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Regulating Agencies in Small Scale-Mining

Group photo of the regional representation drawn from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho. The workshop was officially opened by the Minister of Mines and Minerals Development Hon. Richard Musukwa.

UNDP has formed strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development, Pan-African Support to the Euro Geological Surveys Organisation of African Geological Surveys (PanAfGeo), and other co-operating agencies to strengthen the value chain and opportunities for artisanal and small-scale mining in Zambia and the region.

Recently UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development hosted a regional capacity development workshop on Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) in Lusaka. The primary objective of the training workshop was to build the capacity of regulatory agencies to effectively manage the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) sector. This intervention is consistent with the objectives of Zambia’s 7th National Development Plan which has prioritized the promotion of small-scale mining and exploitation of development minerals as a key driver of job creation and economic diversification. Support has been extended to a range of stakeholders such as government institutions, small-scale miners, local communities and civil society organisations. In terms of capacity-building a total of 1500 stakeholders have directly and indirectly benefited from the EU-ACP Development Minerals capacity-building programme in Zambia.

The Minister of Mines and Minerals Development, Hon. Richard Musukwa commended the United Nations Development Programme, the European Union and the Pan-African Support group for their support. The Minister highlighted some of the other initiatives aimed at developing ASM in Zambia including the promotion of investment, facilitation of market linkages and working with cooperating partners to develop mechanisms to facilitate ASM access to affordable financing. The European Union (EU) Head of Co-operation Mr. Gianluca Azzoni said the EU would continue to support the country’s strategies to transform the minerals resources into assets for change that translate national wealth into economic development.

In his remarks UNDP Deputy Country Director Sergio Valdini pointed out the importance of government and partners working together building a more progressive approach on strategically harnessing geological and mineral information to aid evidence-based decision-making in the on-going efforts to develop the mineral industry and enhance wealth creation.

The forty participants at the regional workshop were drawn from geological and mining departments, small-scale mining entrepreneurs and development agencies from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho.

The small-scale minerals sector faces challenges which include a lack of publicly available and easily accessible mining data needed for sound decision-making for businesses and development planning. Other challenges include: nascent capacity to support the growth of a productive ASM sub-sector; weak backward and forward production linkages between the mining sector and other sectors; and inadequate environmental management systems in mining.
The capacity-building workshop addressed some of these constraints by providing a guide and source of information for best practices that will be used by regulatory agencies to better manage the ASM sector and contribute to transforming the sector to support a diversified and resilient economy.

Within the SDG framework, the capacity-building intervention provides direct support to SDG9 under which member states committed to “build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation”. The eight targets under this goal directly speak to the value proposition of the ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme, as they elaborate on the demand and supply side of Development Minerals. For Zambia this includes: construction, infrastructure, housing, transport, tourism, agriculture and energy. Development minerals are of strategic importance so there is need to leverage them to promote industrialisation. The engagement of the regulatory agencies has culminated in the development of a manual on ASM. The handbook will work as a guide for both the regulators and the small-scale miners.

Zambia will be presented with a rare opportunity to foster global dialogue about development challenges and opportunities within the sector with support from UNDP and other co-operating agencies as it hosts the International Conference on Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining & Quarrying in Livingstone from 11 – 13 September 2018.
Responding to Climate Change

One of the consequences of deforestation is a loss of biodiversity. Deforestation also increases greenhouse gas emissions, disrupts the water cycle, increases soil erosion and decreases the natural beauty of an area.

Caomh Hughes is an International UN Volunteer working in UNDP Zambia’s Environment and Climate Change Unit. She is from Ireland and has been in Zambia since January 2017. She came from Irish Aid, the government of Ireland’s development programme, where she worked with civil society organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa. She also has a specialisation in environment and climate change.

Climate variability and climate change have become a major threat to sustainable development in Zambia. The country is already experiencing climate-induced hazards such as drought and dry spells, seasonal and flash floods and extreme temperatures. Some of these hazards, especially the droughts and floods have increased in frequency and intensity over the past few decades and have adversely impacted food and water security, water quality, energy production and livelihoods of the people, especially in rural communities.

