

Evidence-Based Review of Mining-Induced Resettlement and Compensation Practices in Minambe Ward of Mokambo, Mufulira Mining District, Zambia



POLICY BRIEF

This policy brief is intended to inform and provide actionable recommendations to government institutions, mining companies, local authorities, civil society organisations, traditional leaders, and development partners to strengthen consultation, compensation, livelihood restoration, grievance mechanisms, and the protection of the rights of mining-affected communities in Zambia.



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Executive Summary

Mining is central to Zambia's economic development, yet mining-induced displacement and how affected households are compensated continue to present significant governance, social, and livelihood challenges. This policy brief presents findings from a monitoring study conducted in November 2025 by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) in Minambe Ward, Mokambo, Mufulira District, to examine resettlement and compensation practices associated with the Changfa Resources mining project. Guided by International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standard 5 (2012) and Zambia's National Resettlement Policy (2024) and informed by the experience of the affected community, the study assessed consultation, compensation, livelihood impacts, and grievance mechanisms. Further drawing on emerging frameworks such as Fair and Equitable Land Access (FELA)[1], the recommendations below aim to strengthen governance, promote meaningful participation, protect the rights of affected people, and enhance accountability in mining-induced displacement and resettlement in Zambia.

The findings from Mufulira show that the compensation process was largely cash-based and coordinated through government structures, with limited opportunities for meaningful community participation. The majority of the affected community members that were interviewed reported inadequate understanding of compensation valuation methodology and packages. Customary land users, renters, and other economically displaced households without formal land documentation were frequently excluded from compensation despite losing access to productive land and livelihoods. Cash compensation alone proved insufficient to restore livelihoods, particularly for farming-dependent households, and no dedicated livelihood restoration programme was put in place by the company or the local government. The study also found that formal grievance and remedy mechanisms were either absent or unknown to most affected households.

The findings highlight the need to strengthen mining-induced displacement governance and practices through meaningful engagement and participation of communities, transparent and equitable valuation and compensation processes, recognition of all displaced rightsholders including customary land users, dedicated livelihood restoration programmes, and accessible grievance mechanisms, in line with international standards. Adopting and enforcing binding legislation on resettlement, compensation, and livelihood restoration, aligned with internationally recognised standards on responsible business conduct, including IFC Performance Standard 5, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, will contribute to more equitable, transparent, and accountable compensation processes in case of mining-induced displacement.

[1] Smyth, E., Price, S. and Vancley, F. (2025). *Fair and Equitable Land Access (FELA) by Development Projects: Enhancing Governance for Sustainable Development Outcomes When Projects Displace People*. Sustainable Development. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.70592>

1.Recommendations

Based on the findings of this monitoring study, the following priority actions are recommended to strengthen mining-induced displacement governance and practices in Zambia:

1.1. Key Overarching Recommendations for Resettlement Processes

Theme	Recommendation to all stakeholders involved
Governance of resettlement processes	Establish a dedicated co-governance system including strong collaboration, communication, decision-making and adaptative management processes between all the stakeholders involved in a mining-induced displacement. That includes at a minimum national and local authorities, the mining company, traditional leadership and the affected community. This could be done through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder resettlement committee at project level, to strengthen transparency, coordination, accountability, and community participation.
Community participation	Ensure early, continuous, and meaningful community consultation and participation in decision-making processes, and promote community engagement throughout the planning, implementation, and monitoring of resettlement, compensation and livelihood restoration processes, as well as throughout the project lifecycle. Ensure the participation of women and special considerations to vulnerable peoples and households. Community inclusion and agency are key to successfully carrying out resettlement processes that respect communities' rights and protect their resilience.
Resettlement and Compensation	Ensure transparent valuation methodology, compensation at full replacement cost, and the recognition of all affected rightsholders, including customary land users and economically displaced households. Avoid cash-only compensation and ensure the provision of replacement land and assets, including housing that is adapted to household needs and local context. Ensure that communities have effective access to natural resources and common goods that are essential to their livelihoods and culture, as well as public goods and essential social services and infrastructure (water, electricity, health, education, safety, sanitation, etc.), to effectively improve their standard of living and strengthen their long-term resilience.

