

5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2020

### **CEJ LAUNCHES THREE (3) YEARS PROJECT IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE FOCUSING ON MINING COMMUNITIES AND ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS**

The Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) has launched a 3 years project to be implemented in Sinazongwe District, Southern Province targeting fourteen (14) wards with support from the Bread for the World (BftW) Germany. The Mining Community Voices and Livelihood Preparedness project will contribute to improving the living conditions of the communities. The project will have two components namely; promoting alternative livelihoods in order to guarantee food sufficiency at household level and CSER model implementation with special interest placed on monitoring mining companies' investments in order to genuinely improve people's; livelihoods through the CSER model. The Bread for the World, has been CEJ's partner since 2018 in supporting mining communities in Zambia.

The project which is supported by Bread for the World (BftW) mining community engagement, close to thirteen activities will be implemented which includes; Mult-stakeholder dialogues , community engagements, policy dialogues, development of the District CSER Community development strategy, Traditional leaders dialogue, environmental Protection Dialogues, Community Mining Voices symposiums and development of the CSER App for mining investment monitoring and Community initiatives.

The project is as a result of successful implementation of the Mining Community Voices Pilot Project in Sinazongwe during the period August 2018 - July 2019 has demonstrated that it is possible to foster successful and mutually respectful relationships between Collum Coal Mine (CCM) and the community around the mine using the model of Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility (CSER). The pilot phase indicators by July 2019 was to see that regular co-operation between the women and men from the Sinazongwe community and Collum Coal mine have been established to design, plan, implement, and monitor CSER activities. So far, CEJ has established a co-operation platform called Sinazongwe District Platform on Environment and Extractives (SiDPE). The co-operation platform includes selected district heads of government, the private sector (principally the mining companies), traditional leaders, community members and civil society actors in the district. The platform will strive to strengthen regular community dialogues with the Collum coal mine and government, monitoring of CESR and extractive activities; plan and design community initiatives in relation to development of communities or villages in Sinazongwe district. This will help in ensuring that there is accountability in the exploitation of natural resources by different actors in the district.



Furthermore, CEJ has trained community representatives comprising village headmen, civic leaders, CSO representatives, church leaders, women and youth, who are now able to monitor CSER, identify issues of contention, and negotiate with the Collum Coal Mine owners on what CSER benefits they desire. This has been done through a process of ranking community priorities and signing an investment agreement by which the mine has committed to support the development priorities of the community; and ensuring that women in the Sinazongwe district near the Collum coal mine are supported with start-up capital for business.

CEJ believes that, it is cardinal to continue monitoring the implementation of CSER, enhancing community voices through social accountability platforms in mutually respectful atmosphere. The organisation will leverage on its strong networks with other nationally and in Sinazongwe, such as Centre for Trade and Policy Development, Council of Churches in Zambia and Kaluli Development Foundation.

The organization would like to pay tribute to its partners, the Bread for the World (BftW), for their support to this programme. CEJ believes that the support will change many life's and that it will contribute to the development of the district and create enabling environment for both communities and mining companies.

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