



planetGOLD

Making a world of difference
in small-scale gold mining.

A GEF Initiative

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

**2022
—
2023**

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NOTE FROM THE PROGRAMME MANAGER

As projects in the planetGOLD programme move forward in carving the path for more responsible, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining, this year was characterized by new levels of expansion and exchange. More than a dozen new countries were brought into the programme just as many of the first country projects were reaping the fruits of the groundwork they had laid over the last few years. At the same time, for the first time since its inception staff and partners from all country projects were able to gather in person for an invaluable exchange of knowledge and ideas. In this report you will find examples of the collaboration, lessons learned, and progress made in the planetGOLD programme from July 2022 through June 2023.

While reviewing these new developments, I continue to draw inspiration from the dedication of all the individuals who are helping to drive the advances reflected here, including the miners that have partnered with us, our project staff, allies and partners, and expert advisors. As we continue expanding the umbrella and impact of this programme we are integrating lessons learned into the development of new projects, and I look forward to even greater progress toward making mercury history in artisanal and small-scale gold mining.



Ludovic Bernaudat, Programme Manager for planetGOLD

Head, Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch, UN Environment Programme

NOTE FROM THE GEF

With the second phase of the programme underway, plus five new standalone country projects currently under development, the growth of planetGOLD is a testament to the GEF's growing commitment to holistic, multisectoral, and integrated approaches to ending exposures to toxic pollutants like mercury. In addition to promoting the programme's core strategies of addressing access to finance, mercury-free technical solutions, formalization and access to formal markets, these new projects also aim to prevent land degradation as well as generate biodiversity and climate change co-benefits. The aim is for these additional interventions to help support countries in tackling the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution.

My hope is that in reading this progress report, readers will gain a better understanding of the pathway to a transformed, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector. Through ongoing global collaboration and communication among the growing number of stakeholders in planetGOLD, the programme is aiming to make as big a difference as possible for those most impacted by mercury pollution. I wish everyone in the programme continued momentum and look forward to gathering for a critical knowledge exchange at planetGOLD's flagship Global Forum on ASGM in the coming year.



Anil Sookdeo, Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Coordinator
Senior Environmental Specialist, Global Environment Facility

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The planetGOLD programme, supported by the Global Environment Facility, partners with governments, the private sector, and artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) communities in countries all over the world to significantly improve the production practices and work environment of artisanal and small-scale miners. By working to close the financing gap, supporting formalization, raising awareness, and connecting mining communities with mercury-free technology and formal markets, planetGOLD aims to demonstrate a pathway to cleaner and more efficient mining practices that benefit everyone, from the mine to the marketplace. This work assists countries to meet their commitments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury to reduce and, where feasible, eliminate mercury use in the sector.

This Annual Progress Report features key activities, milestones, and figures from 23 country projects across the programme for the July 2022 – June 2023 reporting period. Regarding technical solutions, eight projects have designed and installed—or were in the process of installing at the end of the reporting period—new mercury-free processing systems at their project mine sites. Two projects have taken up an additional strategy of incentivizing miners to become ore suppliers for existing mercury-free processing plants, thereby preventing the miners from processing the material themselves using mercury.

All planetGOLD projects in the first phase of the programme have assisted policy makers in improving or developing regulations on ASGM in some capacity, and continue to advance in providing capacity building to support miners in their formalization process. Almost all of these projects have also conducted trainings on the CRAFT Code and planetGOLD Criteria, facilitated national and local workshops, or engaged with key stakeholders to work toward establishing transparent supply chains for responsibly mined ASM gold.

The programme has been testing innovative approaches to finance that aim to overcome these barriers and unlock the formal finance needed to fund miners’ transition to mercury-free methods. By piloting different models for access to finance and working with a range of partners, planetGOLD is demonstrating how ASGM finance can be designed to fit a wide range of circumstances and needs.

On awareness raising, multiple project teams have developed a strategy of targeting children and educators in an effort to break the intergenerational cycle of mercury use. All projects in the first phase of planetGOLD have continued to carry out education and training activities, both in-person and virtually, on key topics and planetGOLD has focused on profiling miners and ways in which project teams are working to effect positive change in the ASGM sector.

Finally, projects have put significant efforts toward promoting the participation and advancement of women who wish to work in the ASGM sector and toward addressing structural barriers that often prevent women from fully reaping the benefits of this work.

To help monitor the progress country projects are making in the programme’s core thematic areas, the planetGOLD global project tracks data for four key output indicators across the programme: tonnes of mercury abated; number of miners supported in their formalization processes; amount of money made available to ASGM through financial mechanisms; and amount of responsible ASGM gold produced.¹ What follows is a snapshot of results in these key component areas as of June 2023, based on reporting from planetGOLD country projects.

1 In this context, “responsible” means that operations conform with the [planetGOLD Criteria for Environmentally and Socially Responsible Operations](#)

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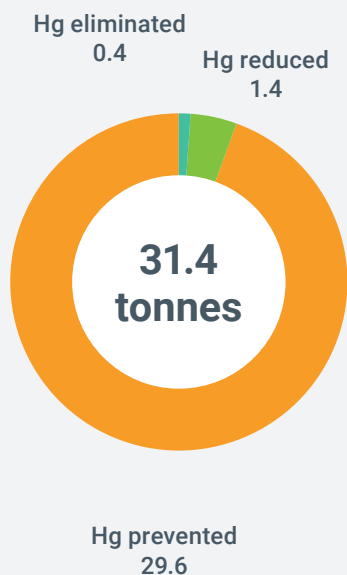
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BY THE NUMBERS

See definitions for each of [planetGOLD's output indicators](#)

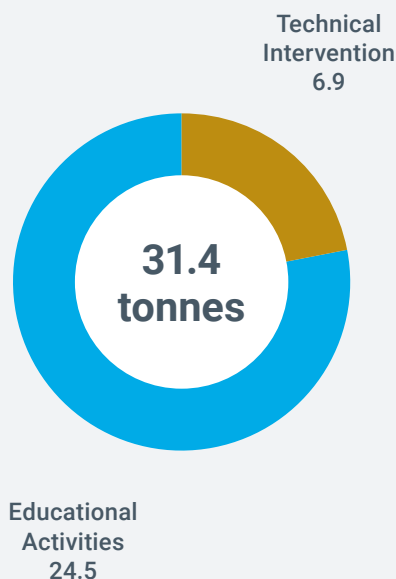
Amount of mercury abated to date

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Indonesia, and Peru



Amount of mercury abated to date, by type of intervention

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Indonesia, and Peru



Number of miners assisted in their formalization process

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines, and Uganda



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Amount of responsible gold produced in conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, and Philippines



984.6kg

Number of new financial products/mechanisms for ASGM developed or supported

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Mongolia, and Peru



14

Amount of money made available through new financial products/mechanisms (USD)

*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Mongolia, and Peru



\$1,085,723

Amount of money successfully accessed to date through financial products/mechanisms (USD)

*Data reported from: Colombia, Indonesia, and Peru



\$697,501

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THE PLANETGOLD APPROACH

OUR MISSION:

To make small-scale gold mining safer, cleaner, and more profitable

OUR VISION:

A clean global supply of gold from small-scale miners

The planetGOLD programme, supported by the Global Environment Facility, works in partnership with governments, the private sector, and ASGM communities to upgrade the production practices and work environment of artisanal and small-scale miners—sustainably boosting their productivity while improving the gold supply chain and reducing global mercury pollution.

The programme works to demonstrate a pathway to cleaner and more efficient artisanal and small-scale gold mining practices that benefit everyone, from mine to market, by supporting:



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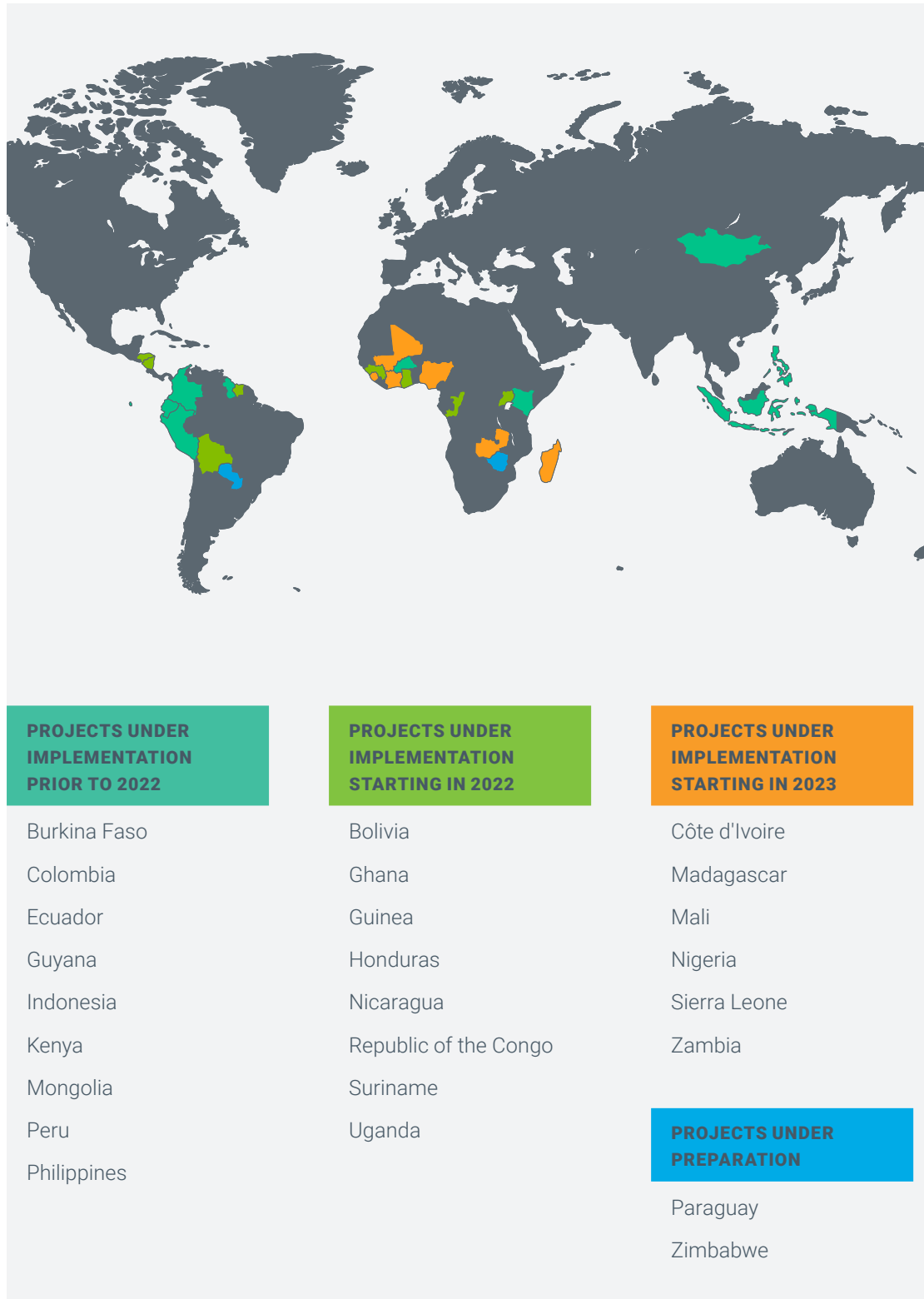
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Supporting countries' commitments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the planetGOLD programme is funded by the Global Environment Facility, led by the United Nations Environment Programme and implemented in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Development Programme, and Conservation International.