These climate change impacts, and other environmental degradation, if left unaddressed have the potential to reverse the development gains already achieved in Zambia. Key sectors that will be negatively impacted include water, agriculture, forestry, wildlife, tourism, mining, energy, infrastructure and health. UNDP has a three-pronged approach to working to combat climate change: capacity-building and awareness, institutional strengthening and creating an enabling environment. This results in effective environmental asset management thus creating multiple benefits for poverty reduction and resilient development. In this way UNDP is supporting the Government of Zambia to ensure that the country follows a low-emission resilient development pathway through the development of policies and legal frameworks and institutional strengthening in both climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

UNDP has a number of ongoing initiatives in this area such as supporting the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to increase the rate of forest regeneration and promote climate-resilient adaptation practices among forest-dependent communities in Zambia’s Central Province. It also includes supporting the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions with the specific aim to increase the resilience of smallholder farmers in response to the effects of climate change.

The waste management project that I work on supports Government to meet its obligations under both the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions through a pilot project with the Ministry of Health. This project is reducing emissions from the health sector using non-incineration treatment of health care waste and the removal of mercury-containing medical devices from health care facilities. The reduction of emissions from the health care facilities will have positive environmental and public health benefits.

Unfortunately, healthcare waste management often falls as a low priority for hospital management in Zambia, when issues such as patient care, supply of drugs and staffing issues are competing for attention and resources. As a result, there can often be poor waste management practices, such as poor segregation of waste, meaning that a greater volume of waste needs to be treated than is necessary. Waste treatment is a necessary part of the disposal process to ensure that waste is safe and not infectious. Current practice in Zambia is incineration of healthcare waste.

However, healthcare waste incinerators release into the air a wide variety of pollutants including organic compounds like benzene, chlorophenols, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and particulate matter such as fly ash.

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
These pollutants unfortunately have a negative impact on the environment and are a contributing factor to climate change.

Fortunately, Zambia is moving away from incineration to alternative forms of treatment of healthcare waste. With this project the Government of Zambia is introducing steam treatment to manage healthcare waste, which avoids the formation and release of these harmful dioxins. The autoclaves which will be used to steam treat healthcare waste will also render the healthcare waste unrecognizable, reduce its volume, eliminate the physical hazards of sharps and decompose pathological waste.

As part of this project, a large focus has been on improving waste management practices in the participating pilot health facilities. This is to ensure that normal waste does not come into contact with infectious waste thus itself becoming contaminated and requiring treatment. Through this effort, I have come to know many of the health facility staff, ranging from nurses and doctors to hospital management and of course the Environmental Health Officers who are responsible for healthcare waste management. As a result of the project’s interventions in 2017, I was able to see not just a shift in practice but a wider shift in attitude of staff towards healthcare waste management. Staff were more vigilant about correct segregation of waste, and management were more diligent in ensuring that resources are being allocated to ensure adequate provision of items such as colour-coded bin liners and sharps boxes. These may seem like small steps, but they have a cumulative effect in reducing the emissions coming from the health sector.

I am excited to be moving into the next phase of the project. In June the autoclaves will be installed and commissioned. All of the preparatory work of the last two years has been leading to this. It will be satisfying for me, the project team, the Ministry of Health and of course each of the health facilities to see the incinerators burn for the last time, not to have toxic black smoke polluting their surroundings and to know that we are part of a wider effort to protect the environment of Zambia and reduce the effects of climate change.
Farewell to UNDP Global Fund Team

Fifteen years ago, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) partnered with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) to support the implementation of programmes targeting the three diseases in low and middle-income countries. In Zambia, UNDP assumed the role of interim Principal Recipient (PR) of Global Fund grants in 2010, with the aim of strengthening national capacity in key functional areas. This resulted in the Zambian Ministry of Health (MoH) reassuming the PR role in 2015.

