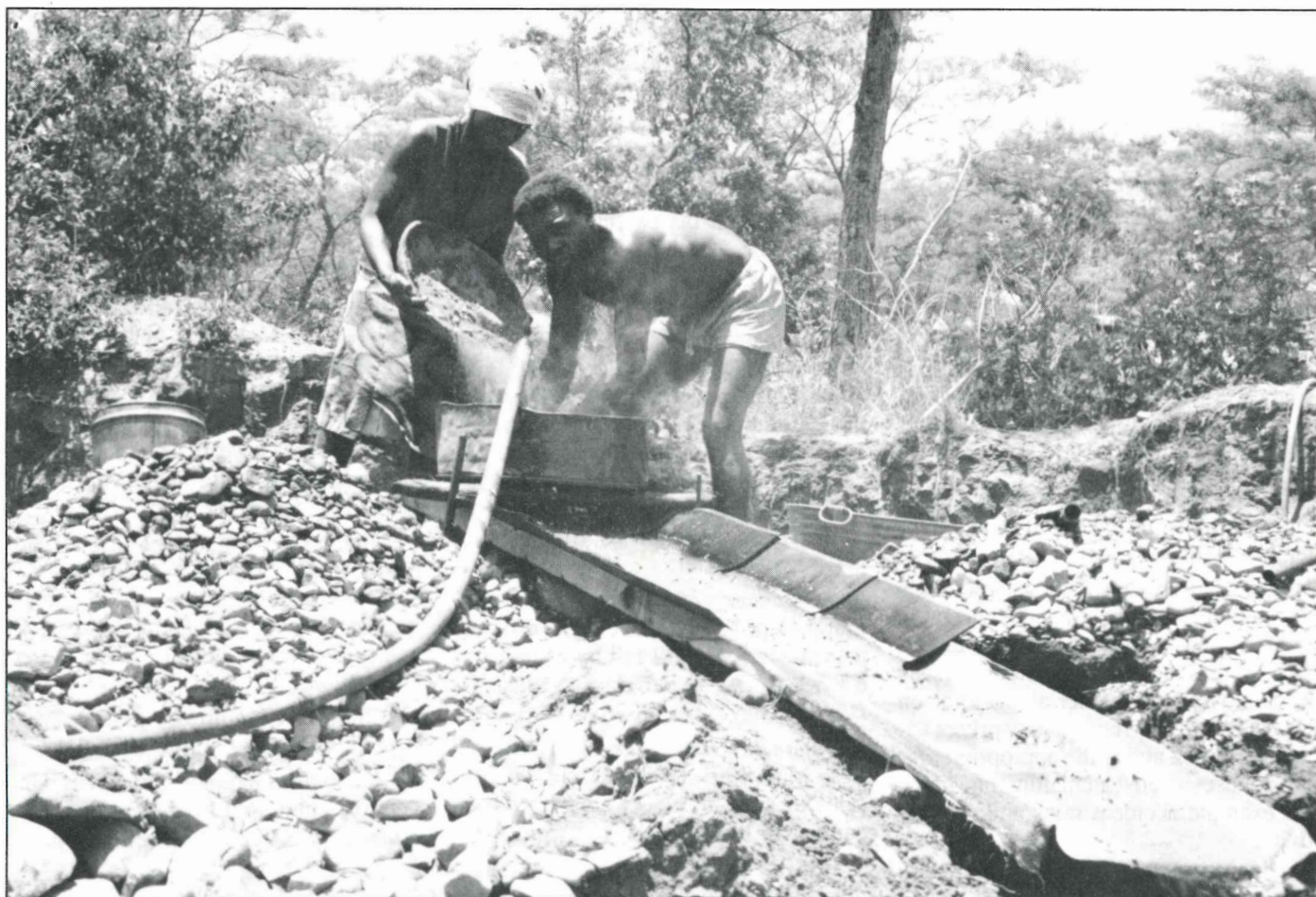


*"A joint venture of husband and wife washing alluvial gold from a sluice box they made themselves. The woman is in full action to supply enough sands to keep up with the supply of water from a hose pipe from a pool of water nearby. This way the couple work between 5 am and noon before they take a rest of the day."*

*Photo from Mazoe River, Zimbabwe, November 1990.*



*Delegates of the SSMAZ from various mining provinces attending their Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 1991.*