To learn more, visit [planetGOLD.org](https://planetgold.org)



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PROGRESS ON CORE STRATEGIES

Projects in the planetGOLD programme have been making progress in advancing responsible ASGM by focusing on four key programmatic themes: formalization, access to finance, technical solutions, and access to markets. Projects also work on awareness raising and gender equity across these pillars. This chapter summarizes the headway made on these programmatic pillars over the last four years. More detailed summaries for each country project can be found in [Chapter 4](#).



Visit [planetGOLD's online resource library](#) for a listing of all materials published in the programme.



TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

All projects across the planetGOLD programme are working to design, pilot, and promote technologies and practices that reduce or eliminate the use of mercury in small-scale gold mining. Projects also carry out training and capacity building activities to increase miners' knowledge of—and comfort with—mercury-free mining practices. When used properly, these alternative technologies and methods can extract a greater amount of gold than traditional methods using mercury, leading to more income for miners and their families while protecting their health, their communities, and the environment.

Each project that launched in the first phase of the planetGOLD programme, prior to 2022, has introduced or plans to introduce improved gravity concentration equipment and methods at their mine sites as an alternative to mercury use (see [Country Project Snapshots](#)). These systems use gravity to separate gold from other minerals in the ore, which have a lower density than gold. Project teams are also introducing machinery that crush or mill the ore to an appropriate grain size. In addition to these gravity methods, some planetGOLD projects have also included chemical leaching processes such as cyanidation as elements of new or existing mercury-free circuits.

In some cases, project teams have undertaken efforts to build all-new mercury-free processing capacity for use by miners and for training or demonstration. In others, country teams took stock of existing gold processing facilities in their project areas and opted to expand these existing facilities' ability to process ore without mercury through capacity building and provision of mercury-free and other equipment.

Building mercury-free processing capacity

Eight projects have designed and installed—or were in the process of installing at the end of the reporting period—new mercury-free processing systems at their project mine sites. The project in Peru has to date installed 9 gravimetric processing plants in the regions of Puno and Arequipa, with 6 more plants set to be installed in the next reporting period. The introduction of this new equipment and training of miners in other techniques has to date resulted in a reduction of over one tonne of mercury.

In Colombia, the project provided a gold beneficiation plant and mercury-free gold processing equipment to seven different mining entities and delivered one new mobile metallurgical laboratory for the purpose of technical training. The project also delivered sluice boxes and mats to four ASGM communities for the separation of gold without the use of mercury. To date, the project's provision of and training on new technologies has so far prevented the use of 2.8 tonnes of mercury.



►► [View this fact sheet for more details on planetGOLD Peru's technology transfer activities](#)

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The planetGOLD Indonesia project, which completed its project implementation this year, established a total of 22 mercury-free processing operations in its 6 intervention areas, resulting in the prevention of 220 kilograms of mercury use. And in Burkina Faso, the project constructed a new gravimetric mercury-free processing system at its project site, hiring and training four local technicians in equipment operation and maintenance to help ensure the longevity of the system's operation.

The project in Mongolia completed construction of a mercury-free processing system in Mandal soum in June 2023, along with additional infrastructure for power supply and a tailing system. Equipped with gravimetric technology without the use of any chemicals, this facility will process up to 5 tonnes of ore per day. As of this reporting period, planetGOLD Mongolia had also nearly finished construction on a similar mercury-free processing system in a second site, Tunkhel village, which will have the capacity to process up to 10 tonnes of ore per day.



▶ *Building a mercury-free future in Mongolia*

The planetGOLD Philippines project commenced commissioning individual equipment within the project's mercury-free processing system in Paracale, with commissioning of the full plant scheduled for the next reporting period. The project additionally obtained a declaration for a mineral processing zone in its second project site, Sagada, enabling the project to initiate construction of a common/shared processing facility and a suitable tailings pond for existing processing activities within the Minahang Bayan (people's small-scale mining area).

As of this reporting period planetGOLD Kenya was poised to build new processing capacity, having designed a full process flow for mercury-free gold extraction and technical specifications for the equipment. The project also reached agreement with counties in project areas to make land available for the installation of 6 mercury-free demonstration sites.

The planetGOLD Guyana project's technology transfer approach included the establishment of two mercury-free demonstration sites in Regions 7 and 8, where more than 50 miners attended events to see how the technology resulted in more gold at a lower cost. After attending one demonstration event, leaders from the Indigenous village of Karrau requested the installation of this mercury-free processing system in their area, which the project successfully established just prior to completing its activities in February 2023.



▶ *Bringing mercury-free methods to the Amerindian village of Karrau in Guyana*

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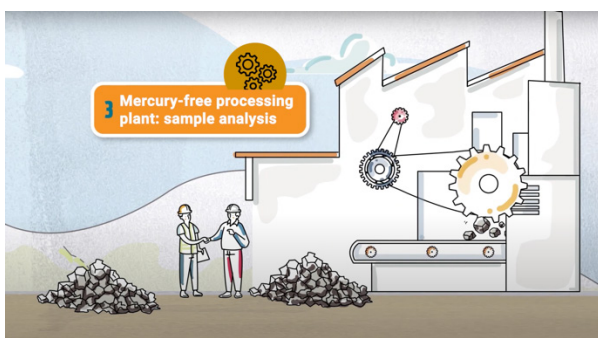
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Partnering with existing processing plants

Projects in Ecuador and Peru have taken up a strategy of incentivizing miners and larger scale processing plants to work together while simultaneously minimizing the use of mercury. In this model, artisanal and small-scale miners become ore suppliers for existing processing plants that utilize mercury-free methods, thereby preventing the miners from processing the material themselves using mercury.

In Ecuador, after increasing the capacity of three existing processing plants with mercury-free equipment and practices, the planetGOLD partner project launched a communication campaign called ValORO tu Trabajo, encouraging miners to participate in this ore sales strategy. In an effort to build up the miners' confidence that if they sell their ore to the processing plants, they will receive a good price, the project worked to strengthen laboratories at the processing plants, which analyze mineral miners bring in to determine the amount of gold it contains.

By improving the laboratories' procedures, the project aims to give miners full assurance that the results accurately depict how much gold is in their ore, which determines the selling price. To date, the use of approximately 0.8 tonnes of mercury have been prevented via the Ecuador project's ore sales strategy. Likewise, in Peru the planetGOLD project has worked in three mining zones in Arequipa and Piura to enable miners to sell their untreated ore to processing plants with efficient mercury-free recovery technologies. This strategy has thus far prevented the emission of about 1.7 tonnes of mercury.



[▶ In this video see how the ore sale strategy works in Ecuador](#)

Training and improving understanding of better practices

To help foster the transition to mercury-free technology, projects across the planetGOLD programme have also provided technical assistance and have engaged miners and gold processors in trainings on how to utilize the mercury-free equipment. Projects have provided instruction on assembling and installing equipment in a proper and reliable way to ensure occupational safety, and on maintaining these systems to ensure their longevity. Technical training topics have included: improved crushing and size reduction operations, gravity concentration methods and equipment, chemical leaching and detoxification, smelting, and refining.

In Burkina Faso, the project launched a comprehensive training program for an initial class of 100 miners, which includes both theoretical instruction and practical instruction carried out at the mercury-free processing system installed at its Gnikipière project site. Through technical assistance in better mining practices and educational workshops, the planetGOLD Peru project has collaborated with regional governments to provide training for thousands of artisanal miners, university students, and professionals in ASM, demonstrating that gravity plants are a viable option for the recovery of gold without mercury.

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The Philippines project completed construction of a training center in Paracale and conducted training on operations and management of the mercury-free processing system in Paracale, a technical lecture on gold processing in Sagada, as well as Occupational Health and Safety trainings in both project sites.

In Indonesia the planetGOLD project also launched a training plant where ASGM miners could learn about mercury-free technologies and techniques. The project also engaged in additional educational activities, including training on cyanide management which contributed to the expansion of mercury-free cyanide operations across its 6 project areas. These cyanide plants resulted in the prevention of an estimated 23 tonnes of mercury use.

In cases where planetGOLD projects have introduced leaching with chemicals that must be handled with great care, teams have educated miners on how to safely handle, use and store the chemicals, to avoid health and environmental concerns. Several project teams have educated miners on additional techniques and technologies, including the proper management of mine tailings and techniques for removing mercury from existing tailings, and have promoted adoption of practices that can reduce the most harmful mercury exposures in a timely manner, particularly at sites where miners are using what are considered the [four worst practices in ASGM](#).



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FORMALIZATION

Formalization—the process of integrating ASGM into the formal economy, society, and regulatory system—is a critical step toward helping address challenges miners often face when operating with an informal status. Bringing miners into the formal economy can lead to higher incomes and better working conditions, while helping to overcome social and environmental challenges.

While formalization of the ASGM sector includes reforming its legal status, the planetGOLD programme additionally aims to support the formulation of improved policies, capacity building, and increased provision of services among agencies and institutions that address different dimensions of the ASGM sector.

Advances in regulation

The development and improvement of regulatory frameworks governing ASGM is an important component in the progression of formalization. All planetGOLD projects have assisted policy makers in improving or developing regulations in some capacity.

In Mongolia, the project team contributed to the improvement and approval of a draft of the country's new national ASM Regulation, which was approved in August 2022. The project then assisted the Government in developing a Guidance Document for implementation of this ASM Regulation at the national and local levels. To further improve coordination and raise awareness, the project conducted training on the ASM Regulation with 24 local officials in Selenge province and with 77 miners and local officials in the Gobi-Altai province. The new ASM Regulation has already enabled 413 miners from two of the project's regions, Mandal soum and Gobi-Altai province, to work formally.