Phase II of the Capacity Development and Transition Action Plan focused on Capacity Development for Global Fund Sub-Recipients and ran from January 2016 to March 2018. An end-of-Project review of Global Fund Capacity Development and Transition Action Plan Phase II was recently undertaken by a team of external consultants to document the main achievements and lessons learnt and to describe best practices in capacity development for potential use in the future. The review was conducted in February and March 2018.

The findings of the project review show that the implementation of the CDTAP Phase II brought measurable improvements to the capacity of the MoH in Zambia to implement Global Fund grants. There was significant acceleration in the achievement of grant targets and fund absorption between 2016 and 2017, and much of this directly related to the work of the PHOs as SRs and implementers of grant-funded activities.

Over the same period, MSL also improved its capacity for reliable and responsive storage and distribution of needed health products for HIV, TB and malaria programmes. As a result of this collective effort, by December 2017, the MoH’s Global Fund grants closed with minimal unspent balances (<5%), lower than other countries in the region.

Zambia also successfully negotiated a new Global Fund contribution for the 2018-2020 period for a value of approximately US$270 million for ongoing support to country-wide HIV, TB and malaria programmes. The benefits to Zambians of this improved commitment and performance by the central and provincial levels of the MoH, MSL and other sub-recipients (SRs) have been immense in working towards SDG3 – good health and wellbeing.

Over the years, the UNDP Zambia Global Fund team has supported implementation of over USD 370 million Global Fund grants in partnership with the government and people of Zambia. After the closure of the Global Fund Capacity Development and Transition Action Plan Phase II at the end of March 2018, a small technical and administrative support team focused on Health System Strengthening within UNDP Zambia will continue to work with key stakeholders to oversee the extension of the main warehouse of the Medical Stores Limited (Phase II) in Lusaka and provide financial mentorship to several District Medical Offices, in order to contribute to national interventions geared towards the agreed global UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets and SDG3 – health and well-being and SDG17 – partnerships for development.
Faith-Based Organisations Commit to Spearheading the SDGs

The SDG Philanthropy Platform, the UN in Zambia, the Ministry of National Development Planning and the Ministry of National Guidance and Religious Affairs partnered to convene an interactive forum for faith-based organisations (FBOs) and religious groups in Zambia to enhance and strengthen their understanding and key role as champions and advocates of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The event held on 24th April, 2018 resulted in the identification of more inclusive and productive avenues to deepen partnerships between FBOs and Government in implementation of the 7th National Development Plan (7th NDP) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The meeting brought together over 60 participants from faith-based organisations, religious groups and government ministries anchoring some of the development activities where FBOs have been active, including education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, community development and social welfare, among others.

The 7th National Development Plan launched in June 2017, under the theme “Accelerating development efforts towards the vision 2030 without leaving anyone behind” completely departs from the sectoral approach and takes an integrated and multi-sectoral approach, stated Mr. Muketo Mulele, Director of National Development Planning. “The plan has also been used as a vehicle for domesticating the sustainable development agenda 2030, the African Union Agenda 2063, the regional indicative strategic development plan and other regional and multilateral commitments”. Director Mulele stressed that while the theme was instructive with regard to the pace and spread of development, it also underscored the need to have new and innovative ways of working to accelerate and deliver inclusive development, reaching the most vulnerable groups such as women, children, the differently abled, and people in rural areas, among others. He further observed that while government aspired to deliver development to all parts of the country, its presence in the remote parts of the country and especially at community grassroot level was often limited, underlining the need to forge partnerships with organisations and groupings that have a presence in the areas at community level.

Director Mulele acknowledged that faith-based organisations and religious groupings represented the rightful partner for they had the outreach and presence in the remotest parts of the country and were operating at community level.

