



Policy Brief

On Effects of Large-scale Mining and Covid-19 Pandemic on Women In Solwezi and Kalumbila Districts of Zambia

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1. Introduction

Globally, Women can experience the consequences of mining projects in different, and often more pronounced, ways than men. Women often bear the brunt of mining projects yet fail to equitably enjoy the potential benefit. It is clear that women are the most negatively affected by the various social and environmental impacts of the mining extractive industries. Women are affected more than other community members causing serious psychological, social, economic, health and physical stress.

In the Zambian context the effects are the same as those on the global level. However, for Zambia other factors that have exacerbated the impacts of large scale mining are; weak enforcement of policy and legal frameworks and institutional arrangements in the extractive industry particularly related to the republican constitution, land policy and legal framework, environmental management, land resettlement and compensation. In the study focus area, women in mining communities of Kalumbila and Solwezi are impacted by large scale mining activities in many ways as it will be illustrated below.

The mining sector has not only negatively affected rich resource countries as it has also presented an opportunity for sustainable development by converting these sub soil assets into meaningful assets such as manufacturing industries, improved agricultural sector and increased social sector spending hence advancing economic and human development. For women in particular, extractive industries can provide opportunities for a better life, including increased employment opportunities, access to revenues, and expanded investment in the local community. Women led businesses can flourish in the extractives supply chain. Working with and investing in women also makes good business sense.

In the Zambian context, the country has a huge potential to benefit from its rich natural resource by harnessing the sector for sustainable development. For women particularly, the country needs to create an environment for women led business to thrive as well as enacting a local content law with a percentage biased towards women that will ensure that local host communities are the sole suppliers to the mining sector in terms of goods and services.

This policy brief is aimed at bringing to the fore some of the policy implications of mining activities on women in Kalumbila and Solwezi Districts of Northwestern provinces. The brief is based on findings of a study the Centre conducted on effects of large-scale mining and the COVID-19 pandemic on women in Solwezi and Kalumbila

districts of Zambia. The study had five objectives, these were;

- i. Identify opportunities and challenges that women face with the presence of large scale mining activities in Zambia with a focus on Solwezi and Kalumbila districts.
- ii. Analyse the adequacy and enforcement in policies governing the mining sector in Zambia.
- iii. Ascertain the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on women in mining communities in Zambia with a focus on Solwezi and Kalumbila districts.
- iv. Identify opportunities and platforms available for women voices in mining communities to be heard.
- v. Conduct a mapping of key stakeholders in mitigating impacts of large scale mining on women.

2. Methodology

Cognisant of the dynamic nature of research, a qualitative research design that used multiple qualitative data collection methods was employed. The methods included desk review of existing literature, Focus Group Discussions, interviews with key informants (from the mines and at the district level) and field observations. The study employed a qualitative data analysis method and specifically the grounded analysis, where themes from discussions and conversations were compiled and examined in order to draw conclusions, which in turn formed the basis for making recommendations.

3. Key findings

The study noted that mining activities have negative effects on the local communities. The negative effects associated with mining activities were found to be environmental, social, economic and political effects. Further, the study found weak enforcement of policy and legal framework and institutional arrangements in the extractive industry particularly related to the republican constitution, resettlement and compensation policy, environmental policy as well as absence of a local content policy has exacerbated the effects of mining activities on the local communities. In the same vain, the research found that the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to prevent its spread are driving a disproportionate increase in women's unemployment

as compared to men and also decreasing their overall working time. Lastly, the report identified several opportunities existing at local, national and regional levels to mobilise women to claim and safeguard their rights and reduce impacts of mining industries on women. Overall, the research noted that the challenges that women face are diverse and have neither affected women equally, nor have they affected all women in the same manner. In most cases, the winners have been those with better education, economic power and acumen, enabling them to cope with the changes and reap benefits from them.

4. Recommendations

Objective 1: Identify opportunities and challenges that women face with the presence of large scale mining activities in Zambia with a focus on Solwezi and Kalumbila districts.

1. Opportunities

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Finding 1: Kalumbila and Solwezi districts endowed with mineral resources and housing three big mining firms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government to revise the mining legal frameworks governing the mining sector to ensure maximum beneficiation for the local people.
<p>Finding 2: Mining firms through CSR has put in place initiatives to mitigate the effects of mining activities on local communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in mining communities to take responsibility to familiarise with mining firms' women empowerment initiatives for them to fully benefit from mining firms CSR programmes. Mining firms to work with local traditional leaders and CBOs in sensitising host communities on how to access the available local empowerment initiatives.

2. Challenges

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Environmental Impacts Affecting Women</p> <p>Finding 1: Indiscriminate cutting of trees for charcoal burning due to increased demand for charcoal has had some negative impacts. These include the diminishing of mushrooms and a local delicacy called Vinkubala, is a cheap source of protein for local communities. Another noted issue was the loss of income from organic honey from the forests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communities should be sensitised on the impacts of deforestation and encouraged to embrace alternative sources of livelihood and energy. Unemployed youths and charcoal burners should be given skills to tap into available business opportunities and migrate from charcoal burning. Government should put measures in place to reduce on deforestation and encourage reforestation. Mining firms to devise CSR programmes that are responsive to the needs of women. Firms will need to effectively empower women both socially and economically in order to mitigate the negative impacts they suffer from operations of mining industries in their communities.