In the Philippines the project played a vital role in initiating policy discussions on the country's regulations on ASGM by completing an assessment of the legal framework and illicit financial flows in the sector. The project also contributed to ongoing efforts to amend the Small-Scale Mining Law of the Philippines by gathering recommendations and action plans formulated during policy workshops and provincial planning activities and sharing these with partner government agencies.

In Colombia, the project reviewed, supported, or developed 10 national standards to improve the environment of the ASGM sector and to reduce mercury use, while proposing additional gender approach guidelines and technical recommendations to the Ministry of Mines and Energy for the drafting of the new Mining Code 2023. The team also progressed in drafting a comprehensive healthcare protocol for people at risk of mercury exposure. And over the last year the project in Kenya carried out public participation in the Draft Guidelines for Mine Safety & Environment and Designation of Areas for ASM Operation, and additionally developed a draft national Guideline on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in Gold Mining.

Building and sustaining capacity

Through the delivery of training, direct assistance and other outreach activities, the planetGOLD projects continue to advance in supporting miners in their formalization process. Projects across the board have engaged in capacity building efforts in mining communities to bolster their understanding of existing legal frameworks governing ASGM

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and how to engage in processes such as obtaining permits and licenses. Several have also provided direct technical support to mining communities in taking the necessary steps to achieve formal status.

In Burkina Faso, the project directly supported an estimated 2,500 miners in creating a fully formalized cooperative, which is key for the ownership transfer of the processing plant it has installed. The project also initiated efforts to formalize a women's cooperative at the project site. Throughout the year the project team supported a total of 13 mining operations in their formalization process through training and awareness raising activities and organized two workshops with representatives of more than 15 government and 10 non-governmental agencies.

The planetGOLD Peru project provided technical assistance for the formalization of a total of 986 ASM members and mining workers from 14 small-scale mining associations. Assistance was provided in areas such as compliance with mining, labor and tax obligations, and assigning specialists to review miners' documentation. The Indonesia planetGOLD project established 7 additional mining cooperatives during the last year of its implementation as a step toward obtaining mining permits.

The project in Colombia reached 1,059 miners in the project's 17 municipalities over the last year through workshops and accompaniment in registration on the country's formalization platform and on due diligence and institutional support. In Kenya, the project aimed to support miners in understanding what processes need to be undertaken by developing a "Roadmap to Formalization," which was validated by representatives of mining groups. Steps in the report include finalizing group constitutions and operational manuals, registering groups by all relevant authorities, and assisting groups in obtaining licenses.

The Ecuador project developed a "step-by-step" manual on good environmental practices that it shared with project beneficiaries and supported 4 mining associations and 3 mining concession holders in completing a checklist process verifying compliance with these practices. To build additional capacity, the project trained 3 female association leaders on the manual, who could then educate other women's groups and concession holders. The project also supported its government partners in implementing historic new regulations formally recognizing *jancheras* (female mineral selectors).

The planetGOLD project in Mongolia directly trained 1,115 miners on ASM formalization, responsible mining, Occupational Safety & Health, gender and human rights, environmental practice, and business management. And with training materials developed in cooperation with the project, the Mongolian ASM National Federation conducted additional training for 1,949 miners from the project's provinces, equipping them with information required to complete the formalization process under the new ASM regulation.

The Philippines project organized a series of policy workshops for small-scale miners and government officials on the formalization process at the national and local levels, which touched on topics including permitting, Republic Act No. 7076 Amendment, and implementing the rules and regulations of Republic Act of 7076. The project team also collaborated on the development of a new Knowledge Management platform that is envisioned to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the ASGM permitting process and to serve as a centralized hub for ASM-related transactions with the government.

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ACCESS TO FORMAL MARKETS

One key element of attracting finance and engaging formal markets is to ensure that the gold produced meets relevant environmental and social standards. The [planetGOLD Criteria](#) for Environmentally and Socially Responsible Operations were created as a branched version of the CRAFT Code, providing an opportunity for planetGOLD beneficiaries to be in conformance with other key guidance and codes.

The programme also aims to connect miners to interested responsible gold buyers such as international refiners, potential domestic gold markets, and national banks to facilitate the direct sale of their gold, which would reduce intermediaries and thereby potentially increase the price miners receive.

Advances toward production of responsible gold

Working with mining operations that comply with and show evidence of verification of environmental standards is a requirement of planetGOLD projects. Building on the CRAFT Code, planetGOLD incorporates three additional criteria for mining entities participating in the programme: eliminating mercury in the mining process, respecting and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and minimizing impact on biodiversity.

Partnering with the Alliance for Responsible Mining, the planetGOLD Colombia project has succeeded in verifying nine mining operations that are in conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria, which is a branched version of the CRAFT Code. These mining entities have produced a total of 791 kilograms of responsibly mined, mercury-free gold since verifying that they meet the planetGOLD Criteria in 2022. One of these groups, La Gabriela Mine, a Fairmined certified operation in the Bajo Cauca Antioqueño area, has to date reported the sale of 6.1 kilograms of mercury-free, responsible gold to the formal market via C.I ANEXPO, also known as the ALTEA group.

Verifying conformance is a critical step in ensuring that gold is responsibly produced, and this is not an overnight process. Almost all projects in the first phase of the programme which launched prior to 2022 have conducted trainings on the CRAFT Code and planetGOLD Criteria, facilitated national and local workshops, or engaged with key stakeholders to work toward establishing transparent supply chains for responsibly mined ASM gold.

As a result of the Mongolia project's work this year to implement the CRAFT Code and planetGOLD Criteria, partner mining organizations have improved and updated their internal rules for environmental management, occupational health and safety, gold traceability, accounting practices, human rights issues, and for implementing an improved grievance and complaint mechanism. These partner organizations are now compliant with 41 out of the 43 criteria of the CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria standard. The Mongolia project also organized capacity-building activities, including a study tour, on the benefits of due diligence, the CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria, and gold traceability for key ASGM stakeholders.

In Burkina Faso the project erected an on-site shelter for miner training focusing on both mercury-free gold processing and on certification standards for artisanal miners. The project also hosted a training workshop with ANEEMAS, the national agency for the supervision of ASGM operations, focusing on improving miners' understanding of responsible ASGM gold marketing regulations.

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The planetGOLD Philippines project also made notable progress toward verifying mining entities' conformance with the Criteria. The project created a technical working group for implementing the planetGOLD Criteria and signed a Memorandum of Agreement with partner mining associations and the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board of Camarines Norte publicly declaring their commitment to abide by the principles and guidelines outlined in the Criteria. They also drafted an initial CRAFT Code/planetGOLD report for the project's partner mining association at their Paracale project site and conducted a workshop on developing gold trading arrangements with the Central Bank.

As part of its search to identify new markets for the commercialization of responsible gold, the planetGOLD Peru project signed an institutional agreement with the Inca One processing plant in Arequipa, verifying that it met 96 percent of the planetGOLD Criteria. The project is also working with the Bulmint refinery to market mercury-free gold from the Arequipa and Puno regions.



▶ Watch "La Gabriela mine: experiences of responsible supply chains"

Documented challenges

Through training and support provided by projects, many mining groups now have a good understanding of the formal gold market system. However, there is still a significant gap in terms of formal gold market players recognizing the realities of dealing with ASGM miners and adapting their buying practices with these supplies. For example, the Indonesia project observed that the biggest obstacle is that formal market players cannot compete with the informal "cash and carry" system, which is preferred by mining groups in Indonesia due to its simplicity and quick turnaround time for payment.

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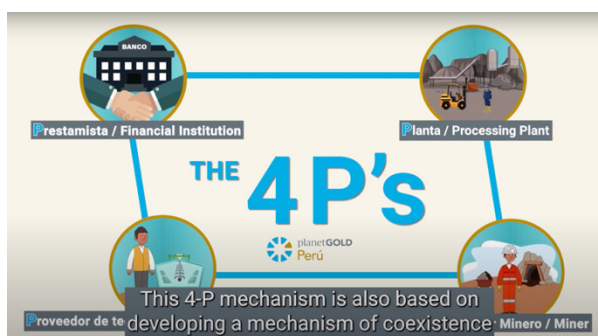
ACCESS TO FINANCE

The planetGOLD programme is working to improve access to finance by understanding the different barriers miners and financiers face, then designing approaches that address them. Miners' lack of familiarity with formal business procedures, the small size of operations, and the fact that actors in the sector tend to operate informally all tend to hinder miners' access to formal sources of finance, leaving them to turn to informal, and sometimes disreputable, sources. Formal financial institutions are often wary of engaging with ASGM due to perceived reputational risks, high transaction costs associated with small actors like ASM miners, and a lack of experience with the ASGM sector.

The programme has been testing innovative approaches to finance that aim to overcome these barriers and unlock the formal finance needed to fund miners' transition to mercury-free methods. By piloting different models for access to finance and working with a range of partners including microfinance institutions, commercial banks, national development banks, NGOs, socially responsible investments, and industry partners, planetGOLD is demonstrating how ASGM finance can be designed to fit a wide range of circumstances and needs.

Debt finance with an intermediary

One model some projects are piloting is a debt financing mechanism that uses an intermediary to “de-risk” the finance. The general model involves a financier who makes a loan to an ASGM gold producer (usually to finance purchase of equipment). The ASGM operation in turn produces and sells gold to a designated buyer at a discounted rate. The buyer then uses the discounted amount to make the loan payment on behalf of the ASGM gold producer.



[▶ Learn more about planetGOLD Peru's "4P" financial mechanism](#)

In Ecuador, the project has developed a new financial product with the National Bank of Ecuador as the financier and the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE) as the gold buyer. This Mining Development Credit (“Crédito Fomento Minería”) will enable miners to borrow between \$5,000-500,000 USD with interest rates starting at 10.71% and payment terms of up to 10 years for fixed assets and 3 years for working capital. Borrowers are required to provide a certificate of economic agent authorization issued by the Central Bank of Ecuador. As of this reporting period, the project was supporting the government and both financial institutions in educating miners on how to apply for this new financial product.

In the case of Peru, the planetGOLD team followed a similar model to finance equipment called the “4P” financial mechanism, but instead of directly providing loan funds to miners, the loan proceeds are transferred directly to the equipment supplier who then provides the agreed equipment to the mining operation. The operation then sells its ore to a central processing plant, which pays a portion to the financier as loan repayment (see featured video on the right). As of the end of the reporting period, financial institution Caja Los Andes had made USD \$530,293 available through this mechanism, with the first

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two successful miner applicants receiving loans totaling USD \$16,174 to purchase new equipment.

