

For today – 21st Oct 2015:

TRUTH EVERY DAY

Daily Monitor

Media reports about our launch, last week of our Africa report - "*Action Research on the Impacts of Extractive Industries on women in Africa*" has started coming out. See the link: <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Women-demand-mineral-fund/-/688334/2922732/-/12mgfr0/-/index.html>

Women demand mineral fund

HOIMA. Women leaders and miners from Bunyoro and Rwenzori sub-regions have petitioned government to set up a mineral wealth fund through which they can directly benefit from proceeds from the exploitation of minerals.

They made the resolution on Thursday in Hoima Town during the launch of the Action Research on the Impacts of Extractive Industries on women in Africa.

The research was conducted by the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) and Women's Alliance on Mining (Womin) in selected African countries including Uganda, DR Congo, Burkina Faso, Ghana and South Africa.

The research findings, among others, state that women miners of salt at Lake Katwe work without protective gear and suffer consequences of prolonged exposure to hazardous chemicals. According to the research findings, they have experienced inflammation of the uterus, dehydration and chemically-induced burns.

The NAPE gender and food security officer, Ms Shillar Kyomugisha Osinde, said women whose core responsibility in rural households is to produce food and take care of children, suffer the greatest impact in areas where minerals are exploited.

"There is need for government to regulate activities of extractive industries to minimise their (negative) impacts on women and the community in general," she said.

The Hoima District secretary for community development, Ms Bernadette Plan, said women are traditionally marginalised in owning and inheriting land in their families.

"Government recognises agriculture as a backbone of the country. The women are major contributors towards food production. We therefore need affirmative action to enable us own, utilise and make decisions on land," she said.

The women leaders said many women are victims of land grabbing in mineral-rich areas and chances of women gaining from mineral resources is hampered by their inability to acquire sufficient skills and capital to adequately tap into opportunities in the mineral industry.

They want government to set up a mineral fund that will give them capital and the relevant skills and knowledge.

However, Energy minister Irene Muloni said government has addressed concerns of women in the mining industry through the mining laws and policies.

"You do not need a mineral wealth fund to address women issues in mining. We have already trained over 1,000 artisanal miners out of whom 400 are women. We are equipping them with knowledge, skills to benefit from mining and helping them to make formal groups that can get mineral licences like any other registered companies," Ms Muloni told Daily Monitor on Sunday.

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