**Mzingaye Brilliant Xaba public interest statement**

In the post-apartheid South Africa, there exists widely held belief that local communities who are fighting against developmental projects such as mining are resisting development. In this article, this paper engages this debate using the case of Xolobeni where local communities have been fighting a mining company for over 10 years. While it is true that mining has brought economic development, this paper draws attention to the non-economic benefits that local communities enjoy such as cultural /living heritage, customary rights, religion, spirituality, culture, and other social aspects threatened by these development projects. Using the concept of the notion of “sacrifice zones” and the political ecology approach, the paper casts doubt on the ability of the developmental projects to lift people out of poverty, also given that elsewhere in South Africa, mining communities continue to face various problems in the hands of mining companies.