Debt mechanisms with loan guarantees

Another way to de-risk financing of the ASGM sector is by providing loan guarantees. In Colombia, the project created a financial mechanism agreement with CFA Financial Cooperative, with a guarantee fund of USD \$80,000 contributed by planetGOLD Colombia to support this line of credit, worth a total of USD \$230,000. As loans have been successfully repaid, the fund's capacity has increased even beyond this amount. To date, 41 loans have been granted for a total amount of USD \$249,840.

In Burkina Faso, the team developed a revolving fund that will be made available to ASGM operations, with the Coris Bank International as the fund host. A loan guarantee will support the credit, with capital to fund the guarantee initially provided by the project, but with the aim to raise additional capital from other public sector actors (e.g. bilateral donors) and from private actors, such as refiners, that are interested in developing responsible artisanal and small-scale gold production capacity. An account was opened in June 2023 making USD \$150,000 available in the revolving fund.

Central Bank collaborations

In the Philippines, the project team is working with the Central Bank of the Philippines to develop a Supplier Agreement whereby the Central Bank agrees in writing to purchase gold from the partner mining association in the Paracale project site that meets the planetGOLD Criteria. The mining association can then use the Supplier Agreement as a form of collateral to secure a loan from participating local commercial banks.

The Philippine project is also supporting the Central Bank and the Provincial Government of Camarines Norte in exploring the creation of a Credit Surety Fund for miners in their Paracale project area. This pooled fund—with contributions from cooperatives and/or non-government organizations, the local government unit, and government-owned banks—would act as surety cover and serve as alternative collateral for participating mining entities that would apply for loans from formal financial institutions.

Models outside the formal banking system

In addition to the financial mechanism developed with the CFA Financial Cooperative, the planetGOLD Colombia project has partnered with Corporación Medios de Vida-VITAL to implement Savings and Credit Groups as a pragmatic financial strategy adapted to mining communities' needs. In this model, mining communities form groups that help them collectively save funds, acting like a small community bank. These savings are later used to finance the communities' necessities, such as mercury-free technologies. A total of 81 groups from the Bajo Cauca region and Cauca regions have been formed, comprising a total of 1,313 people. The financial balance of the groups is USD \$58,694, with USD \$4,900 held as a social fund, and 39 loans in the amount of USD \$3,450 have been granted.

The project in Mongolia likewise assisted miners in Tunkhel village in establishing and registering a Savings and Credit Cooperative to work as an entity in the ASM sector. With 24 miners as founding members, including 18 women, the cooperative is owned and operated by miners. It is expected to have approximately \$189,000 USD in funds available through

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the planetGOLD Mongolia project and is expected to provide access to capital for all 140 miners in Tunkhel. The cooperative is registered with the Government and as of the end of the reporting period was working to get its operation permit.

In partnership with Solidaridad, planetGOLD Peru has developed the pilot loan “Emprende Pallaquera” for amounts up to USD \$3,000. This community banking model aims to allow pallaqueras (women mineral selectors) to access finance and to promote entrepreneurship in mining communities. The project and partners held a training for the program, granting prizes of up to \$4,000 to women miners who took the training and who developed a business model to complement or phase out mining activity.

In the Philippines the project has developed a Social Investment Plan (SIP) for operations at the project’s mercury-free processing plant in Paracale, for presentations to national investors following the commissioning of the new facility, particularly socially responsible impact investors. This social enterprise design includes allotting a portion of its profits for an ASGM fund that will be used for economic, social, and environmental outreach programs.

Educating miners and financiers

Bridging knowledge gaps for both miners and financial institutions is key to fortifying the development of these new financial models. Projects have undertaken training since the inception of the programme to both improve miners’ financial skills and educate financial institutions about the ASGM sector. Through engagement in education and outreach to banks and other formal financial institutions, the aim is to improve their understanding of the realities of the ASGM sector and to promote positive opportunities to provide financing for responsible, mercury-free mining operations. Projects have also engaged in improving miners’ business skills and in training them on the loan application process and creating business pitches.



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AWARENESS RAISING

The execution of effective communications and awareness raising plays a critical role in advancing progress on the four programmatic pillars elaborated above. Tackling the use of mercury in the sector requires not only disseminating information on the dangers of mercury, formalization, financial mechanisms, and mercury-free technologies, but also persuading actors to change their behavior. The planetGOLD programme aims to use effective communications to help miners, local and national governments, financiers, consumers and other supply chain actors recognize and support the potential of responsible, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining.

Elevating human stories and progress being made

To reach the broader public with messages on responsible ASGM and to elevate the perspectives of miners themselves, planetGOLD has focused on profiling miners in the programme and the ways in which they and project teams are working to effect positive change in the ASGM sector. To this end, in late 2022, planetGOLD premiered a new video series called “[Dispatches from the Field](#)” which dives into some of the obstacles that miners have faced, while featuring champions that are breaking through barriers to advance responsible mining and make meaningful change on the ground. Ultimately, the series aims to showcase and celebrate positive ripple effects the programme is having on individuals and communities alike toward making mercury history in artisanal and small-scale gold mining.



Projects across the programme have created additional human-centered stories about miners published on the planetGOLD website, YouTube, and social media. The Guyana project, for instance, shared stories of female small-scale miners through its “Women in Mining” video series, and the planetGOLD Philippines project has developed its monthly “ASGM Champion Spotlight” series on Facebook. This campaign features individual miners and other partners who are recognized for inspiring change and advancing responsible ASGM in their community. Other stories from project teams can be found in the news articles published on the [website](#).

Reaching the next generation

Multiple project teams have developed a strategy of targeting awareness raising efforts at children and educators in an effort to break the intergenerational cycle of mercury use. Project teams in Indonesia, Guyana, Ecuador, Colombia, the Philippines, Mongolia, and Peru have gone into local schools and other gatherings of children to hold age-appropriate awareness sessions and engaging events on the dangers of mercury, ways to avoid exposure, and on safer, more responsible mining methods.

Creative campaigns that have been carried out in planetGOLD project areas include [storytelling events](#) and contests, singing and song writing contests, art contests, and a food

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safety event where young people proposed actions to prevent mercury from affecting food sources in their region. Through these early intervention educational initiatives, the aim is to empower young people—who are often the children and grandchildren of miners—to learn from a young age how to protect themselves from mercury exposure. If they later choose to go into mining, the hope is that they will be equipped with an understanding of ways to mine in a responsible, mercury-free way. Children can also become agents of change in their community and help inform their parents and other adults in their life about the importance of making mercury history.

Sensitizing miners and local communities

To be most effective, communication with miners and affected communities needs to be rooted in detailed knowledge of the local cultural, economic and institutional context. Several project teams have engaged in contextual studies and visits to project areas to understand the best ways to reach these communities with their messages. Projects often find that information is best received when it is presented visually, such as through video, infographics, or posters. And in many cases, despite the increasing prevalence of mobile devices, project teams have found that effectively raising awareness in mining areas requires distributing materials and speaking to communities in person.

“I drew action on mercury use in artisanal mining. Breathing mercury vapors is much more harmful to human health. If people continue to use mercury, the Earth will end. Therefore, my painting shows how a healthy Earth is different from the Earth with mercury use.”

– Children’s art competition winner B. Tuguldur, 7th grade, Selenge province, Mongolia

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Multiple country projects have created educational kits disseminated to miners and others in mining communities, containing materials on the impacts of mercury on the environment and human health, avoiding exposures, alternatives to mercury in mining, and other health and safety messages. Additional engaging materials that have been disseminated include playing cards, comic books, posters, booklets, coloring sheets for children, and wall calendars with reminders and information for miners. Projects have also placed key messages and slogans on information billboards in mining areas and on merchandise items such as shirts, hard hats, bags, water bottles, and stickers for miners to place on their motorbikes, mining equipment, or other personal belongings. In so doing, projects aim to regularly reinforce messages about responsible mining even when their team members are not present at mine sites.

In addition to directly providing materials to mining communities on the impacts of mercury use, all planetGOLD projects have carried out education and training activities, both in-person and virtually, on cleaner production methods, access to finance, formalization, occupational safety and health, due diligence, gender equity, and many more topics. The Colombia project, for instance, continued disseminating its innovative [e-learning courses](#), and the planetGOLD Peru project expanded the reach of its [“Mercury Expedition” online campaign](#).



►► Explore an e-learning course developed by planetGOLD Colombia (Spanish only)



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GENDER EQUITY

Recognizing the key roles that women can and should play in advancing more responsible, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale mining practices, women’s equitable inclusion is a cross-cutting theme across all the planetGOLD programme’s core programmatic pillars. Making up 30 percent of the global ASGM workforce, the empowerment of women’s groups and women-led groups has the potential to significantly strengthen mining operations and to safeguard communities from unsafe practices in ASGM. Projects in the planetGOLD programme promote the participation and advancement of women who wish to work in the sector and aim to address structural barriers that often prevent women from fully reaping the benefits of this work.

Making regulatory frameworks more inclusive

Significant efforts have been made by planetGOLD projects to influence and execute national- and local-level regulations related to recognizing and supporting women miners in the ASGM sector. In Ecuador, the project has supported the national government in the implementation of new regulations formally recognizing *jancheras* (female artisanal miners who collect mineral discarded by larger scale operations) as members of the ASGM sector. The project additionally began devising a strategy to enable these women miners to join their mineral sales strategy and deliver ore directly to processing plants, rather than process it themselves using mercury.

Evaluating the gender-related provisions and impacts of existing regulations is also an important contribution to the regulatory landscape that can help inform future evolutions in legal frameworks. In Mongolia, for example, the project conducted a gender analysis of the country’s new ASM Regulation, finding that it neither discriminates against women nor does it directly acknowledge the different needs and experiences of women and men working in the sector.

Increasing capacity

Several projects have worked to promote gender equity and inclusivity through training, workshops and discussions with miners, policy makers and other stakeholders. This year the planetGOLD Peru project launched the “Rinconada Plan” in collaboration with Solidaridad and The Swiss Responsible Gold Initiative. This initiative benefits 6 associations of women gold selectors, strengthening their capacities in responsible mining practices, financial education, design and validation of a financial mechanism, and awareness on the impacts of mercury and on gender violence.