Stressing the importance of strengthening partnerships with FBOs in delivering inclusive development, Permanent Secretary Ms. Katongo Chifwepa, Ministry of National Guidance and Religious Affairs, highlighted that FBOs were government’s natural partners. “They are present in every corner of the country, reaching the most remote places where government presence and services are either inadequate or unavailable and providing services in various sectors including health, education, water and sanitation, livelihoods, governance and accountability, among others. Their activities are integrated in communities and close to the grassroots, thus making them long-lasting and sustainable”. FBOs and religious organisations are trusted by the communities and have a wide network which can be leveraged to share information and learning.
Speaking earlier, the United Nations Development Programme Country Director, Ms. Mandisa Mashologu observed that the SDGs were a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. She highlighted the interconnectedness of the goals and applauded Zambia’s strides to employ multi-sectoral collaboration and innovative approaches to implementing the 7th NDP and the SDGs.

“I would like to take this opportunity to express the UN System’s appreciation to the people and government of the Republic of Zambia for the strong partnership we have had to translate these very ambitious and transformative development goals from paper to practice through the Vision 2030 and the 7th National Development Plan”, stated Ms. Mashologu. She added that under the leadership of the Ministry of National Development Planning the UN system in Zambia provided technical support to ensure that the 7th National Development Plan was aligned to the SDGs in terms of the targets and indicators to hold us to account for our interventions. She stressed that realising the aspirations of the SDGs and 7th NDP will require greater partnerships between Government, faith-based organizations, civil society, the private sector and cooperating partners, to marshal the necessary domestic resources and capacities for its implementation, as well as a sound system to monitor and report on real impacts in the improvement of people’s lives and well-being.

She explained that the United Nations System in Zambia attached great importance to supporting national development priorities and had through the 2016 – 2021 Zambia-UN Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development ensured a programmatic approach to providing support. “Through the Zambia-UN Partnership Framework, twelve resident and twelve non-resident agencies in Zambia are partnering with various stakeholders to support policy and legislative development, institutional strengthening, advocacy and awareness, and direct service delivery and programming, focusing on marginalized groups, particularly women, the youth, children and people with disabilities”.

Speaking at the same event Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors Vice President, Ms Heather Grady explained that the SDG Philanthropy Platform was an initiative led by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Ford Foundation, Master Card Foundation and other Foundations and partners to support accelerated implementation of the SDGs. She further indicated that the platform seeks to educate and expand awareness and knowledge of the SDGs and how to leverage them, connect and increase engagement between stakeholders to help them increase their impact on advancing the SDGs as well as facilitate new types of collaborations and investment in promising transformative solutions between the philanthropy sector, business investors, the UN, government, and broader civil society.

“At country level, the SDG Philanthropy Platform has developed a flagship approach. The approach involves mapping ecosystems for SDGs; convening stakeholders to share approaches and models to deepen impact in achieving the SDGs; holding participatory workshops to identify levers that increase impact, as well as define collective outcomes for collaborative actions; and support innovative solutions”, she explained. She further informed the workshop that Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors was championing the “Scaling Solutions Initiative” which seeks to introduce better ways for funders to place resources with organizations that have the intent and ability to scale their impact.

In Zambia, the platform has been able to package information on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ecosystem that it has shared on the interactive website, www.philanthropy.org. The platform has also hosted a systems innovation workshop that aided in the selection of development areas to be prioritised to receive catalytic grants provided under the Innovation Challenge. The platform has supported three pilot innovations addressing various SDGs that have contributed to not only transforming lives but also providing best practices for and greater impact. The Platform also provides information on SDGs and related developments, including data on SDG financing from the philanthropy sector on www.SDGfunders.org.
Climate Updates Cushion Small-Scale Farmers from Dry Spell

Walking reluctantly through his wilted eight hectares maize field, Sililo Musepei waits for a sign that rainfall is eventually coming. Usually, he would look for clouds in the sky or birds singing. This time though, he’s anxiously expecting an agrometeorological advisory from the Zambia Meteorological Department. Like many Zambian small-scale farmers, Musepei, 44, has long relied on traditional weather indicators, such as the blossoming of certain indigenous trees or the constellation of stars, migration of bird species, appearance and disappearance of reptiles and many others to manage their crops. But such traditional know-how has become increasingly unreliable in the face of climate change, which has disrupted the seasons and led to prolonged dry spells, greater flooding and erratic rainfall.