*In the front row are invited visitors to the AGM. From left :*

*Mr D Robinson , Secretary - Economic Affairs Chamber of Mines of Zimbabwe;*

*Mr Vera, Regional Metallurgist, Harare Province;*

*Dr Munezvenyu, Chief Government Mining;*

*Mr Magnus Ericsson, The Raw Materials Group, Stockholm, Sweden;*

*Mrs Chiganza of CIDA (Canada);*  
*Professor Voss, University of Zimbabwe.*

*Addressing the meeting is the President of the Association, Mr G E Munyoro.*





# “Mining is business”

By B.A. Mafarachisi

**In many developing countries the lack of local financial resources is a major obstacle to developing a strong mining industry. In this document a leading member of the mining community in Zimbabwe argues that small scale mining can be seen as a natural first step in the development of large mining operations.**

“To many Zimbabweans, mining means different things. Unfortunately, to some, mining is an activity for white people who employ black Zimbabweans.

We envisage huge mines with huge pieces of machinery and conclude that no blackman can afford to purchase or own that size of machinery and operations. We have distanced ourselves from mining for too long. The result is that our children both at home and at school are not taught or influenced to consider mining as a meaningful, attractive and rewarding career. We have yet to awaken to the potential mining has to create healthy incomes for the owners of operations and employees alike.

The benefit of mining is in improvement of standards of living in rural areas where most mineral deposits are found. Lucky enough agriculture is not viewed in the same light. We would be starving if it were. But, we can learn a few things from agriculture to help us appreciate mining in a more positive perspective.

In agriculture we have huge farms or farms that are highly mechanized with huge pieces of machinery. We also have medium and small farms down to the village lots. Irrespective of the size, each is actively engaged in growing fruits, vegetables, crops or animals. It is recognised that in order to survive, farming is taken to be serious business regardless of the size of one's operations.

Even those of us who have awakened to the potential benefits offered by mining, have reservations regarding mining operations from a small mine to a large mine, or from a hand to mouth intermittent operation to a continuously growing operation. Most of small scale miners fail in this category. There is need to grow out of this mould and think big like has been demonstrated in agriculture. Small can and should grow big in size and/or output. Informal mining should be formal like other businesses. Mining is business and should be run that way.

Admittedly, there are many constraints which must be overcome for a mining operation

to be viable. The perennial constraint has been access to capital and machinery. The Government of Zimbabwe has decided to devise ways and means to help remove that hurdle. That throws the challenge back on our laps. We must meet that challenge squarely. We need to view mining seriously as a business that must be run on sound business lines.

Earlier it was mentioned that small scale miners view themselves and their mining activities with reservations. Largely these derive from lack of confidence. This in turn is caused by lack of adequate preparation for that type of business. Our schools and total environment do little to prepare the small scale miner for a mining career or business. Those with some experience, worked in mines as labourers and very few have management experience. Hence the feeling of hesitancy on the part of the small scale miners. The truth is that the duty is on you to identify and acquire the skills and tools required to enable you to conduct a successful mining business. What is called for?

First and foremost you need to be committed wholeheartedly. Mining is a business - a rough business. A high degree of resolve and commitment is essential to succeed. With that, one finds it easier to gather patience and interest to acquire the necessary management tools. Are you committed? Lets assume you are. Then you have patience to gather the needed tools that enable you to carry out functions like planning, budgeting, accounting, management, controlling to name a few.

Your manpower requirements and recruitment, plant layout and mining methods need to be planned carefully with the assistance of technical people. Budgeting allows you to identify the manpower, size of operations, estimated revenue generated, and operations on course. You need to know specific technical information directly related to your mining operation

To get these skills one needs to take courses, read books, magazines and learn

Mr B.A. Mafarachisi is Secretary General of the Small Scale Miners' Association of Zimbabwe. The article was first published as an editorial in *Mining News*, Harare, August 1991.

from those who already have skills. The Small Scale Miners Association conducts seminars, workshop and publishes information through 'Mining News' to inform you. Attend these and those offered by other organization to broaden your technical, financial and operations management skills.

