



A guide for organizations

SUPPORTING MINING-AFFECTED
COMMUNITIES

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR
MINING-AFFECTED
COMMUNITIES

2026

About this guide

This guide provides practical tools, strategies, and advice for organizations that support mining-affected communities. It is designed to help organizations navigate their role in connecting communities with independent experts from the Find An Independent Mining Expert (FAIME) database. This guide is designed for:

- Organizations interested in accessing the FAIME database to support mining-affected communities; and
- Current partners of FAIME



About FAIME

The Find An Independent Mining Expert (FAIME) is a secure online database of global experts available to provide services to Indigenous and other communities affected by mining. FAIME lists experts that offer diverse skill sets and facilitates contact between experts and the communities or organizations seeking expertise.

The database increases access to scientific, socio-economic, and technical services to assist communities in addressing issues arising from new and existing mining projects affecting their territories and well-being. The services rendered by FAIME experts can aid in the prevention and mitigation of negative environmental, social and economic impacts of mining.



The database benefits mining-affected communities by:

1

Facilitating timely access to independent, qualified, credible, and trustworthy experts for mining-related challenges

2

Supporting Indigenous Peoples' self-determination and enhancing community-led decision-making processes

3

Helping public interest organizations advance their missions by providing equal access to expertise, levelling the playing field between communities and mining companies

How FAIME Supports Organizations and Communities

FAIME helps organizations connect communities with trusted experts who can provide vital technical insights, guidance, and solutions. By acting as a bridge, your organization can facilitate successful collaborations between communities and experts such as:

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS

These professionals specialize in ecological studies, environmental impact assessments, and sustainability practices. They can help assess how projects affect your local environment and advise on mitigating negative effects and enhancing environmental conservation.

SOCIAL SCIENCE EXPERTS

Specialists in social sciences, such as human geographers, sociologists or anthropologists, examine the social dynamics and cultural impacts of projects. They can help understand community changes, social impacts, and work towards culturally relevant solutions.

ECONOMICS EXPERTS

These professionals specialize in economic analysis and financial planning. They can assess the economic viability of projects, assess the economic impacts of past or present mining, and help ensure fair economic benefits for communities.

TECHNICAL EXPERTS

Engineers, technologists, and other technical professionals provide specific knowledge on the design or engineering of a project, on its infrastructure, and suggest revisions to the design of the mining infrastructure. They ensure that the technical aspects of a project are feasible, safe, and efficient. A technical expert could analyze the structural integrity of proposed mining facilities near your community, ensuring that all constructions meet safety regulations to prevent accidents.



Accessing the FAIME database

Access to information on experts is exclusively available to FAIME staff members and national and international public-interest organizations that have signed the Collaborative Operational Agreement (COA) and have joined the project as partners.

FAIME collaborates with values-aligned organizations that support mining-affected communities across the globe. To apply to partner with FAIME, an organization must represent one or more global regions and provide direct support to mining-affected communities. If your organization is interested in accessing the FAIME database in order to support mining-affected communities, you will need to:

BECOME A FAIME PARTNER

FAIME partners uphold and support FAIME's mission, vision and values. Learn about becoming a FAIME partner at www.faime.org/become-a-faime-partner



Your Role as an Organization

Your organization acts as a bridge between mining-affected communities and experts listed in the FAIME database. Facilitating the connection between communities and experts often includes:

- **Assessing Community Needs:**

Work with the community to understand the challenges they face and the types of expertise they require.

- **Identifying Experts:** Use the FAIME database to find experts whose skills match the community's needs. You can search based on specific areas of expertise, such as environmental assessments, hydrology, or public health.

- **Presenting Options to the Community:** Present potential experts to the community along with details about their background, qualifications, and experience.

- **Facilitating Communication:** Engage

the expert(s) selected by the community and assess their interest in the project at hand, unless otherwise arranged. Once interest has been established, connect the expert directly with the community. Depending on the situation, your organization may no longer be required to manage communication between parties beyond this point.

- **Miscellaneous Support:** This may include supporting a community in completing a Request for Expertise form via the FAIME website or, for communities who experience barriers to technology, helping them to access or navigate certain types of technology that facilitate the connection between them and a FAIME expert.



Effectively Connecting Experts and Communities

To effectively connect experts with communities, organizations should consider several key factors when searching the database (or working with FAIME staff to search the database):

1

Community Needs

What specific challenges is the community facing (e.g., environmental, health, social, economic)?

2

Relevant Experience

Does the expert have the right field of expertise for the community's needs?

Has the expert worked with Indigenous or mining-affected communities before?

3

Extent of Expertise

Would the project benefit from involving multiple experts with different specialties?

4

Cultural Sensitivity

Does the expert understand or have experience working with communities with diverse cultural practices?

5

Community Preferences

Has the community provided feedback on the type of expert they feel would best support their needs? Does the expert align with this feedback?
Would it be beneficial to provide the community with multiple expert options to choose from?

6

Availability

Is the expert available within the community's timeline, especially if the issue is urgent?

7

Budget and Pro Bono Services

What are the expert's fees, and do they fit within the community's budget?

Is the expert willing to offer pro bono services, if needed?

8

Long-Term Commitment

Does the project require a one-time consultation, or will it need ongoing expert involvement?

Is the expert interested in building a long-term partnership with the community if needed?

9

Transparency and Trust

Has the expert disclosed any potential conflicts of interest, such as affiliations with mining companies?

Are there reviews or feedback from other communities or organizations about the expert's past work?

What Experts Can and Cannot Do

When facilitating expert engagements, it's important to understand the scope of the expert's role:

EXPERTS CAN:	EXPERTS CANNOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide specialized knowledge based on their field of expertise.• Help identify potential risks and benefits related to a mining project.• Offer solutions or alternative approaches based on best practices.• Simplify and explain complex technical, environmental, and legal issues to the community.• Serve as mediators in discussions with governments or corporations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make decisions for the community. Experts provide recommendations, but it is the community that must make final decisions.• Represent the community without full community engagement and permission. Any meeting with external parties should include community representation.• Provide expertise outside their field. Ensure that the right type of expert is chosen for each challenge.



Photo credit: Inter-American Association for the Defense of the Environment (AIDA)

Learn more

Additional resources and information can be found on the FAIME website at www.faime.org/resources.

The FAIME staff team is always there to support you in completing any of these steps and to help you navigate the database. If you are unsure about how to search for an expert or are struggling to have the capacity to connect a community to an expert, simply reach out to info@faime.org and a team member will assist you.



Email Address

info@faime.org



Website

www.faime.org/resources