In an effort to promote opportunities for women miners at their mine site, the planetGOLD Burkina Faso project launched a campaign to support women’s financial skills and to assist them in establishing an official women’s cooperative and trained 30 women miners in mercury-free mining techniques. The Philippines project likewise partnered with a local college to carry out training aimed at supporting additional income opportunities for women and bridging the gender gap in income and employment in the ASGM sector.

In Colombia the project has emphasized meeting women’s financial inclusion needs. In addition to consolidating two strategies that improve access to finance for women by way of credit and self-managed savings, the project formed a Network of Mining Women to build financial skills and opportunities for women. With a total of 303 members who are

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artisanal miners or mineral selectors in Bajo Cauca Antioquia, Northeast Antioquia and Sur de Bolívar, the network has facilitated 116 workshops on cooperation, associativity, community and solidarity work.

Beyond capacity building for mining workers, engagement of national and local political stakeholders in education and outreach provides a foundation to improve gender equity and inclusion at the government level. To this end, over the past year in Peru, the project trained 83 regional energy and mining authorities and officials on gender approaches applied in ASM, the Sustainable Development Goals, and health impacts of mercury. The planetGOLD Philippines project carried out a gender mainstreaming workshop in Sagada in partnership with the Philippine Commission on Women resulting in a gender action plan. And in Mongolia the project has established a Gender Committee composed of 65 artisanal miners and local officials in Mandal soum to prepare members as gender activists and human rights advocates, and to improve gender and human rights sensitive practices among artisanal miners.

Promoting associations

As an important step toward official recognition and formalization, some projects are working to help women miners form their own cooperatives or associations. In Kenya, the project is encouraging the establishment of women-led groups that, once formalized, would be able to apply for mining permits and by extension improve the availability and equality of opportunities to access financial services. The project has provided training and support to women miners with the objective to empower them to form women-led mining cooperatives and to undergo the registration process.

This year the planetGOLD Peru project supported the registration of the Piura region's first-ever formally constituted association of female mineral selectors (*pallaqueras*), composed of 35 women. The team also supported the establishment of a similar association in the Arequipa region. And in the Philippines, the project organized an orientation for women on the pre-registration process for mining cooperatives.

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OBSERVATIONS TO DATE

As the planetGOLD programme nears the end of its first phase, some common themes and observations are emerging across the programme. This section highlights some initial reflections, learnings and emerging issues.

In the development of formal finance mechanisms, for instance, the importance of reflecting on the benefits as well as drawbacks of current informal mechanisms has become clearer. While formal finance may be more advantageous in the long term, it has been recognized that many miners prefer simple transactions, risk sharing, privacy and flexibility offered through informal financing arrangements and that formal finance needs to compete with these advantages. To overcome these challenges, all planetGOLD countries have invested in building capacity of ASGM operators around financial literacy, record keeping and formalization. Further, in some cases, mechanisms offering incentives such as assistance with bank savings accounts, or extra insurance, has been effective in attracting miners to formal finance.

With perceptions of the ASGM sector as extremely high risk persistent among the finance sector, providing a first-loss guarantee to finance partners is still seen as a necessary precondition by many financial entities. The availability of government funds to provide credit lines for miners, de-risking financial agreements with local banks through supplier agreements with Central Banks, and using entities such as equipment suppliers as intermediaries have been key in the development of some mechanisms.

The absence of adequate incentives for ASGM sector engagement with the formal market has also been a common theme among projects. There is often a mismatch in expectations between miners and the projects about the benefits that access to formal markets should bring. Furthermore, incentives are needed not only for ASGM operators, but also traders or other local supply chain actors who are vital links between ASGM production and national refineries, export or downstream industries.

While access to formal markets often focuses on international actors, the planetGOLD experience to date has confirmed that recognizing, mapping and working with local trading dynamics is a fundamental first step of intervention in order to engage the right supply chain actors. To address logistical challenges to the formal trade of gold, practical solutions embedded in local realities also need to be formulated. In several planetGOLD countries, this has taken the shape of collaboration with local governments and stakeholders to strategically decentralize essential services, such as gold buying and assaying.

Further, planetGOLD countries increasingly recognize a need to actively involve local traders and aggregators who already have established relationships with ASGM operators and understand local context. These individuals or entities can act as key intermediaries, bridging the gap between miners and formal markets. It is also evident that sustainability of project interventions is reinforced through partnerships with entities who can continue providing services and assistance to miners, traders, or other actors beyond the life of the project, such as local vocational and technical schools, assaying laboratories, etc.

Regarding technology transfer, project experience has underscored that sound preparatory activities need to be prioritized at the outset, such as ASGM-appropriate prospecting studies and laboratory analyses to characterize the nature of the ore. Understanding the type of ore helps determine which physical or chemical mercury-free processing methods are appropriate for the site. Equally important, project teams must consult with miners to

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ensure that any technical interventions meet the miners' needs and will be accepted and used by them. Processing methods that are then selected need to account for the entire ASGM workflow to maximize the efficiency of gold recovery. This means that crushing and milling of the ore to an appropriate grain size in the gold liberation step is equally important as the use of gravimetric equipment for the concentration step.

While some planetGOLD projects have undertaken efforts to build or expand mercury-free processing facilities owned by ASGM operations, other country teams have successfully worked to build capacity of facilities that can provide mercury-free ore processing services to miners. This "ore-selling" model frees miners to focus on mining, while allowing processing facilities to use the most appropriate technologies to extract gold without mercury.

In order to prioritize assisting miners with identifying technical and financial solutions to improve their operations, planetGOLD is primarily working with mining communities that are well along in the formalization process. Capacity building efforts have been key in these mining communities, to support them in knowing how to engage in processes such as obtaining permits and licenses. Several projects have provided direct technical support to mining communities in taking the necessary steps to achieve formal status, and in some cases have worked with authorities at the national level to develop more user friendly platforms and tools for miners to use in their formalization process. Country teams' evaluation of national legal frameworks on ASGM and their active participation in policy discussions around regulations governing the sector have also contributed to advancing ASGM's integration into the formal economy.

Regarding awareness raising, project teams are recognizing that to get miners to change their behavior, they need to convince them that with mercury-free technology, they can recover more gold or at least the same amount, while preserving their health and the health of their families and community members and shortening the processing chain. There is also increasing recognition that responsible gold processing opens the door to new markets by enabling them to sell their gold via official, traceable channels.

Activities and awareness raising campaigns targeting children and youth have been increasingly seen as an effective communication and outreach strategy in ASGM communities. The objective is to empower the children of miners to protect themselves from mercury exposure and to help break cycles of mercury use. If the children follow their parents into mining work, the aim is for them to already be equipped with knowledge on ways to mine in a responsible, mercury-free way. In the meantime, children can also help inform their parents and other adults about the dangers of mercury and better alternatives.

Contextual studies carried out in ASGM project areas have shown that often, one of the best ways to reach communities with project messages is by delivering materials and outreach activities in person. Projects often find that information is best received when it is presented visually or in easily digestible formats, such as through video, infographics, or posters. When project staff are unable to be physically present in mining communities, merchandise, murals and other physical materials conveying responsible mining information and themes help reinforce these messages in between in-person engagements.

In the coming year, the planetGOLD programme aims to further expand the global knowledge base by producing an in-depth, cross-programmatic analysis and comparison of activities and lessons learned to date across all projects in the programme. [Subscribe to the planetGOLD email list](#) to be sure to receive a copy of that analysis when it is published.

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COUNTRY PROJECT SNAPSHOTS



BURKINA FASO



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:

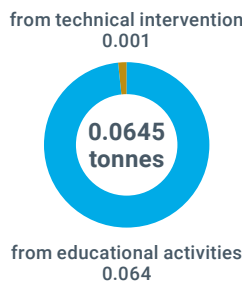


KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

The project achieved a total mercury reduction of 0.0645 tonnes through the installation of a new gravimetric mercury-free processing system at its Gnikpière mine site and through trainings carried out on this system.

Amount of mercury eliminated from educational activities and technical intervention (in tonnes)



RESPONSIBLE GOLD

Amount of responsible gold produced by operations verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria (in kilograms)

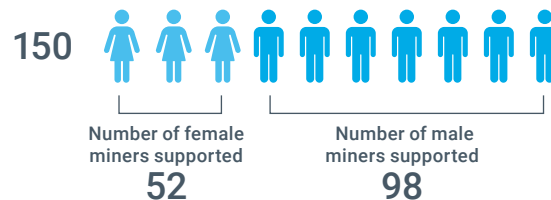


MINERS

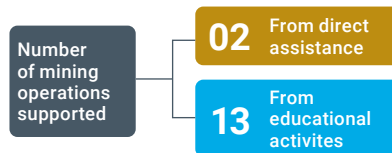
Number of miners supported in their formalization process from direct assistance



Number of miners supported in their formalization process from educational activities



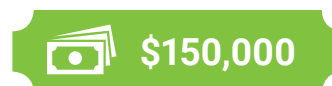
Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process from direct assistance and educational activities



FINANCE

In collaboration with local bank Coris Bank International, the project devised a revolving fund mechanism with USD \$150,000 available to ASGM miners as of June 2023.

Total amount of money made available through 1 new finance mechanism



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JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Tested mercury-free processing equipment, with a demonstration tour for project members and local authorities
- ▶ Hired and trained four local technicians in equipment operation and maintenance, addressing functionality challenges
- ▶ Erected an onsite shelter for miner training on the pilot unit
- ▶ Conducted a training for trainers in mercury-free gold technologies, focusing on certification standards for artisanal miners
- ▶ Launched a comprehensive training program for 100 miners and had an official ceremony involving various ministers
- ▶ Produced 405 grams of mercury-free, responsible gold



Formalization

- ▶ Directly supported an estimated 2,500 miners (1,900 men; 600 women) in creating a cooperative that is now formalized with official recognition, with a 15-member management committee. This group is key for the ownership transfer of the processing plant. Completed an institutional capacity assessment and successfully organized two workshops, with over 15 government and 10 non-governmental agencies participating. The first workshop had 26 attendees (42% women), and the second had 28 (29% women).
- ▶ Actively worked on formalizing the Gnikpière project site, including a collaboration with the permit holder through a memorandum of understanding, crucial for processing equipment installation and a tailing treatment facility
- ▶ Undertook efforts to formalize a Gnikpière women's cooperative
- ▶ Supported 13 mining operations through training and awareness raising activities



Access to Finance

- ▶ Signed a memorandum with Coris Bank International (CBI), and together developed credit application criteria and a management committee for a revolving fund, a new financing mechanism aimed at enhancing ASGM sector financing and reducing mercury use
- ▶ Secured investment in the revolving fund from one institution
- ▶ Facilitated the opening of an account in June 2023 making \$150,000 USD available in the revolving fund.
- ▶ Conducted a campaign for miners providing loan application guidance
- ▶ Achieved widespread sensitization, miner trust improvement, identification and training of about 5,000 miners
- ▶ Actively supported miners in fund applications and business plan development.