Theme	Recommendation to all stakeholders involved
Livelihood restoration	Complement compensation with livelihood restoration measures in compensation packages, including access to and tenure of replacement land as well as access to essential natural resources and common goods (fish, forest products, medicinal plants, firewood, etc.); transition support –including to avoid food insecurity and malnutrition–; technical support and capacity building measures; and long-term monitoring of the effectiveness of the livelihood restoration measures. Livelihood restoration should not be seen as a one-off, box-ticking exercise focusing on inputs; it should rather be a collaborative and adaptive process, in close discussion with communities, focusing on developing economically viable livelihoods that are tailored to the needs, vulnerabilities and capabilities of the communities, as well as the new conditions and opportunities created by mining activities to effectively restore and improve their incomes and subsistence in the medium and long term.
Community well-being and vulnerable groups	Identify and mitigate any social, cultural, psychological, environmental, and health impacts to protect community well-being, culture and cohesion throughout and after the displacement process. For instance, psychosocial support may be needed for the displaced community for a period of time to make sure that the social networks and community structures are restored. Pay specific attention and design specific measures to cater for gendered impacts and specific risks to vulnerable groups (elderly, people with disabilities, single parent households, etc.), who are often disproportionately affected by a resettlement process.
Grievances and remedy	Establish formal, accessible, transparent, culturally appropriate and gender-responsive grievance mechanisms that enable affected communities to seek timely and effective remedy in line with the effectiveness criteria detailed in the UNGPs (Principle 31). These mechanisms should be compliant with and connected with other local and national judiciary remedy avenues.
Monitoring and oversight	Establish independent monitoring mechanisms that promote compliance with national legislation and international standards such as IFC Performance Standard 5 and UNGPs. Beyond compliance, monitoring should enable all relevant stakeholders to ensure that agreed compensations have been timely provided and livelihood restoration processes have effectively improved the community's standard of living and resilience in the long-term, including that of women, youth and vulnerable groups.

1.2. Recommendations to Specific Actors

1.2.1. Government of Zambia and Local Authorities

- Develop a comprehensive, binding legal framework for mining-induced displacement aligned with the National Resettlement Policy (2024), the principles of the Fair and Equitable Land Access (FELA) framework, and international standards such as IFC Performance Standard 5 and the UNGPs. To that end, the Government should develop a strong Resettlement Management Bill through a multi-stakeholder process, providing for meaningful community consultation, fair compensation, effective livelihood restoration, protection of all displaced rightsholders, and accessible grievance mechanisms. The Government then should ensure its effective implementation and enforcement with adequate dedicated resources and training of Government officials.
- Undertake an independent assessment of land access and tenure arrangements in mining project areas and require early planning for land-based livelihood restoration, including the identification of suitable replacement land where communities depend on customary land and agriculture for their livelihoods.
- Require mining companies to comply with national legislation and applicable international standards through regular monitoring, independent compliance and progress reviews including key project documents (environmental and social impact assessments, resettlement action plan, livelihood restoration action plan, etc.), and timely corrective action where gaps are identified. Consistent failure to comply with legislation and regulations should result in sanctions, including mining permit suspension or revocation.
- Require mining projects to assess household-level vulnerability as part of resettlement planning and ensure that livelihood restoration measures are tailored to the specific needs of women, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
- Require mining projects to develop and publicly disclose Resettlement Action Plans and Livelihood Restoration Plans, where applicable, setting out compensation measures, eligibility and entitlements, livelihood restoration measures, implementation arrangements, timelines, and grievance mechanisms, and ensure that displacement and its associated impacts are adequately assessed and addressed through the ESIA process.

1.2.2. Mining Companies

- Systematically conduct human rights and environmental due diligence prior to and throughout all operations, in line with international standards and good practice.