"Indigenous knowledge of predictions have become more like tossing a coin," Musepei concurs. "We now see that traditional ways of predicting the weather just don’t work. With climate updates, I now know that if it rains tomorrow I can save my fertiliser for another day." In the current farming season, for example, the rains were expected in mid-October but started four months late, in February. Zambia has seen increasingly unpredictable weather, including dry periods and high temperatures this year that hit at the time when maize – the country’s staple crop – began putting out tassels. Hardest hit are small-scale and subsistence farmers as they largely depend on rain-fed crops for their livelihoods. This led to poor germination of crops, especially of cereals, and hence stunted growth rates, that have translated into low yields, including maize and beans — two key crops in Zambia.

Zambia’s Ministry of Agriculture focusts that maize production may drop around 50 percent in the current 2017/2018 crop season because of a prolonged dry spell which affected the main maize-producing areas including Southern, Western and Eastern Provinces. This has huge implications for a country where 70 percent of Zambians rely on agriculture for a living. About 60 percent of the country’s people live below the poverty line, more than 40 percent of those in extreme poverty, according to the 2016 UNDP Human Development Report.

To help remedy the situation, a UNDP-supported project which provides regular weather forecasts and agriculture advisories for farming communities, made a significant difference during the dry spells. The aim is to minimise the impact of adverse weather on crops and boost agricultural production.

"My harvest this farming season was far beyond average because my immediate neighbour who used the traditional way of predicting the weather did not harvest anything, despite having used fertilisers and certified seed".

Ms. Gertrude Sililo, Farmer - Gwembe

With funding from the Global Environment Facility Least Developed Countries Fund, UNDP works with the Meteorological Department and District Agriculture Officers through the Climate Information and Early Warning Systems project to notify farmers before planting time that the season would be dry and advised them to substitute their regular crops with varieties that required less water.

Weather updates were sent by text messages in English to lead farmers who have volunteered for the pilot project in three districts. They relay the information to fellow farmers in local languages.

To broaden the reach of weather updates, the project partners with community radio stations to broadcast weather information in local languages and trains the presenters how to interpret the information.

" We push agrometeorological content to small-scale farmers to help them increase their food production. Our regular weather updates give farmers up to 10 days lead time to plan during the rainy season. It helps them prepare for extreme weather events to better manage their crops and the safety of their livestock".

Edson Nkonde, Acting Director - ZMD
UNDP is helping farmers susceptible to floods and droughts increase productivity, generate new sources of revenue, and become more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

The content is delivered through community radio, SMS and town hall meetings in a dozen local languages – which makes the service inclusive for farmers with little formal education as well as those who are illiterate.

“We have seen a lot of livelihoods lost, particularly in rural areas because of adverse weather conditions and poor planning. This service helps reduce their losses and helps farmers plan for climate risks, making their farming more diversified and resilient to climate change.”

Mandisa Mashologu - UNDP Country Director

Musepezi and fellow farmers say they use the updates to make more informed farming decisions. “The seasonal forecasts help us in planning and deciding which mix of crops and seed varieties we will be planting to maximize productivity based on the expected weather pattern.” Some farmers have drawn comfort from the regular weather updates. Most farmers adopted a practice known as intercropping - growing two or more crops together – meaning farmers have another crop to fall back on when maize harvests fail because of poor rainfall.

 Farmers who heeded the agro-meteorological advisories got a better idea of when, how and what to plant. As a result, they got higher yields, less waste, and on average increase their income. “Kubona, kona ku utwisisa – Seeing is believing,” Peter Kamusaki, Sesheke District Agriculture Coordinating Officer said in the Lozi language.

In many parts of Zambia, more than half the rural population carry mobile phones. Crop prices, weather forecasts and agricultural tips are now in the palms of their hands. Meteorologists and agriculture experts here say good rainfall during the next farming season is key to boosting a rural economy hit by delayed and lower rains last year.