

# Remember the Land: Global Ecumenical Voices on Mining

## COMMUNITY MAPPING ACTIVITY

The Community Mapping Activity is designed to help you better understand the impacts of resource extraction on communities such as those highlighted in the KAIROS video **Remember the Land**. You can use it in a number of ways:

- As a stand-alone activity with the video
- As part of a video screening with the discussion process highlighted in the video's study guide
- As an additional activity with the KAIROS "Find Your Voice" workshop on Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

In this activity, participants will "map" their communities and then simulate the impact of resource extraction being imposed there. Since it is designed for mixed groups in which not all participants are from the same community, participants will be drawing individual maps focused on their real home communities. If you are working with a group in which everyone shares a common attachment to a home community, making maps in groups of four may be better.

If the number of participants is very large, ask people to group together by home community, in groups no larger than five.

**Time required: 1 hour**

**This activity will help you to:**

- Understand the potential community impacts of resource extraction
- Identify with communities facing resource extraction struggles
- Understand the communication difficulties faced by such communities
- Better understand the connections between ecological justice and Indigenous Rights

**You will need:**

- Sheet of light-coloured heavy paper for every participant (larger is better)
- Markers (many colours, with a black marker per group held in reserve)
- 2 additional black markers
- A pair of scissors
- Tape

**Preparation:**

- Outline a shape in black marker on one side of half the sheets of paper – some can be circles and others can be irregular shapes. All that matters is that, when cut, the shapes will leave large holes.
- Print the information on p. 6 on 3 role play cards.
- Review the script below so that you are familiar with what you will be saying and doing as the facilitator.



## ACTIVITY SCRIPT

*Welcome participants and divide them into groups if you are doing group community maps. Pass out the paper and coloured markers*

**Facilitator:** We're going to take a few minutes to map out the community each of us identifies most deeply as home. Think about it for a few moments. What do we value about our home communities? What are the things without which they would not be the same?

*Wait a few moments*

**Facilitator:** Everyone has a piece of paper for this exercise. It's important to only use the side of it without markings for this part of the exercise.

Take the paper and markers and map out your home community – draw those things you value about your community, as well as any important landmarks or features that would help others recognize it. If there is a body of water, or a mountain, be sure to include that.

*Pause*

**Facilitator:** Now, if you have not already done so, draw the places you rely on for food in your community – maybe a market, a grocery store, a garden, a farm.

*Pause*

**Facilitator:** Now, if you have not yet done so, draw the places you work and spend your time.

*Pause*

**Facilitator:** Now, if you have not already done so, draw the sacred spaces in your community – where do you worship? Where do you find the sacred?

*Pause*

**Facilitator:** Now, if you have not done so, please add any places of historic or past importance to the community.

*Pause*

**Facilitator:** Finally, if you have not yet done so, please add some of the people who live in your community.

*If the group is small enough (under 20), ask each participant to share some of the features of their map.*



**Facilitator:** We have some beautiful communities represented here; thank you for sharing them. We all know that to make our communities run, we need an economy. And to fuel that economy, we need some jobs. Can I have three volunteers who would like a job?

*Pass out black markers to two participants, and a pair of scissors to one participant.*

**Facilitator:** Thank you. And we also know, of course, that to run an economy we need some stuff. That stuff has to be made out of something, and a lot of the something that we make stuff out of comes out of the ground – the metals in our cars and bikes, the materials in many of our electrical components, the precious jewelry we like to wear.

*(Addressing volunteers:)* With your help, we'll find some of those resources to make our stuff with.

*Hand out role play cards to each of the volunteers; give them a moment to read the cards.*

**Facilitator:** Our three volunteers are representatives of different parts of the resource extraction industry. They'll help us get the stuff.

**Volunteer #1,** you'll need to help us pick where to start. If everyone can please turn over your maps, some of you have a circle or other shape outlined in black underneath. **Volunteer #1,** these are places where your company has secured a mineral lease with the government in this country. Please pick three for us to mine.

*Volunteer #1 picks three maps*

**Facilitator:** Great. Now those of you whose maps have been chosen, please take a look on the other side. Are there things you would value about your community that are threatened by the proposed mine?

*Give participants a few moments to share what is threatened.*

**Facilitator:** And with a show of hands, how many of you would try to stop whatever threatened these things in your community?

*Participants raise hands.*

**Facilitator:** And this is what we see in many mining-affected communities – when outside companies threaten communities and ways of life, many people choose to protest.

But this protest often comes at a terrible price for communities. In many places around the world where there is intense resource extraction, there is also intimidation and violence. People and human rights and environmental rights organizations have been silenced, threatened, and sometimes killed or, in the case of organizations, shut down.