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Conducted sessions to promote the use of mercury-free ore processing equipment among artisanal miners.
- ▶ Participated in multi-stakeholder consultations for sharing best practices in artisanal mining.
- ▶ Hosted a training and awareness workshop with ANEEMAS focusing on responsible ASGM gold marketing regulations. The workshop aimed to support at least 50 miners in regulation, formalization, mining, and market access.



Gender Equity

- ▶ Launched a campaign to educate Gnikpière women, supporting their fund applications and assisting in establishing an official women's cooperative.
- ▶ Trained 30 women in mercury-free processing
- ▶ Continuously aimed to integrate women in project activities

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COLOMBIA



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:

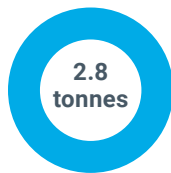


KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

Through delivery of equipment to improve gold production processes and training on mercury-free technologies, to date the project has prevented the use of 2.8 tonnes of mercury among 14 mining entities.

Amount of mercury prevented from technical intervention (in tonnes)
from technical intervention



RESPONSIBLE GOLD

In coordination with the Alliance for Responsible Mining, the project intervened with 9 mining entities verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria, which collectively produced 791 kg of gold. One of these operations, which has obtained Fairmined certification, recorded 6.1 kg of gold sold on the formal market.

MINERS

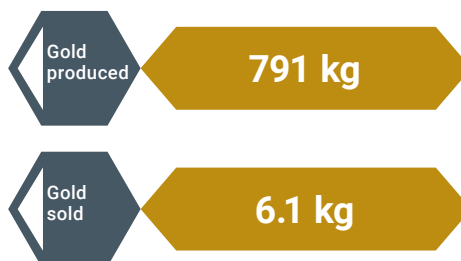
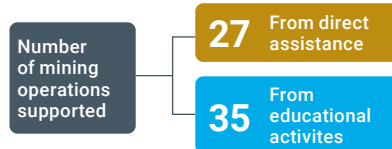
Number of miners supported in their formalization process from direct assistance



Number of miners supported in their formalization process from educational activities



Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process from direct assistance and educational activities



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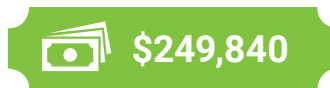
FINANCE

Through a financial agreement with CFA Financial Cooperative that is guaranteed with funds from the project, 41 loans have been granted for a total amount of USD \$249,840. As loans have been successfully repaid, the fund's capacity has increased beyond its initial line of credit.

Total amount of money made available through new financial mechanisms (USD)



Total amount of money successfully accessed by miners/operations via these mechanisms (USD)



JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Delivered sluice boxes and mats for mercury-free separation of gold to ASM communities Asomuselupaz, Mindalá Community Council, Association of Afro-descendant Women of Northern Cauca, and Rural women of El Doce in Antioquia.
- ▶ Provided a gold beneficiation plant and mercury-free gold equipment to La Gabriela Mine, Asominucol, Cangrejo Mine, Esperanza Mine, Walter Mine, Los Cigarrillos Mine, Caribona Mining Society.
- ▶ For the purpose of technical training, a mobile metallurgical laboratory was delivered to the operations of Alto Caribona in the Sur de Bolívar.
- ▶ Provided trainings, workshops and other events to 1,741 miners on mercury-free techniques, technologies and equipment for clean production.
- ▶ Through this technology transfer and technical training support among 14 mining entities, the use of 2.01 tonnes of mercury was prevented during the reporting period.



Formalization

- ▶ Reached 1,059 miners in the project's 17 municipalities through workshops and accompaniment in registration on the Genesis formalization platform, due diligence, and institutional support
- ▶ Reviewed, supported, and developed 10 national standards to improve the environment of the ASGM sector and to reduce the use of mercury
- ▶ In partnership with Universidad Nacional de Colombia and with the support of the Ministry of Health, progressed in drafting a comprehensive healthcare protocol for people at risk, or in situations linked to the exposure to mercury and its compounds
- ▶ Provided gender guideline recommendations for the National Environmental System (SINA) by suggesting activities aimed at mainstreaming the gender and differential approach in environmental management and supported the socialization of the recommendations.
- ▶ Proposed gender approach guidelines and technical recommendations to the Ministry of Mines and Energy for the drafting of the new Mining Code 2023



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ To date, mining communities verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria in Cauca, Antioquia (Bajo Cauca) and Sur de Bolívar have produced a total of 791 kilograms of mercury-free, responsible gold.

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- ▶ Of this total, 6.1 kilograms of responsible gold were sold to the formal market via the Sociedad de Comercialización Internacional Antioqueña de Exportaciones S.A.S (C.I ANEXPO), also known as the ALTEA group. This mining operation also meets Fairmined standards for clean gold production.



Access to Finance

- ▶ In collaboration with CFA Cooperativa Financiera, 88 new savings accounts were opened for mining employees, subsistence miners, and productive units through a new Guarantee Fund.
- ▶ Through a financial agreement with CFA Financial Cooperative guaranteed with funds from the project to date, 41 loans have been granted to miners in the amount of USD \$249,840.
- ▶ Partnered with Corporación Medios de Vida - VITAL to implement a Savings and Credit Group financial strategy supporting mining communities' needs related to financial education, cooperatives and teamwork. Mining communities gather in groups that collectively save funds that are used to finance the communities' necessities, such as mercury-free technologies.
- ▶ Helped form a total of 81 Savings and Credit Groups from the Bajo Cauca region and Cauca regions, with a total of 1,313 people and a financial balance of USD \$58,694. Thirty-nine loans in the amount of USD \$3,450 have been granted.
- ▶ Formed a Network of Mining Women to assist with financial opportunities for women, with a total of 303 members (259 women; 44 men) who are artisanal miners or mineral selectors in Bajo Cauca Antioquia, Northeast Antioquia and Sur de Bolívar. To date, the network has facilitated 116 workshops on cooperation, associativity, community and solidarity work.



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Reached 14,308 new individuals (7,440 women; 6,868 men), including 3,577 direct participants and their families.
- ▶ To date, 1,593 educational kits containing materials on the impacts of mercury in the environment and human health have been delivered.
- ▶ Implemented 6 creative campaigns aimed at educating youth on the dangers of mercury, including: a children's story contest in coordination with the Association of Afro-descendant Women of Northern Cauca (ASOM); a "Colombia Libre del Mercurio" event on Children's Day in the village of Mindalá, Suárez; "Couplets and Verses for a Mercury-free Colombia" in the municipality of Timbiquí; a gastronomic exhibition for food safety in Guapi, Cauca, where adolescents and young people proposed actions to prevent mercury from affecting rivers or food sources in their region; and a singing contest for women working in mining and agriculture in the Buenos Aires region promoted the elimination of mercury use in all activities.



Gender Equity

- ▶ Worked to strengthen the gender capacities of public officials from the Regional Autonomous Corporations (Corantioquia, CRC and CSB).
- ▶ Focused on including a gender approach within the regulatory frameworks and public policies with gender proposals and guidelines.
- ▶ Operationalized care routes in preparation for reported Gender-Based Violence in eight municipalities and constructed a protocol for health care for people who may be at risk due to mercury exposure.
- ▶ Consolidated two financial inclusion strategies that improved access to finance for women by way of credit and self-managed savings.
- ▶ Created the Network of Mining Women, of which both men and women are members.
- ▶ Directly reached 3,577 people (1,860 women; 1,717 men) with information about how the dangers of mercury affect men and women differently



“Thanks to the planetGOLD project I have been able to get ahead, improve my quality of life and help other women do clean mining.”

– Armencia Rosa Pérez, Artisanal Miner

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ECUADOR



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



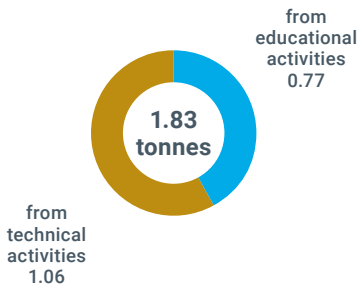
The National Program for Sound Management and Life Cycle Management of Chemical Substances is a planetGOLD partner project.

KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

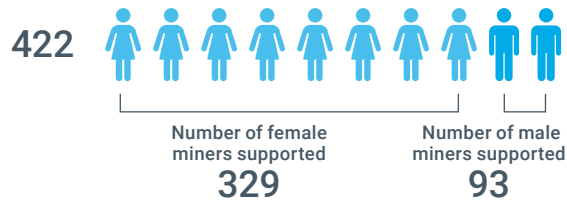
To date the project has prevented the use of 0.765 tonnes of mercury via its ore sales strategy. An additional 1.06 tonnes of mercury have been prevented through alternative livelihood projects and capacity building activities.

Amount of mercury prevented as a result of technical intervention and educational activities (in tonnes)



MINERS

Number of miners supported in their formalization process from educational activities



“We are taking very seriously the possibility of negotiating with the plants, selling the ore directly to them [...] We have been training ourselves to find a way to negotiate with the processing plants directly, so that they buy from us at a fair price.”

– Andrea Mendieta, mineral collector (*janchera*)

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JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Launched ore sales strategy in collaboration with the EMICOR plant, EYMEN CORPORATION plant and NUEVA UNIÓN.
- ▶ Under this strategy, the project strengthened 3 processing plants and 2 ore laboratories, which are now operating with the project's proposed business model of purchasing ore from ASM miners who would have otherwise processed it themselves using mercury
- ▶ Since the launch of the project's ore sales strategy, a total of 99.01 kilograms of mercury-free gold have been recovered at three processing plants
- ▶ The EYMEN plant purchased 2,091.48 tonnes of ore, with 2.21 kilograms of mercury-free gold recovered and 15.46 kilograms of mercury prevented
- ▶ The EMICOR plant purchased 73,253.87 tonnes of ore, with 94.43 kilograms of mercury-free gold recovered and 661.03 kilograms of mercury prevented
- ▶ The NUEVA UNIÓN plant processed 264 tonnes of ore, obtaining 2.37 kilograms of gold and preventing the use of 16.58 kilograms of mercury
- ▶ An additional 0.5 kilograms of gold was recovered using a natural biofiltration system in the waters of the Nambija River



Formalization

- ▶ Supported the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition and Ministry of Energy and Mines in the implementation of new regulations formally recognizing *Jancheras* (female miners who collect low mineral content rock from dumps) as members of the ASGM sector.
- ▶ Developed a "step-by-step" manual on good environmental practices and shared with 79 people (69 women and 10 men) in Camilo Ponce Enríquez canton.
- ▶ As a way to build and maintain capacity, the project trained 3 female association leaders on the manual, who could then educate and provide advice to other women's groups and mining concession holders.
- ▶ Supported 4 mining associations and 3 mining concession holders in completing a checklist requesting the status of compliance with the conditions provided in the manual.
- ▶ Considered a pilot business dynamic, so that both grassroots recyclers and mining concession holders can acknowledge the benefits and the obligations they must assume to operate within the instructive's framework.



