

Thursday, Lusaka (19th March 2026)



[CEJ WELCOMES CABINET'S RESETTLEMENT BILL APPROVAL]

The Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) has welcomed the decision by Cabinet to approve in principle the introduction of the Resettlement Management Bill, 2026, in Parliament.

CEJ Executive Director Maggie Mapalo Mwape said the approval marks a significant milestone in the Government's commitment to protecting vulnerable communities affected by development projects, disasters, and forced displacements.

Mwape stated that for many years, CEJ has consistently called for a comprehensive legal framework to guide resettlement and compensation processes, having witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by displaced persons in project-affected areas.

She said the Cabinet's approval of this Bill is therefore a welcome response to those calls, and it demonstrates the Government's commitment to inclusive governance, social justice, and sustainable development.

The CEJ Executive Director noted that the organisation has implemented resettlement projects in Sinazongwe, Serenje, and Mumbwa districts, where communities have historically faced challenges related to fair compensation and adequate resettlement support.

Mwape recalled that following the launch of the Resettlement Policy in 2024, CEJ collaborated with the Office of the Vice President under the Resettlement Department to disseminate the policy in Serenje, Mumbwa and Sinazongwe, among other districts, ensuring communities understood their rights and entitlements.

She explained that in early 2025, CEJ convened a high-level Government ministerial engagement to gain a clear understanding of the Resettlement Policy, during which the Office of the Vice President Resettlement Department shared strategic opportunities, barriers, and challenges facing implementation.

Mwape stated that early this year, CEJ participated in a stakeholder consultative meeting hosted by the Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD), where a policy analysis

comparing the 2015 and 2024 Resettlement Policies was presented to inform ongoing advocacy efforts.

The CEJ Executive Director said that by establishing clear standards and procedures, the Bill promises to help reduce conflicts over land, protect vulnerable groups, and ensure that resettlement practices align with globally accepted social and environmental norms.

Mwape noted that the Cabinet resolution's language, which explicitly mentions compensation for affected persons, protection of vulnerable communities, and adherence to globally accepted standards, reflects the very issues CEJ has consistently raised through its advocacy work.

She stated that CEJ now looks forward to Parliament's favourable consideration and subsequent enactment of this important legislation.

Mwape said this achievement is not only a victory for affected communities but also a testament to the power of collaborative advocacy.

The CEJ Executive Director said the organisation is set to host a Resettlement and Compensation Indaba in Lusaka this May 2026, which will bring together stakeholders to further deliberate on ensuring the Bill, when enacted, delivers meaningful protection for affected communities.

Mwape affirmed that CEJ believes the Bill will foster more responsible development outcomes, strengthen trust between citizens and institutions, and contribute to a future where no one is left behind in the pursuit of national progress.

She commended the Government for listening to the voices of civil society and for prioritising the well-being of displaced persons.

Mwape reaffirmed that CEJ stands ready to support the effective implementation of this legislation once enacted and to continue working with all stakeholders to ensure that resettlement is carried out in a fair, transparent, and humane manner.

Issued By: CEJ Communications Unit

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