

# THE GOLD WITHIN

## How FADev Brought Responsible Mining to the Heart of Geita

On a sunlit morning in September 2025, the gates at the Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan Grounds opened to a wave of visitors. Miners, entrepreneurs, investors, students, media workers, and curious families poured into the 8th Geita Mining Technology Exhibition. They came searching for opportunity, tools, and solutions. In the middle of this industrial parade, one booth refused to sell a product.

It was selling something less tangible, and far more transformative.

### A Different Kind of Exhibit

The Foundation for ASM Development (FADev) did not arrive with heavy equipment or glossy corporate banners. Instead, its display table carried something unexpected: plain brochures explaining mercury's invisible dangers, a policy paper written in language miners understood, and a small metal device that changed everything.

The retort sat quietly on the table. Not glamorous. Not loud. But when ignited, it became the most powerful attraction in the booth. Visitors stood transfixed as FADev staff showed how it burned amalgam without poisoning the air. Small curls of mercury vapour—usually released straight into miners' lungs, kitchens, and children's bedrooms—were trapped, condensed, and reclaimed.



*FADev had come to Geita with knowledge. And knowledge, it turned out, was its rarest commodity.*



## Responsible Mining

# The Power of Peer Wisdom

*Knowledge, not equipment, became FADev's loudest product.*

FADev did not rely solely on staff experts. The organisation brought a ten-member delegation of its Training of Trainers (ToT)—miners from Mgusu and Nyarugusu who speak the language of gold dust, riverbeds and fatigue, not theory.

They stood shoulder to shoulder with visitors, explaining how mercury fumes creep into the lungs, how hidden neurological damage accumulates over years, how a solution as simple as a retort can prevent lifelong illness

They didn't lecture, they related.

*A young visitor asked a ToT member whether toxins stay in the air after burning amalgam.*

***"Smoke doesn't disappear. You just stop seeing it."***

The student's eyes widened. The booth fell silent for a moment.

Key Stats	#
Policy Papers shared	117
FADev TOTs	7F & 3M
Participants	~900

# A Lesson in Law and Reality

On the exhibition's most crowded days, FADev reached another audience: miners who feel alienated by law.

They walked away with 117 policy papers, each one unpacking the misalignment between Tanzania's environmental and mining regulations.

For many, this was their first time seeing policy explained without legal jargon. It didn't speak to investors. It spoke to the man who digs. The woman who processes ore by the river. The student who inherits both risk and opportunity. The paper did not tell them to obey. It told them how to comply. It mapped a path from question to solution

One visitor, visibly relieved, told the team:

***"If the law is this clear, why didn't anyone explain it to us like this before?"***

The FADev booth had a rhythm: conversations, demonstrations, realizations.

Parents asked about mercury in homes.

Older miners asked about cost savings.

Youth asked about the future.

FADev brought no miracle technologies. It brought small, repeatable choices, simple enough for individual miners, scalable enough for entire communities.

Many young people lingered longer than expected. They wanted to know about alternatives: the borax method, safer cyanidation, controlled processing. They weren't asking how to extract more gold. They were asking how to protect themselves while doing it.

# A Sector in Transition

The exhibition drew more than 900 participants.

The exhibition itself was framed by the country's top leadership.

**Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa** stood before the crowd and spoke of growth, investment, resilience.

Days later, on 28<sup>th</sup> **Deputy Prime Minister Doto Biteko** closed the event, citing 43 mineral markets and 109 mineral buying centers, proof that Tanzania's mining sector is expanding in every direction.

## Why This Matters

Mining communities remember the people who speak their language.

FADev's work is rooted in Geita and Shinyanga because miners are not "beneficiaries" they are instructors, pioneers, survivors, parents. They possess knowledge that governments do not, and FADev understands that sustainable change is not something you deliver to communities—it is something you build with them.

The Geita exhibition proved that even in a space dominated by machinery, investors and corporate power, a table with ten trainers and a retort can become the beating heart