**Volunteer #2, your job is on the line. Either secure these sites for our mine, or we'll find someone else who can. Please use your marker to cross out a few people and buildings in each of the communities where people raised their hands, indicating that they have in some way been silenced.**

*Volunteer #2 crosses out some people and buildings.*

**Facilitator:** Anyone still interested in protesting? Good. But I want to assure you that we have heard your concerns, and we're also aware of our obligations to do an environmental assessment. In fact, we have an environmental review scheduled in just a few moments. I'll hear testimony about how the planned mine will affect your communities.

*Call the witness forward*

**Facilitator:** Now, I need you to tell me what it is in your communities that will be affected by the mine. While I am glad to be able to visit you here in your community, regretfully the schedule of these proceedings does not permit me to physically visit the whole of the area. If you've brought your drawing to the front you may consult it, but in order to save time please do not show it to me.

*Select a participant to go first*

**Facilitator:** Please tell me the nature of your concerns.

*Have each group spokesperson testify. Do not give the appearance of great interest in their stories. Interrupt them for clarifications of spelling.*

**Facilitator:** Alright, thank you for participating in this consultation. We will do everything we can to ameliorate any environmental damage from the mine. You may return to your community.

**Okay, now that we're done with that review, it's time to get those resources! Volunteer #3, please take your scissors and remove the portion of each map that is marked on the back.**

*Volunteer #3 cuts out the areas on the maps.*

**Facilitator:** Thank you. Of course, as with open pit mining around the world, only a very small portion of the earth we removed is actually the mineral that we're looking for.

*Rip the removed portions into quarters, then tear a pea-sized piece of each off and hand it to Volunteer #1.*



**Facilitator:** The rest of the upturned soil and rock may be left nearby, often in huge piles. There's also huge volumes of water removed from the pit, some used in the mining processes, some accumulated through rainfall. This water, along with the soil removed, includes some substances found below the surface that can be harmful to people – like lead, mercury, arsenic, and cyanide. During the mining operations, this water is placed in huge artificial reservoirs called tailings ponds.

*Give the torn quarters of the removed map areas back to the volunteers, along with some tape.*

**Facilitator:** To represent this mine waste, please use your black markers to colour in these pieces and tape them back onto the communities they came from.

**And in closing, I'd just like to say that I'm very pleased we could have this consultation before we move forward on this project that will be a great benefit to the community.**

*Let the group pause for a few moments before gathering together to reflect on the process.*

## PROCESS FOR GROUP REFLECTION

Facilitate a discussion around the process that just took place. You might begin with the following questions:

- How did that feel? What was it like to be told a mine will displace your community? What was your reaction as we cut through your drawing? What if that had happened in your actual community?
- How did the nature of the process shape what you were able to say about the effects in your community? Did you feel like you were able to communicate your point?
- Who set the terms for the consultation? Who had the power in the interaction? Is that as it should be?
- Those who volunteered to play employees of the mining company – what were the pressures at play on your characters? How realistic do you feel that they were?
- Those who were invited to the consultation: did you feel that your efforts to consult made a difference? What could change that?

Note that while this exercise was obviously fictional, this activity reflects some of the very real situations faced by communities that are near significant mineral deposits. Many of these are indigenous communities with deep and varied connections to the land that they live on. This is part of the reason why, according to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous peoples have the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent before resource extraction and other development projects proceed on their territories. Now ask the following questions:



- Look again at your community maps. Imagine that these places you've drawn, these important aspects of your community, go back not just through your own lifetime, but through many generations. What would be your reaction if they were threatened in this way?
- Look at the places you drew where you get food in your community – what would you do if an oil spill removed them from your use for years, or decades?
- Look at the places you drew which are sacred. What compensation could there be for their destruction?

Wrap up the activity by brainstorming some actions that you can undertake for mining justice, and making a clear plan to follow through. For up-to-date information on mining struggles, check the KAIROS website: [www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org)

## TEXT FOR ROLE PLAY CARDS

### Volunteer 1

You've been hired to manage mining operations by a major publicly traded mining company – congratulations! This is a big step in your career, and doing well here could mean even bigger roles down the road. The company's under a lot of pressure from shareholders to perform, though, and it's been made very clear to you that output needs to be higher, and fast, or someone else will be found who can make it happen.

You're pretty new to this country, and some of the local customs still don't make a lot of sense to you. You've also seen reports in the news about how dangerous it can be here.



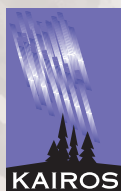
### Volunteer 2

A foreign company has hired you to make sure things run smoothly at their mines in your area. This job pays a lot more than you've been able to make doing other work, and makes a big difference for you and your family. There's a lot of other people who would do the work, though, so you've got to show you can deliver results. You just can't understand how some people can't see things the way you do – this mine is the only way to get a leg up around here.



### Volunteer 3

Times are tough in your community, so you've taken a job far from home in a major new mine. The pay is better than anything you could find at home, so you'll try to hold this job as long as you can.



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