

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations emerged through a participatory and grounded process that brought together insights from the affected community, local CBO and NGO organisers, and partner organisations working in critical mineral-affected regions of Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and the DRC. Each recommendation reflects not only policy analysis but the lived realities, resistance strategies, and demands voiced by community members in Buhera, Ulanga, and Ruashi. Together, they outline a pathway toward a people-centred and justice-driven approach to the energy transition; one grounded in the principles of sovereignty, consent, and accountability.

1) Alternatives to extraction must be brought into the centre of policy debates.

The focus on mining as the default pathway for energy transition ignores the potential of recycling, reuse, and demand reduction strategies that could reduce the pressure on new mineral frontiers. G20 countries, as the primary consumers of these minerals, bear responsibility for investing in circular economy strategies and reducing the externalisation of environmental costs to African communities.

2) The G20 should reframe its priorities on critical minerals to centre community rights rather than supply security.

This means explicitly recognising the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) in all mineral governance frameworks, and ensuring that this right is enforceable in practice. FPIC cannot be reduced to one-off consultations; it must allow communities the power to say no, to negotiate terms, and to shape the trajectory of development on their land.

3) Development finance institutions and international corporations that support critical mineral projects must be held accountable to human rights and environmental standards.

Independent monitoring mechanisms, with direct input from affected communities, should be a condition of any financing. Grievance mechanisms must be accessible, transparent, and capable of delivering remedy, not only in financial terms, but also through restoration of land, health, and cultural heritage.

4) Benefit-sharing frameworks need to move beyond token compensation towards structural redistribution.

This includes community development agreements that are legally binding and co-designed with local residents, as well as revenue-sharing schemes that ensure a proportion of royalties are reinvested in public services such as health care, education, and climate resilience at the local, not only national level. Crucially, benefits must extend to women, youth, and marginalised groups whose voices are often excluded. Accountability of these benefits is central.

5) African states and regional bodies should be supported in developing policies that protect sovereignty and prevent a race to the bottom in mineral governance.

Rather than competing for foreign investment by lowering standards, governments should collaborate on African regional and Global South frameworks that uphold rights, environmental integrity, and long-term development goals.

The experiences of Buhera, Ulanga, and Ruashi demonstrate that communities are not passive victims of extraction but **active shapers of alternative futures**.

Their struggles and demands provide the **moral compass for what a truly just energy transition could look like**, one that values land, culture, and dignity as much as lithium, cobalt, or graphite.

The G20 and its partners face a choice: to reproduce extractivism under a green banner, or to **stand with communities in building development pathways that are equitable, accountable, and genuinely transformative**.

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