

Makor Resources and Jubilee Metals launches program to provide food security and support subsistence farmers across Zambia.

Thursday 17 October, 2024

Following a drought that devastated agriculture and pushed millions of Zambians into food insecurity, Makor Resources and Jubilee Metals Zambia partner to support the government's existing efforts in providing agricultural inputs to subsistence farmers.

Ndola District Commissioner, Joseph Phiri, joined Makor Resources Chief Executive Officer, Brooke Bibeault and Jubilee Metals Managing Director, Ricus Grimbeek to distribute Compound-D and Urea fertilizer along with drought-tolerant maize seedlings to beneficiaries across the Munkulungwe Ward in Ndola.

This program was hosted by the Bwana Mkubwa families who were resettled last year by previous mine owners First Quantum Metals and was also attended by Ward Councilor Lombe Kaweme, Senior Ndola Agricultural Officer, Zeniah Nambeye Chitema, civic leaders and community members.

"Our aim is to provide lifesaving support to subsistence farmers, particularly those who have recently resettled from their ancestral homes at the outset of the drought, along with those most vulnerable farmers," says Brooke Bibeault, "These farmers have faced crop failures, reduced harvests, critical food shortages and malnutrition, forcing them to adopt desperate measures like selling off essential assets or skipping meals."

The beneficiary farmers of this collaborative effort between Makor Resources, Jubilee Metals Zambia and the local government included elders, the physically disabled and widowed women who rely on agricultural production.

Makor Resource's CEO, Brooke Bibeault and Jubilee's Ricus Grimbeek emphasized, the importance of collaboration to ensure that our communities live in better ways in terms of the extractive industry.

"I will keep advocating at all levels for cooperation between large-scale mining companies to work together to improve the lives of the communities we impact and have impacted" states Grimbeek, "it is not just good for business but also the right thing to do."

Many of the rural farms surrounding mine operations are disadvantaged, given its remoteness from the capital, rugged terrain, environmental risk, climate vulnerability, and reliance on subsistence farming. Moreover, households have minimal access to agricultural inputs, especially fertilisers.

This lack of access is compounded by unfavorable environmental conditions and limited access to profitable markets. These factors have affected agricultural productivity, production, and income, subsequently contributing to high levels of chronic malnutrition and food insecurity.

Ndola District Commissioner, Joseph Phiri, emphasized:

"It is crucial that we encourage other companies to follow the examples set by Makor Resources and Jubilee Metals. Their contributions do not go unnoticed and are a testament to the spirit of solidarity and community resilience that we cherish. Their commitment to supporting our communities is commendable and should inspire others in the mining sectors to engage in similar initiatives."

Makor Resources and Jubilee Metals Zambia will also scale this distribution program to the rural communities surrounding the Munkoyo Mine in Kapiri Mposhi later this month.

Mary Mubanga, Jubilee Metals Manager of Safety, Security and Government Relations, commented "As we are aware this year we are expected to have heavy rains, and therefore, Jubilee Metals and Makor Resources saw it fit to donate fertilizer and seed at the outset of the season, which we believe will contribute to the food security of our community and the country at large".

This effort aims to promote sustainable agriculture, increase yields, and improve livelihoods, especially in the face of climate change and environmental challenges.

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