- Maintain meaningful, inclusive, and ongoing dialogue with affected communities, the Government of Zambia, local authorities, and traditional leaders to co-design, implement, and monitor resettlement, compensation, and livelihood restoration plans that respond to local needs, priorities, and community-defined wellbeing objectives.
- Establish project level grievance mechanisms that are accessible, transparent, independent, gender-responsive and culturally appropriate, and ensure affected communities have access to effective remedy while maintaining regular communication about their concerns throughout the resettlement process. Where multiple mining projects are taking place, collaborate with industry bodies and other mining companies to provide effective remedy.
- Develop and make available to rights holders and relevant parties key documents such as environmental and social impact assessments, resettlement action plans, livelihood restoration plans, etc. as well as other documents relevant to the resettlement process (meeting minutes, compensation matrix, valuation methodology, etc.) to foster transparency and meaningful collaboration with local stakeholders involved in the resettlement planning, implementation or monitoring.
- Beyond compensating and improving the communities' livelihoods and living conditions, ensure that the project meaningfully contributes to local development, in line with communities' needs and aspirations. No local development measures will ever offset the negative impacts of mining projects, but positive impacts should be enhanced and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms should be co-designed with the communities and implemented sustainably, as a distinct measure from the resettlement process.

1.2.3. Investors and Lenders

- Ensure financed projects comply with national legislation and the principles reflected in international standards, including the IFC Performance Standards, as well as the [Fair and Equitable Land Access \(FELA\) framework](#), at a minimum, by establishing internally robust environmental, human rights and social screening and conditionality systems for proposed projects; incorporating environmental, human rights and social requirements into financing agreements with selected projects (e.g. mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence); establishing clear and regular disclosure, reporting and independent audit obligations for project proponents; supporting independent project monitoring throughout the project lifecycle; and taking appropriate corrective and remedial action where non-compliance or serious adverse impacts are identified.

1.2.4. Civil Society Organisations

- Continue independent monitoring of displacement and compensation practices and support evidence-based policy advocacy.
- Support and strengthen community awareness of their land, participation, compensation and livelihood restoration rights.
- Advocate for the development and public disclosure of resettlement and livelihood restoration plans and support affected communities to access and understand these plans.

1.2.5. Development Partner

- Support the implementation of the National Resettlement Policy (2024) and the drafting, adoption, and enforcement of a Resettlement Management Bill that should be aligned with the principles of the Fair and Equitable Land Access (FELA) framework and international standards on human rights and responsible business conduct, through multistakeholder participation, capacity building, technical assistance, and institutional strengthening.

2. Background

Zambia's mining sector remains one of the country's most important drivers of economic growth, employment, government revenue, and foreign exchange earnings. Copper continues to dominate mineral exports, while ongoing investment in mining and related infrastructure has accelerated land acquisition and displacement in several mining districts, particularly in the Copperbelt and North-Western Provinces (Sikamo et al., 2016; World Bank, 2020; Ministry of Mines and Mineral Development, 2021). Although these investments contribute significantly to national development, they have also increased concerns regarding the consultation and compensation, the livelihood restoration and standard of living, as well as the protection of the rights and resilience of communities affected by mining-induced displacement (Ndulo et al., 2018; IIED, 2013).

Mining-induced displacement in Zambia is consistently characterised by cash compensation without planned physical resettlement or comprehensive livelihood restoration programmes. While Zambia has made important progress through the National Resettlement Policy (2024) and the proposition to adopt a Resettlement Management Bill, gaps remain in the implementation and monitoring of ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement, the protection of all economically displaced households including the most vulnerable groups, transparency in valuation and compensation outcomes, the improvement of livelihoods and living conditions, and access to effective grievance mechanisms (Cabinet of the Republic of Zambia, 2026; Parliament of the Republic of Zambia, 2019). These challenges have been documented in mining communities across the country and

continue to affect the ability of displaced households to restore their livelihoods and living standards (World Bank, 2019; Ndulo et al., 2018).

This policy brief draws on evidence from a monitoring study conducted in November 2025 by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) in Minambe Ward of Mokambo, Mufulira District, where mining-related land acquisition associated with the Changfa Resources project affected both residential and agricultural land users. Guided by Zambia's National Resettlement Policy (2024) and IFC Performance Standard 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement, the study documents the experiences of affected rightsholders following displacement and compensation and identifies key policy and implementation gaps requiring attention and urgent action.

