

27TH FEBRUARY, 2020

MINING INDUCED DISPLACEMENTS AND RESETTLEMENT CAN CAUSE MAJOR SOCIAL DISRUPTION AND AFFECTS SOCIA-ECONOMIC CONDITION

The Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) has been working in mining communities since 2010. Between 2011 and 2014, CEJ with support from the Civil society environment fund which then was an environmental fund basket for the Finnish and Danish Government, undertook two evidence based research on "Mining Contract Transparency and Accountability" and "Mining Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility". Furthermore, in continuing to support our mining communities, CEJ is being supported by the Bread for the World (BftW) Germany in amplifying mining community voices and promoting alternative livelihoods. Findings reveal a need for the inclusion and active involvement of landowners in determining the modality for compensation for lost trees and crops, households, access to social amenities, and to formulate legislation that ensures the provision of alternative livelihood options for relocated persons, which would potentially enhance the reconstruction of affected communities.

CEJ, having worked in mining communities and held meetings with local partners working in mining areas such as the Centre for Trade Policy and Development, Oxfam, Council of Churches in Zambia, Caritas, Kaluli Development Foundation , Action Aid, Extractive Industries Transparency Alliance , just to mention few, it is evident that mining-induced displacement and resettlement can cause major social disruption and affect the socioeconomic condition of resettled persons, yet it is an inevitable outcome of incremental mineral exploitation. Mining-induced displacement involves, mostly, the involuntary movement of affected people from their original abode and/or socioeconomic activities. Mining-induced resettlement is the extensive process of planning and implementing the relocation of people, households and communities from one location to another because of mining projects, and all the associated activities such as the provision of compensation, livelihood restoration, and restoring or improving the social condition of the community.

In the case of Zambia, the displacement of affected mining communities has been ongoing since the 1970s. In some cases, projects such as dams, irrigation, oil exploitation, mining etc may involve multiple displacements over time due to incremental land acquisition. There are also instances in which anticipated displacement and resettlement may be foiled due to changes in investment climate or other unforeseen circumstances. Evidence gathered suggests that mining-displacement and resettlement is generally detrimental to host and affected communities as they bear the environmental costs of mining and face unfavourable socioeconomic conditions, often

exacerbated by ineffective livelihood reconstruction programs. The loss of access and utilization of farmland (both in quantity and quality), and other natural resources have considerably affected food security in the resettled areas. Food shortage in their new communities was lack of farmland. While their old villages had enough land for cash crop plantations, sufficient farmland and extensive inland valley swamps with rich soil, abundant water sources such as streams and wells, and diverse vegetation for traditional livelihoods sufficient for everyone; the new villages lack these resources.

CEJ calls on projects to assist displaced people improve their livelihood or at least restore it to pre-displacement levels. However, the extent to which these best practices have contributed to affected communities in Zambia has been seriously questioned. The reliance on generic social safeguards for involuntary displacement while overlooking specific contexts and relationships, and the absence of community participation in the design and execution of plans usually leads to the marginalization of local people's views and interests.

ISSUED BY: MAGGIE M. MWAPE (MS)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT JUSTICE (CEJ)