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Completed a feasibility study in the project's priority mining sectors analyzing a system for integrating responsible supply chain initiatives in the ASGM mining sector in Ecuador, in compliance with international mining standards.
- ▶ Finalized the study, *Ecuador's current situation and regulations for artisanal and small-scale mining regarding compliance with the Fairmined Standard*, with a focus on recommended legal frameworks for small-scale mining and ASGM regulations regarding compliance with the Fairmined Standard.
- ▶ Completed the study, *Potential scenario for Fairmined gold trading from Ecuador*, analyzing the scenario of the potential commercialization of certified gold and discussing gold trading channels in the national ASGM market and alternatives for Fairmined certification.
- ▶ Carried out the study, *Evaluation of the compliance of the project's mining stakeholders with the Fairmined certification standard*, analyzing 3 processing plants and 3 mining organizations.
- ▶ Following analysis of these 6 participating groups, presented conclusions and recommendations, highlighting challenges for applying the Fairmined standard in Ecuador and options to improve adoption by mining stakeholders

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Access to Finance

- ▶ Developed a new financial product, the Mining Development Credit, in a collaborative effort with BanEcuador, the Central Bank of Ecuador, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the Ministry of the Environment, Water and Ecological Transition. Miners who successfully access this credit will be able to borrow between \$5,000-500,000 USD with interest rates starting at 10.71%.
- ▶ Held workshops to educate 84 economic agents on this new financial product (40 women and 54 men). From this group, 3 male miners and 5 women miners expressed interest in applying for loans.



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Launched the communication campaign, “ValORO tu trabajo: responsible and mercury-free mining,” which focused on disseminating and promoting ore sales from the ASGM sector to processing plants prior to its processing, thus avoiding mercury use in their activities
- ▶ As a result of the campaign, 272 people (120 men and 152 women) were directly informed and more than 11,000 people were indirectly informed in the Zaruma-Portovelo cantons, El Oro province, and in Camilo Ponce Enriquez, Azuay province
- ▶ Organized a storytelling contest in four schools (86 students) in the Portovelo canton to raise awareness among youth, who then could inform their parents about the hazardous effects of mercury



Gender Equity

- ▶ Provided *Jancheras* with a road map and a pilot program to socialize the legal instrument, in order to formalize their activity at the Internal Rent Service (SRI).
- ▶ Began devising strategy to sign at least one partnership agreement enabling material collected by *Jancheras* to be included in the mineral sales strategy and delivered to the processing plants, thus preventing the women from processing it using mercury.
- ▶ As part of UNDP’s Violet Boots gender campaign, delivered 40 pairs of violet boots to members of the *Jancheras* Union, the Progreso and Rumikuri associations as a recognition for having led the struggle for legal recognition of their activities after four decades of invisibility.



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GUYANA



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



The planetGOLD Guyana project completed its activities in February 2023.

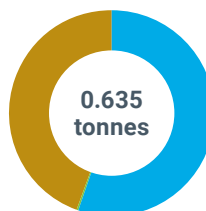
KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

The project directly eliminated 0.005 tonnes of mercury at 2 mercury-free demonstration sites. An additional 0.35 tonnes were eliminated by miners educated by the project and by others influenced by those miners. Provision of a mercury capture device resulted in a reduction of 0.28 tonnes of mercury emissions.

Amount of mercury prevented as a result of technical intervention and educational activities (in tonnes)

Hg reduced due to technical intervention
0.28



Hg eliminated due to educational activities
0.35

Hg eliminated due to technical intervention
0.00504

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Increased the number of mercury-free processing sites from two to three, with the establishment of a mercury-free demonstration site in the indigenous village of Karrau in February 2023
- ▶ Abated 0.6 tonnes of mercury use as a result of project interventions through mercury-free gold processing at the demonstration sites and adjustments to gold processing by other miners in Regions 7 and 8
- ▶ Provided a mercury capture device to the Guyana Gold Board, which captured 0.28 tonnes of mercury while smelting 197,083 ounces of gold



Formalization

- ▶ Participated in the finalization of the National Action Plan on ASGM (NAP) which was approved by the Government of Guyana and submitted to the Minamata Convention on Mercury Secretariat

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Designed a chain of custody and verification process that adheres to the planetGOLD Criteria
- ▶ Pilot tested the chain of custody and verification process at the Region 8 demonstration site with favorable results
- ▶ Conducted training at the Region 8 site for miners drawn from other mining operations, and additional training at the CI-Guyana location for representatives of partner agencies
- ▶ El Dorado Gold Branding led to a comparative increase in income by all participating miners



Access to Finance

- ▶ Consultations with Local Government officials in Regions 7 and 8 resulted in their willingness to serve as an intermediary between the project and central government in an effort to encourage government support for any one of the financing mechanisms recommended under the Financing Mechanism Consultancy that included: i) Rethinking Collateralization, (ii) Establishing a Mining Development Bank, (iii) Launching a Support Fund, and (iv) new Green Loans
- ▶ A report resulting from the Duke/Mercer Grant Agreement articulated an alternative financing arrangement described as a “coexistence model” which offered a non-traditional option involving well-funded medium-scale operations, which may yet provide a mechanism for small-scale gold miners to access financing



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Organized the **Responsible Mining Conference** in January 2023 under the theme “Responsible Mining with Better Equipment Leading to Bigger Production,” resulting in government representatives committing to addressing many of the issues raised
- ▶ Produced “Changing Minds and Mines”, a video that tracked the process of producing mercury-free gold, from prospecting to smelting
- ▶ Created **two additional videos** with interviews of miners for the “Women in Mining” series
- ▶ Translated two posters on the dangers of mercury into Spanish for dissemination by partner agencies
- ▶ Published 3 blogs: “**Partnerships of hope**,” “**Solutions to deforestation in Guyana**” and “**Guyana Responsible Mining Conference**”



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INDONESIA



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



The planetGOLD Indonesia project completed its activities in June 2023.

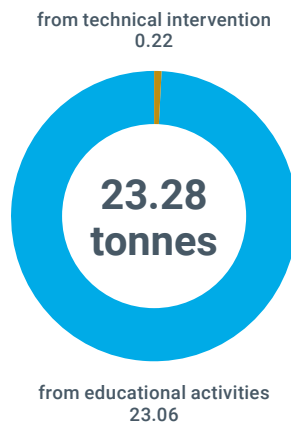
KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

22 mercury-free processing operations established by the project in 6 intervention areas resulted in 220 kg of mercury prevented.

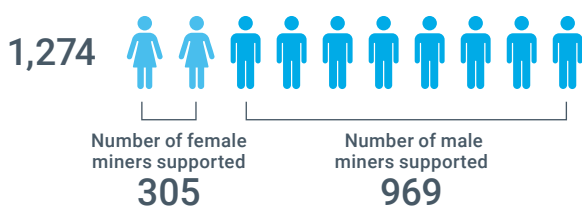
Through additional educational activities, including trainings on cyanide management, the project contributed to the expansion of mercury-free cyanide operations across its 6 project areas, resulting in the prevention of an estimated 23.06 tonnes of mercury through these cyanide plants.

Amount of mercury prevented from educational activities and technical intervention (in tonnes)



MINERS

Number of miners supported in their formalization process from educational activities



Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process from educational activities



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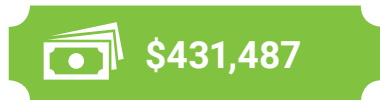
As a result of project engagement with a local micro-credit agency to reform lending codes allowing microfinance to be channeled to ASGM, 49 miners received a total of \$311,627 in micro-loans.

Another bank provided a \$27,246 loan to a miner in Kuantan Singingi.

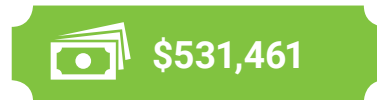
The Indonesian state-owned pawnbroker provided a \$36,101 loan to a miner in Kuantan Singingi.

The project provided low value grant agreements to 7 mining cooperatives for a total value of \$531,461. 38 miners received \$56,513 in loans from the cooperatives.

Amount of money provided to miners through format mechanisms



Amount of money provided to miner groups / cooperatives



Number of miners receiving finance



Number of groups/cooperatives receiving finance



JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Conducted Focus Group Discussion on development of Standard Operational Procedure for mercury-gold processing and waste management
- ▶ Conducted training on how to input and manage data of mercury avoided in Jari Emas online application
- ▶ Conducted training on mercury-free processing in Gorontalo, Kuantan Singingi, Lombok Barat, and Kulon Progo District
- ▶ Procured and installed 1 fixed plant unit and 5 micro-leaching tanks
- ▶ Launched a training plant for ASGM miners to learn about mercury-free technology



Formalization

- ▶ Established 7 additional mining cooperatives as part of support to obtain mining permits
- ▶ Supported attaining small-scale mining permits in Gorontalo Utara District, expected to be issued in the following quarter



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ In spite of several project interventions including supporting the establishment of a quality certification system for mercury-free gold, connecting mining groups to gold refineries, and introducing formal market requirements to mining groups, only 220 kilograms of gold was estimated as sold to formal markets in the project areas.
- ▶ Through the training and support provided, mining groups now have a very good understanding of the formal gold market system. However, there is still a significant gap in terms of the formal gold market players adapting their buying practices when dealing with ASGM miners. For example, the project found formal market players cannot compete with the informal cash and carry system, which is preferred by mining groups due to its simplicity and quick payment.