We do not infer that taking these courses will guarantee the success of your business or make you a millionaire. What we can safely say is that you enhance your chances of success tremendously. You still need situational management, acumen and an analytical mind to sense trouble from what you see, hear, feel etc, before the trouble starts. You teach yourself this through experience. Certainly these tools

make you a better manager of your own business. If you have accepted that you are running a business, you are on the correct footing to success. The size of the operation is not a major issue. We want your operations to grow. Remember, most, if not all of the mines we know of in Zimbabwe started as small mines. Today they are large mines. If your mine is run properly it has the potential to be a large mine. Hence, we want you to view yourself as a large mine operator of tomorrow.

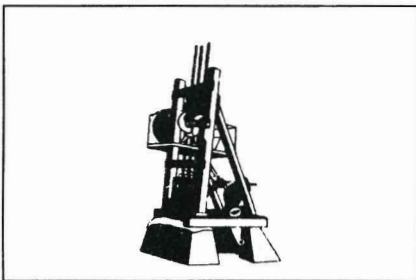
Further, unlike our experience in Zimbabwe, in some countries much mining activity is carried out by small to medium size mines. Their productivity is

high and they employ more people per capital invested than large mines.

So, we want all owners of small scale mines to view their operations as business, and seek help from the Association and the Ministry of Mines to increase their chances of success in their small mining business.

Let us prove to the Government that we, through mining, have the will and capacity to do more than agriculture to promote rural development. Already there are many towns, schools, clinics, roads etc. that have been established in the rural areas as a result of mining. We need to see similar success from our current pool of small scale mines businessmen." ■

## THE SMALL SCALE MINERS' ASSOCIATION OF ZIMBABWE



### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Small Scale Miners Association is non government organisation founded in 1982, (as a voluntary organisation). Its (organisational) structure consists of grassroots chapters. There are eight mining provinces which cover the whole country. Each province has a locally elected executive committee to conduct the affairs of that province. A province can have branches to facilitate reaching the members.

### OBJECTIVES

- To identify problems common to most small scale miners and seek national solutions.
- To aid drop-in miners and would be miners resolve individual mining problems they face.

- To compile and distribute information useful to and of general interest to small scale miners by personal contact, telephone, correspondence and newsletter.
- To inform members of the existing and new laws, rules and regulations as they are from time to time propagated by the Ministry of Mines. Labour and Social Welfare, health etc of the government of Zimbabwe.
- To liaise with Ministry of Mines officials to resolve problems faced by small scale miners.
- To identify minerals in demand and encourage members to concentrate their efforts on such minerals.
- To promote the government policy of rural development via creation of employment opportunities and decentralization of industry in for out-lying areas which is where most mineral deposits are located.
- To promote safety consciousness and pursuance of viable mining and acceptable business practices.
- To provide a medium for interchange of ideas, technology etc.
- To perform information and advisory centre for small scale miners. Members are entitled to be elected to the management committee at the Annual General Meeting.

### ACTIVITIES

SSMAZ's activities can be summarised in a range of services rendered to small scale miners.

### 1. Workshops

Aided seminars are held which focus on global picture in giving information on mining background, pegging, prospecting and safety. Most of the resource persons are from the Ministry of Mines and right now these are sponsored by Intermediate Technology Development Group.

### 2. Technical seminars

The technical training is conducted by the Midlands Gold Project sponsored by the British Geological Survey.

### NEWSLETTER

Liaison between Small Scale Miners and the government via Ministry Mines.

*International:* ITDG, SADCC, EEC, GTZ etc

*Public Relations:* Radio, Newsletters, Press  
*Projects:* eg, Shamva Mine concept Development and implementation.

### MEMBERSHIP

Members receive SSMAZ Newsletters  
Membership is by a registration contribution of \$10 and annual membership subscription of \$5-00. Membership is renewed every 2 years.

Membership application forms are available from SSMAZ offices on request.

Postal address:  
SSMAZ, PO Box 4380  
Harare, ZIMBABWE.

*A participant at the registration table for a meeting with the Association of Women in Mining, Harare, September 1990. The Association has 160 women in mining as members.*

*A woman in mining, Miss Clarah Farai at her new mine, The Dip Mine. She is showing the President of SSMAZ, Mr G E Munyoro, the ore from the mine shaft ready for transport to the milling plant at the Shawa mining and services centre. The ore observed in this picture is about 60 tons worked in 10 days from a one meter wide reef. It has some free gold which can be seen from a naked eye. The Dip Mine presently employs twelve people. (Below).*

