

Sunday, Mumbwa (16<sup>th</sup> June, 2024)



### **UNREGULATED GOLD MINERS IN MUMBWA'S NANGOMA AREA POCKETING K50M DAILY, LEARNS CEJ**

At least 50 Million Kwacha per day is estimated to be leaving the Nangoma Area of Mumbwa District, Central Province, due to unregulated gold miners.

This revelation came to light during a community symposium in Nangoma, organized by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) under the 'Voices for Climate Justice and Natural Resource Governance' project, with support from the Southern Africa Trust (SAT).

CEJ Head of Research and Studies, Freeman Mubanga, discovered that the area hosts 50 unregulated gold grinding machines, each producing one kilogram of gold worth One Million Kwacha.

He said, cumulatively, this amounts to 50 Million Kwacha per day if the gold is sold on the local black market.

Mr Mubanga emphasized that the gold being sold on the local black market might cost three times more in regulated markets overseas, potentially transforming Nangoma and benefiting the country.

Mr Mubanga further added that Zambia is losing out on huge revenues due to untaxed gold.

"The amount of gold leaving Zambia due to unregulated mining is adding to the growing illicit financial flows in the Extractive industries," he asserted.

He said the Constitution of Zambia, under Article 255 (Amendment Act of 2016), enshrines the protection of the environment, including natural resources like gold.

Mr Mubanga said the Constitution recognizes that the resources hold environmental, economic, social, and cultural value.

"One of the constitutional principles stipulates that the person responsible for polluting or degrading the environment must pay for the damage caused. However, unregulated gold

miners evade this responsibility, leaving the burden on the government to rectify the damage, as they do not contribute to the Environmental Protection Fund as required by law. The Constitution also criminalizes deliberate damage to the environment. Furthermore, Article 256 emphasizes that a lack of scientific certainty should not hinder the implementation of effective measures," he said.

Mr Mubanga highlighted that cooperation with state organs is essential to maintaining a clean, safe, and healthy environment.

The CEJ Head of Research and Studies emphasized that existing laws ensure ecological, sustainable development and responsible use of natural resources.

"However, the gold mines in Nangoma reveal disturbing scenes, where people face harassment and even death due to the lack of proper regulation as stipulated by law," he said.

Mr. Mubanga highlighted the prevalence of environmental legacies in Kabwe District, where dangerous minerals pose challenges to citizens.

At the same event, Senior Headman Kaliindi commended CEJ for their sensitization efforts on environmental, land, and human rights.

He also pointed out that some individuals, masquerading as investors, collect large quantities of gold under the guise of exploration samples but never return to the area.

Meanwhile, Head Woman Kapapa of Nangoma stressed the need for further sensitization, especially since mining is a new phenomenon in the area.

Issued By: CEJ Communications Unit

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