3. Methodology

This policy brief is based on an evidence-based monitoring study conducted by CEJ over one week in November 2025 in Minambe Ward, Mokambo, Mufulira District. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining household surveys, Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews, and field observations to document the experiences of households affected by mining-induced displacement and compensation. Despite repeated efforts by CEJ to engage the company during the study, company representatives declined to participate. The findings draw on evidence from affected communities, government institutions, and civil society.

The analysis was guided by Zambia's National Resettlement Policy (2024), relevant national legal frameworks, and IFC Performance Standard 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement to assess consultation, compensation, livelihood restoration, and grievance mechanisms. A detailed description of the study methodology is provided in the [full monitoring report](#).

4. Key Findings

Key Findings	Evidence from the Study	IFC Performance Standard 5	Policy and Practice Implication in Zambia
Limited meaningful consultation and participation	Consultation was largely informative rather than participatory. Households were informed after key decisions had already been made and had limited opportunities to influence outcomes.	Emphasises early, meaningful, and ongoing consultation with affected persons, throughout the displacement process and project lifecycle.	Ensure early, continuous, and meaningful consultation and involvement in decision-making of affected communities and their representatives, throughout the resettlement, livelihood restoration process, and the project lifecycle.
Gaps in compensation processes and transparency	Compensation was only cash-based and the packages were very low. Many households did not understand how compensation rates were determined, and customary land users and renters without formal documentation were frequently excluded.	Requires compensation at full replacement cost, transparent compensation processes and valuation methodology, and recognition of all displaced persons, including those without formal land titles.	Strengthen transparency in compensation valuation methodology and outcomes, ensure compensation at full replacement cost, avoid cash compensation and prefer housing and land replacement, and recognise and take into account all categories of affected persons, especially the most vulnerable groups.
Cash compensation alone did not restore livelihoods and resilience	Compensation was mainly used to meet immediate household needs. Many households reported reduced income and loss of livelihoods, due to the absence of livelihood restoration programmes.	Requires livelihoods and standard of living to be improved or, at a minimum, restored through livelihood restoration measures and transitional support, including to avoid food insecurity, to protect the resilience of the community.	In addition to replacement of assets and/or cash compensation, provide dedicated livelihood restoration programmes, access to suitable replacement land close to natural resources and common goods, transition assistance, capacity building and support, and long-term monitoring.

4. Key Findings

Key Findings	Evidence from the Study	IFC Performance Standard 5	Policy and Practice Implication in Zambia
Weak grievance and remedy mechanisms	Most respondents were unaware of any formal grievance mechanism and relied on informal channels to raise complaints, which failed to provide effective remedy.	Requires accessible grievance mechanisms for receiving and effectively addressing concerns throughout the displacement process.	Establish or require the establishment of formal, accessible, culturally appropriate and transparent grievance and remedy mechanisms that duly and effectively address community's concerns.
Environmental risks	Respondents reported dust exposure which could imply risks for human health (including through risks of air and water pollution).	Requires measures to avoid or minimise adverse environmental and social impacts associated with displacement.	Effectively identify, manage and mitigate any risks to the environment, natural resources and human health associated with the resettlement process and mining operations.
Gender and youth concerns and specific attention to vulnerable groups	The resettlement process did not include specific measures for vulnerable groups (e.g. the elderly or people with disabilities). Women and youth highlighted specific concerns (e.g. food insecurity, limited employment opportunities) and exclusion from decision-making.	Requires specific measures to identify vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and ensure their meaningful participation, targeted assistance, and tailored livelihood restoration plans throughout the displacement process.	Adopt measures specifically tailored to vulnerable groups within a community, as well as gender-responsive and youth-inclusive approaches to resettlement and compensation, and more broadly to mining project development.

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The responsibility for the content of this policy brief rests solely with the authors. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the consortium partners or Sida.

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