Wednesday, Lufwanyama (6th August 2025)

EARTHWORKS PROJECT BUILDS ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS IN LUFWANYAMA

Three NGOs have launched community trainings to build climate-resilient communities in Lufwanyama District, Copperbelt Province, funded by Earthworks and Environmental Defenders.

The Project—implemented by CEJ, Future-Preneurs Zambia, and Care for Nature—aims to raise awareness, gather evidence, and advocate for environmental justice in pollution-affected communities along the Kafue and Lufubu Rivers.

Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) Executive Director Maggie Mapalo Mwape has urged women in Lufwanyama's Mukumbo, Kapata, and Kankonde areas to take advantage of the Project as it is a tool for women's empowerment.

Mwape has emphasised the critical role of women in households and environmental stewardship.

She noted that traditionally, women are expected to wait for men to provide.

She, however, said the current project aims to elevate and empower women to take initiative and share responsibility.

Mwape said under the initiative, several issues will be addressed which include the right to a safe environment and understanding one's rights regarding natural resources like water, trees, and land.

She warned that some individuals misuse natural resources and engage in nature-based crimes.

Mwape stressed the importance of protecting the environment—especially trees.

She stated that those who destroy environmental assets or forge documents related to land and natural resources must be held accountable, as this amounts to environmental crime.

Mwape urged communities to pay closer attention to the natural blessings they've received and to protect them with care.

The CEJ Executive Director said the project intends to encourage community participation in identifying environmental challenges that include water pollution caused by mining and understanding how this impacts agriculture and livelihoods.

Mwape encouraged people to share openly about farming practices, income use, and water concerns.

She added that these insights will help CEJ and other stakeholders find solutions together.

Mwape revealed plans for a meeting focused on socio-economic empowerment and affirmed CEJ's commitment to collaborating with communities.

She stated that the organisation aims not just to lead but to learn together.

Mwape said the project aims to generate a positive impact in a short period and will also foster long-term renewal and care for nature.

This came to light when the project team, accompanied by Lufwanyama Council officials, held a community meeting in Mukumbo Ward.

The meeting drew participants from Kapata and Kankonde in Lufwanyama District.

At the same event, Future-Preneurs Zambia Executive Director Martin Kampamba Mulenga encouraged the elevation of women in society.

Mulenga urged an end to gender stereotypes, especially in development.

He stressed that men and women should work together as equal partners if the country is to develop.

Mulenga emphasised that the day's discussions focused on women as environmental rights defenders.

He noted that most household work is typically carried out by women.

Meanwhile, Care for Nature Programme Officer Valerie Mulenga Matete called for women to engage in productive ventures such as gardening.

She explained that such efforts can help reduce hand-to-mouth struggles by improving access to vegetables and creating income opportunities.

Matete noted that it is often difficult for a woman without employment to afford basic items like soya beans or eggs.

She added that men should feel proud when women contribute meaningfully, as it helps lighten the burden at home.

Matete said the empowerment being introduced through this project is expected to benefit not only women but men as well.

Issued By: CEJ Communications Unit

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Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ)

Plot 269, Off Twin Palm Road, Ibex Hill, Lusaka -Zambia
Visit CEJ website: https://cejzambia.org/ and Facebook: https://facebook.com/cejzambia.org
Call: +260 954 713003 / +260 964 244255 / +260 973 389859
Email: info@cejzambia.org