Communities have lost money in compensation since it is premised on ‘guessed work’. Even when there is a going for meetings, locals complain about surface rights and royalties,” he says.

Lotack of standard compensation rates is still a challenge in mining communities because it has resulted in underrating. For Moroto District in particular, Mr Lotany says they are losing revenue. It is against such a background that Lotany says they sought ANARDE’s help in developing a document for standard compensation rates that they seek to use in determining property value in mining communities.

Mr Tumusiime says the Land Act of 1998 requires that districts update compensation rates of non-permanent form such as trees, crops among others, every year. However, this has not been done, and having realised compensation is a big issue in Karamoja. ANARDE is developing standard compensation rates to base on.

According to Mr Achellam, the last meeting was held in September involving ANARDE and district officials which elapsed with a draft of compensation rates for crops, trees and semi-permanent structures in the districts of Moroto, Kotoko and Nakapiripirit. Draft tables for compensation rates for each district had already been developed. The districts Moroto, Kotoko and Nakapiripirit agreed to have their tables developed.

A Workshop with key district officials on the compilation of key compensation rates concurrently, this helped to save time and give more productive discussions on a wide scope for the two district communities.

The discussions around the items and prices were done, step by step from crops to semi-permanent structures. Some additions, reactions and subtractions were made and all this was captured in the compensation rates tables, for each district.

"ANARDE does training of lawyers in extractives mainly conducted between Uganda Law Society (ULS) targeting public litigation. Between 2018 and 2020, ANARDE has had three training in Mbale, Moroto and Kampala Districts. The training also extends to mediators and paralegals who are supervised and monitored by ANARDE. The mediators total to 47 members spread across in the three districts of Abim, Kotoko, and Moroto.

The mediators help communities to resolve petty cases using alternative dispute resolution. So far, according to Mr Emmanuel Achellam, the programme officer ANARDE standing centre, addresses artisanal miners during a community engagement meeting on human rights issues in Kosiroi mining sites recently.

PHOTO/PAUL MURUNGI

Mr Zaddock Opolot, senior legal officer, Legal Aid Project, Uganda Law Society Moroto District.

Mr John Lotany, acting natural resources officer Moroto District.

Mr Isabella Orishaba, the programme officer ANARDE’s education and community trust for purposes of transparency between investors and communities. She describes paralegals as ANARDE’s ambassadors on ground who report human rights violations affecting communities, but also do sensitisation.

For example Mr Francis Lopeyok is a paralegal, who is currently following a course in which a one Mr Amedooky Peter working with Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is accused of selling customary land belonging to a local community to Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) estimated at 560 hectares in Napak District.

We have been involved in gathering evidence and identification of community members in the case,” Mr Lopeyok says.

Mr Zaddock Opolot a senior legal officer working with ULS in Moroto District, is one of the beneficiaries in ANARDE’s legal training.

He says public interest litigation training has enhanced lawyers and judges’ capacity as lawyers to understand and handle cases arising from the mining industry. It has also helped to build their capacity and provide flexibility in supporting FIDA and ANARDE communities,” Ms Ataro says. She says GBV largely manifests itself through psychological, physical and economic violence.

However, she identifies that Moroto is largely hit by economic violence. This is because men (fathers) do not want to provide for their children.

Economic violence has forced most women into mining sites as a way of economic survival where exploitation is also rife with a low bargaining power and cheating. Some lack protective gear and are prone to accidents.

Karamoja, it is the woman who bears the burden of raising a family and sustaining it economically. These cases are on the increase despite creating awareness. We have tried to empower women but we also need to bring the men on board,” Ms Ataro says. She adds that so far, ANARDE has referred more than 20 cases of GBV to FIDA, and these have been handled successfully.

She says awareness engagements are being done at mining sites, and encouraging women to form associations so as to collectively defend their economic rights.

Early this year, ANARDE launched the State of Karamoja Platform with an aim of uniting different stakeholders to work together, however, this was affected by Covid-19 but is still ongoing.

Compensation rights

Karamoja region is awash with minerals, but still lacks compensation rates in most of its districts to base on and determine the value of property in mining communities when mining companies set foot in the region.

Mr John Lotany, the acting district natural resources officer in Moroto District says communities have lost money in compensation since it is premised on ‘guessed work’.

Lotack of standard compensation rates is still a challenge in mining communities because it has resulted in underrating. For Moroto District in particular, Mr Lotany says they are losing revenue. It is against such a background that Lotany says they sought ANARDE’s help in developing a document for standard compensation rates that they seek to use in determining property value in mining communities.

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