeting initiatives. Brazil was provided as a strong case study, with participatory budgeting initiatives being implemented in the 1980s at the municipal level: given the locally collected funds from mining, communities would vote on what projects to invest in, providing them with a voice as to how to use the collected funds.

5.9 IMPLEMENTING GREATER PROTECTIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

From our conversations with experts, another solution emerged: implementing greater protections for human rights defenders (HRDs), particularly those who are focused on the connection with the environment. Whistleblowers and HRDs play a key role in exposing bad actors, environmental damages, and failed promises. Their efforts can thus place a significant check on companies that fail to effectively and equitably engage with communities and can help place much–needed pressure on companies to continue to maintain positive and equitable relationships with surrounding communities. However, there has been a significant amount of violence directed towards these individuals. Global Witness (2025) identified 2,157 environmental and land defenders (ELD) killed and 96 disappeared globally between 2012 and 2024, with 374 due to mining and extractive industries (Figure 2). Although ELDs and HRDs are somewhat distinct, Global Witness (Global Witness, 2025) defines ELDs as "a

specific type of human rights defender–individuals or groups of people who act to promote, protect, or strive for the realisation of human rights through peaceful action", thereby aligning this definition with how our interviewees described HRDs. These attacks on HRDs (and ELDs) create an environment of fear of speaking out against mining company actions:

> *There's a lot of violence – anybody that goes against the mining project, for example, is pretty much immediately on some type of blacklist, and the company is very aware of who's against them, who's for them, and... the community development activities... where they investigate the community, it's supposed to reportedly only be for knowing how to invest community development funds, but it's also to get a good idea of who's against them and who's for them, and they very closely track those things – Industry Interviewee I2.*

> *If you don't protect human rights, among those the right to participation and the right to protest, really bad things happen... the most obvious impact is people are assaulted, killed, receive death threats... When you look at the specific cases ... the person that got a death threat literally just went to a meeting... the company tracked them (...) and eventually they were disappeared – Academic Interviewee A1.*[7]

Attacks on HRDs can also be non–violent – specifically, through judicial harassment (such as strategic lawsuits against public participation – SLAPP). According to Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (2025), this is the most frequent type of attack worldwide.

Several interviewees raised the role for grievance mechanisms – including ombudsmen and independent third parties that can receive complaints – and discussed their existence across multilateral organisations. For example, the World Bank has several outlets for HRDs and whistleblowers to express their grievances and concerns. However, these are targeted towards individuals affected solely by World Bank–financed projects, which limits their relevance across mining projects. The 2018 Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, also known as the Escazú Agreement, establishes a requirement for signatories to ensure the safety of HRDs; 18 states have ratified the agreement to date[8] (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018). Whether this agreement has stemmed the attacks on HRDs in adopting countries remains an open research question; e.g., Asaba (2025) finds no evidence of it functioning to reduce attacks on HRDs in Mexico, in part due to a widespread lack of awareness of the Agreement by HRDs and implementation challenges.

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[7] International NGO Interviewee N1, Academic Interviewee A1, Industry Interviewee I3.

[8] Countries marked with an asterisk have signed but not ratified: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil*, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica*, Dominica, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala*, Guyana, Haiti*, Jamaica*, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay*, Peru*, Dominican Republic*, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay. (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, n.d.).

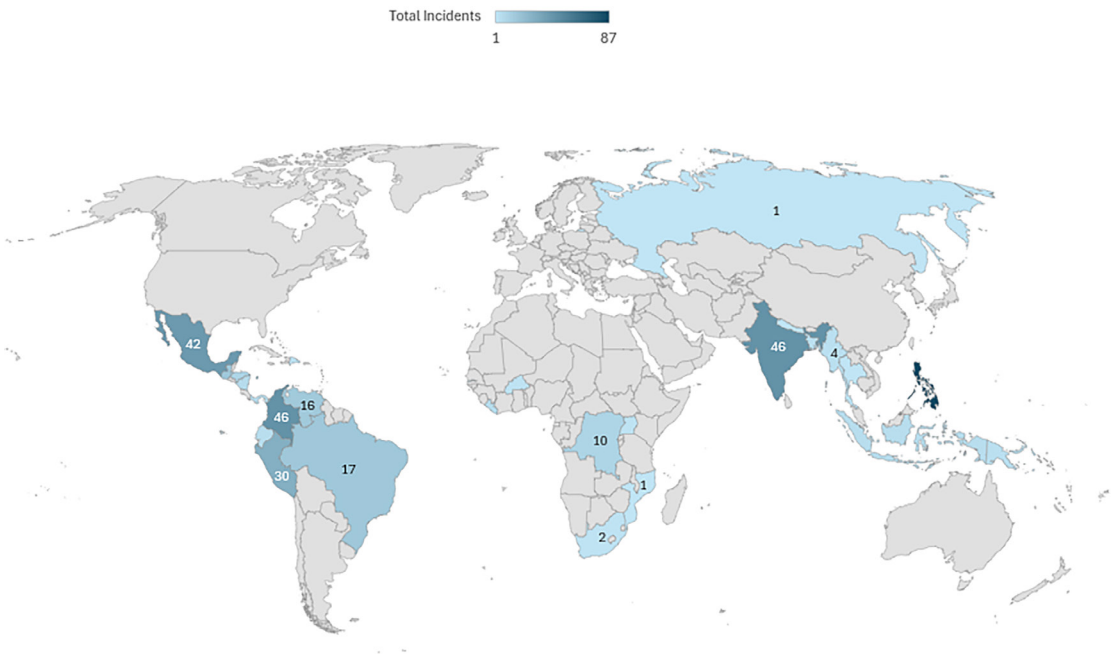

Figure 2. Land and environmental defenders killed or disappeared by country in the mining and extractives sector (2012–2024)
Source: Global Witness, 2025.

6. CONCLUSION

Our conversations with experts stressed the difficulties in achieving participatory engagement with local mining communities, and even systems–level solutions face their own challenges in being effective at achieving this goal. However, through these interviews, some common themes emerged:

- **Transparency** is an essential governance tool at the company, national and international levels. Transparency in corporate operations, ensuring consultation meeting records are publicly available, and keeping agreements with communities public and transparent, can reduce corruption and strengthen accountability. However, transparency alone will not eliminate corruption unless it is accompanied by institutional reforms, such as strengthening public sector capacity and addressing structural incentives that render the mining sector particularly vulnerable to corruption. Moreover, lack of transparency in ISDS decisions also hinders participatory engagement.
- **Funding is essential.** Money is key, not just for companies, but also for communities, and communities need to be ready to invest the money they receive from companies. Money flows need to be tracked from companies to the government and back to communities, and investment funds should be tied to engagement. Funding can help communities prepare to negotiate for themselves, leading

to improved community engagement. Attaching community engagement requirements to financing for mines can also improve outcomes.

- **The role of civil society is large.** NGOs can help communities in advocating for themselves; internationally, these organisations can boost governance, and research organisations can work with mining companies on innovation. Universities can work with companies to improve research and development, leading to reduced environmental impacts at mines and improved outcomes for communities, helping to facilitate positive engagement.
- **Implementation details matter.** Even when solutions exist, companies and governments can still treat them as compliance exercises – producing policies, reports, or one–off consultations that "check the box" without shifting decision–making power, addressing grievances, or sustaining engagement over time. Solutions will require consistent and ongoing enforcement, monitoring and implementation, and education and outreach to relevant stakeholders to ensure intended outcomes are achieved.

Participatory engagement, thus, is not an unreachable goal, but will require coordinated and ongoing action by governments worldwide, international institutions, financing agencies and civil society worldwide.

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