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Social/ Cultural Impacts affecting Women</p> <p>Finding 1: Increase in marital instability and domestic violence, including psychological and physical violence. This was attributed to high incomes and alcohol abuse by men working in mines. Relocation of husbands to mining areas was also found to contribute to temporary marriages, polygamy and/or abandonment of the family.</p> <p>Finding 2: Urbanisation, population displacement, loss of livelihoods, reduced food security, inadequate and deteriorated social infrastructure due to increased population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs should facilitate strong linkages and collaborations of women groups with mining firms and duty bearers at various levels to enable effective engagement on issues affecting women such as violence against women. • Governments should ring-fence mining revenue for investments in priority sectors, including health, and must use these revenues to address the needs of communities that directly bear environmental and social costs of mining. • CSR should be linked to the government's broad development agenda and more specifically, its social development goals (poverty reduction). CSR will then become a public policy issue.
<p>Economic Impacts affecting Women</p> <p>Finding 1: Increased employment, income opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs to sensitise mining communities on the available business opportunities. • Government to put in place a local content policy with a biased percentage allocated to women to empower women in mining communities to ensure they are benefiting from the local income generating opportunities.
<p>Political Impacts affecting Women</p> <p>Finding 1: Political decisions concerning relocation and compensation as well as CSR plans rarely captures the needs, issues and concerns of women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the absence of the CSR regulation, mining firms must adopt a more inclusive and participatory approach to corporate governance and CSR initiatives, taking account of community needs and culture so as to ensure communities have ownership of CSR projects. • CSOs should lobby mining investors to adopt gender-sensitive Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and international voluntary guidelines. Examples of these include the OECD Guidelines for multi-national enterprises that aim to enhance protection of local communities particularly women from injustices caused by mining investments. • CSOs should undertake wide-spread gender sensitisation and awareness targeting general members of the community and traditional authorities in areas around extractive industries. This will be key in changing the negative attitudes of men and traditional authorities and increase their support towards women

Objective 2: Analyse the adequacy and enforcement in policies governing the mining sector in Zambia.

Findings

Finding 1: Weak enforcement of policy and legal framework and institutional arrangements in the extractive industry. Particularly, the republican constitution, resettlement and compensation policy, environmental policy as well as absence of a local content policy. This has exacerbated the effects of mining activities on the local communities.

Recommendations

- Review the current Zambian constitution to enable inclusion of as well as the Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) and environmental rights in the Bill of Rights in order to safeguard the rights of women.
- CSOs should lobby and advocate for the finalisation of the Resettlement and Compensation Policy and Legal framework. These should provide for minimum guidelines and consultative processes that will ensure Free, Prior, Informed Consent of affected communities including strong participation of women before they are displaced and relocated.
- CSOs should lobby and advocate for the review of relevant environmental management legislation such as the environmental Management Act of 2011, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Mines and Minerals Development Act No. 8 of 2020, National Environmental Policy (NEP), 2009. The amendment of these Acts will lead to the realisation of a diversified and sustainable mining sector which will ultimately benefit the Zambian citizenry and this great nation
- Government should strengthen wide public consultations particularly consultation of women to capture their interests and concerns in order to minimise environmental impacts of mining investments.
- CSOs should advocate for transparency and public scrutiny of the provisions of agreements between government and mining companies such as the Investor Protection Agreements (IPAs) to ensure that they do not disadvantage the ordinary Zambian citizens particularly women.
- Government must develop a local content policy to ensure mining firms are sourcing goods and services locally. The local content policy should have a biased percentage reserved for women.

Objective 3: Ascertain the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on women in mining communities in Zambia with a focus on Solwezi and Kalumbila districts

Findings

COVID-19 pandemic and measures to prevent its spread are driving a disproportionate increase in women's unemployment as compared to men and also decreasing their overall working time.

Finding 2: Women in Solwezi and Kalumbila have lost

Recommendations

- Government must ensure gender focused organisations and women's equal representation in all COVID-19 response planning and decision making so as to ensure that the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on women is mitigated.

more than 50 per cent of incomes as COVID-19 preventive guidelines drastically reduced the number of people visiting the market.

Finding 3: Domestic workers lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, paid domestic work, like many other informal economy jobs, lacked basic worker protections like paid leave, notice period or severance pay. Domestic workers were placed on forced unpaid leave as their employers did not provide them an income while away from work.

- Government must target women and girls in all efforts to address the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. It will be important to apply an intentional gender lens to the design of fiscal stimulus packages and social assistance programmes to achieve greater equality, opportunities, and social protection.
- CSOs should lobby to integrate a gender assessment in all country assessments to understand the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, including economic impact, and how to address these effectively

Objective 4: Identify Opportunities And Platforms Available For Women Voices In Mining Communities To Be Heard.

Findings

Finding 1: Availability of local community based organisations advocating for women’s rights.

Finding 2: At community level there are limited opportunities to engage government except through sub district structures such as the Ward Development Committees (WDC).

Finding 3: CSR programmes being provided by some mining companies also provide opportunities for effective mobilisation of women to claim their rights, take-up economic opportunities and mitigate impacts of mining activities on women.

Finding 4: At district, provincial and national levels, opportunities for mobilising women to claim and safeguard their rights exist.

Recommendations

- CSOs to support organisational capacity strengthening for the Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) to enable them effectively mobilise women to claim their rights and equitably benefit from the mining industries.
- CSOs must sensitise women to take interest in being voted into WDCs so as to champion women agenda.
- CSOs must lobby local authorities to assign a number of seats to women on the WDC.
- CSOs should lobby mining firms to adopt “open-door policies” to enhance women’s engagement in corporate accountability on operational issues affecting women.
- CSOs to sensitise women in host communities on the available opportunities at local, national and regional levels so as to mobilise women to claim and safeguard their rights and reduce impacts of mining industries on women.

Objective 5: Conduct a mapping of key stakeholders in mitigating impacts of large scale mining on women

Findings

Finding 1: The study identified various stakeholders that should be targeted for women to effectively claim their rights, benefit and challenge the negative impacts of mining activities.

Recommendations

- CSOs to support create linkages between the identified stakeholders and women in mining communities.



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