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Access to Finance

- ▶ Conducted coordination meetings with banks and other finance institutions for increasing financial access opportunities for ASGM miners
- ▶ Collected data on the amount of funding and loans available from individual and institutional investors. Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI) and Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI) confirmed that there is an estimated USD \$13 billion of commercial finance available through existing financial mechanisms to support all types of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in all sectors, which in principle could include ASGM operations that meet their criteria.
- ▶ Assisted mining cooperatives to finalize grant reports including administrative reports and narrative reports
- ▶ Provided a grant to the mining cooperative HargoSelo Kencono Cooperative in Kulon Progo for capacity building and establishment of a mercury-free processing plant, which then launched operations in May 2023
- ▶ Provided low value grant agreements to 7 (seven) mining cooperatives, for a total value of USD \$531,461.38 miners received USD \$56,513 in loans from the cooperatives.
- ▶ Actively engaged with the local micro-credit agency Kredit Usaha Rakyat (KUR) to reform lending codes to allow microfinance to be channeled to ASGM. As direct result, 49 miners were able to access a total USD \$311,627 in micro-loans from the BRI, through KUR.
- ▶ Bank Perkreditan Rakyat (BPR) Cempaka, through a mechanism that provides small amounts of funds with no collateral needed, provided USD \$27,246 loan to a miner in Kuantan Singingi.
- ▶ The Indonesian state-owned pawnbroker (PT. Pegadaian), which offers secured loans to miners with personal assets used as collateral, provided USD \$36,101 fund to a miner in Kuantan Singingi.
- ▶ In addition to institutional finance listed above, the project’s research suggests that there was a transition among individual local investors who are the customary financiers of ASGM activities. These financiers appear to be redirecting their funding from mercury operations to non-mercury technology. The data showed that over the past 3 years of project period, these individual investors provided USD \$3,302,796 of finance. Within this funding framework, approximately USD \$2,067,802 was allocated to build 193 leaching tanks. Additionally, an estimated USD \$1.3 million was used to support mining operations such as buying generators, water pumps, crushers, diesel, and other related machinery.



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Conducted mercury-free campaign with storytelling in Kulon Progo and mercury-free campaign for high school students in Kuantan Singingi
- ▶ Conducted a high-level workshop and exhibition in December 2022 to share the results and lessons learned from the project
- ▶ Conducted a media visit to one project site.
- ▶ Supported the production of a “Dispatches from the Field” [video about a woman miner](#) who is a project champion sharing training and messages on mercury impacts to local communities.
- ▶ Designed and printed project publications for local dissemination and [shared all project publications](#) on the planetGOLD website.
- ▶ Conducted coordination meeting with implementing partners to update the project progress

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Approved prior to 2022

Approved in 2022

Approved in 2023

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KENYA



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



“As the women of Elwunza Women’s Mining Cooperative Society, we can’t wait to learn alternative ways of processing gold at the mercury-free demonstration site planetGOLD Kenya is setting up.”

Shebby Kendi, Chairperson, Elwunza Women’s Mining Cooperative Society

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Mercury-free technologies for testing and adoption by the groups were jointly identified by the project and target beneficiaries.
- ▶ The project established a full process flow to maximize extraction of gold without the use of mercury, which will incorporate: a jaw crusher, ball mill, gold kacha, gold cube, and blue bowl
- ▶ Developed a mercury-free technologies handbook
- ▶ Engaged training institutions in developing a standard operating procedure for the small-scale mining sector
- ▶ Reached agreement with counties in project areas to avail land for 6 mercury-free mining demonstration sites
- ▶ Developed technical specifications for mercury-free technologies



Formalization

- ▶ Supported in the registration of miners into 3 cooperatives, to work with planetGOLD Kenya
- ▶ Developed a **Roadmap to Formalization**, which was validated by representatives of mining groups. Steps in the report include: finalizing group constitutions and operational manuals; registration of groups by all relevant authorities; and assisting groups in obtaining licenses.
- ▶ Carried out public participation in the Draft Guidelines for Mine Safety & Environment and Designation of Areas for ASM Operation
- ▶ Developed a draft national Guideline on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in Gold Mining
- ▶ Developed a miner’s database
- ▶ Supported the country’s ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

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Access to Finance

- ▶ Developed a finance literacy trainers handbook that covered the following topics: financial literacy, entrepreneurship, record keeping and financial reporting
- ▶ Developed a report on funds in the mining sector and shared with miners
- ▶ Held consultations with 6 finance institutions on their loan products that artisanal and small-scale miners could access
- ▶ Improved miners' awareness about available financial literacy



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Collaborated on two [video](#) episodes featuring women miners, including one for [International Women's Day](#)
- ▶ Shared information on the dangers of mercury during project activities.
- ▶ Reached over 2,000 persons on social media platforms
- ▶ Developed a blog post on the status of formalization in Kenya



Gender Equity

- ▶ Provided training and support to women-led groups to form mining cooperatives and undergo the registration process
- ▶ Built capacity of women and disadvantaged groups on available finance products in the market.



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MONGOLIA



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agencies:



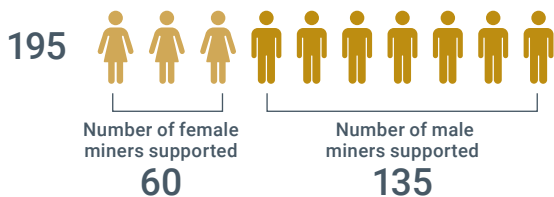
Executing Partners:



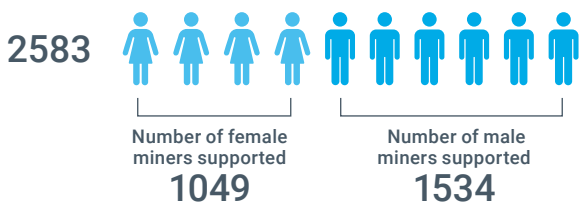
KEY FIGURES

MINERS

Number of miners supported in their formalization process from direct assistance



Number of miners supported in their formalization process from educational activities



FINANCE

These funds are to be available for a newly established Savings and Credit Cooperative through the planetGOLD Mongolia mercury-free processing system investment

Total amount of money made available through 1 new finance mechanism



Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- Completed design of processing technology for 2 different mercury-free processing systems, successfully imported equipment, and transported it to the project areas for installation
- Construction of the first mercury-free processing system in Mandal soum and equipment installation were completed in June 2023, with additional infrastructure built for the power supply and tailing system. Equipped with gravimetric technology without the use of any chemicals, this facility will process up to 5 tonnes of ore per day.
- Completed construction of the second mercury-free processing system in Tunkhel village in September 2023, with ongoing equipment installation with 70% performance. The facility has the capacity for up to 10 tonnes of ore per day via gravimetric technology without any chemicals.
- Worked toward obtaining relevant permits for the operation of the mercury-free processing system, including conducting MFPS Feasibility Studies. Awaiting approvals from the government.



Formalization

- ▶ Contributed to the improvement and approval of a draft of the new national ASM Regulation, which was approved by Government Resolution #296 in August 2022
- ▶ Assisted the Government in developing a Guidance Document for implementation of the ASM Regulation at the national and local levels
- ▶ Trained 1,115 miners (45 women; 70 men) in project areas on ASM formalization, responsible mining, Occupational Safety & Health, gender and human rights, environmental practice, and business management.
- ▶ With training materials developed in cooperation with the project, the ASM National Federation conducted training for miners with knowledge needed for their formalization in accordance with the new ASM regulation. In total, 1,949 miners (779 women; 1,170 men) attended the training from the project provinces.
- ▶ Conducted a workshop with 24 local officials (8 women; 16 men) in Selenge province on the new ASM Regulation, to raise awareness and improve coordination
- ▶ The new ASM Regulation enabled 413 miners (125 women; 288 men) from 45 ASM partnerships in Mandal soum and Gobi-Altai province to work formally.



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Organized capacity-building activities, including a study tour, on the benefits of due diligence, the CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria, and gold traceability for key ASGM stakeholders
- ▶ Implemented the CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria at partner mining organizations. As a result, partner organizations have improved and updated their internal rules for environmental management, occupational health and safety, gold traceability, accounting practices, human rights issues, and the implementation of improved grievance and complaint mechanism.
- ▶ Partner organizations are now compliant with 41 out of 43 criteria of the CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria standard
- ▶ Prepared and disseminated CRAFT Code/planetGOLD Criteria related posters, boards and handouts with information such as rules, essential health protocols, proper clothing guidelines, and reminders for safety measures



Access to Finance

- ▶ Developed a Social Enterprise Business Model for the ASGM community in Tunkhel village to improve their access to finance. The draft model was introduced to the miners of the Baatar Vangiin Khishig ASM NGO and the MFPS plant Positive Mind both operating in the village.
- ▶ Assisted the Baatar Vangiin Khishig (BVK) NGO in establishing a Saving and Credit Cooperative (SCC) owned and operated by the miners, with 24 miners (18 female; 6 male) as founding members. The Cooperative is expected to provide access to capital for all 140 miners in Tunkhel and will expand to the greater Mandal soum. The SCC was registered with the Government and is now working to get its operation permit.
- ▶ Co-hosted the second Precious Metal and Stones Forum & Expo in April 2023. The forum attracted over 60 representatives (35 female; 25 male), including government officials and representatives from ASMOs and gold traders. It provided information on the current ASM conditions and challenges, as well as investment opportunities in the ASGM sector, attracting over 6,000 visitors and more than 818,000 engagements on related social media and news items.
- ▶ Shared project information at international mining investors forums such as PDAC 2023 and the OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains.
- ▶ Developed a Social Investment Plan (SIP) for Shijir Khishig Partnership in Mandal soum to enhance their capacity to attract investment or pitch investment.



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Made several presentations on mercury-free technology, ASM formalization, and artisanal miners' access to essential social services in the ASGM sector in Mongolia with the planetGOLD global programme, DELVE Exchange, and other countries and stakeholders through international conferences.

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- ▶ Signed an MOU with the ASM National Federation of Mongolia to improve the functionality and accessibility of the existing [ASM Knowledge Hub](#)
- ▶ Used social media to raise public awareness of the hazards of mercury and to promote opportunities of a responsible ASGM sector. As of June 30, 2023, the project’s Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts had 1,546 followers and reached 424,798 people through 230 posts published.
- ▶ Developed and disseminated a quarterly digital newsletter in both English and Mongolian languages, reaching 965 subscribers.

Gender Equity

- ▶ Established and launched a Gender Committee, an informal and voluntary network composed of artisanal miners and local officials, in Mandal soum to empower members in gender and human rights, prepare them as activists and human rights advocates, and improve gender and human rights sensitive practices among artisanal miners. Currently, the committee has 65 members, of which 71% are women.
- ▶ Organized training and workshops for 65 members on team management, gender and human rights, first aid, CRAFT code, and business planning.
- ▶ Made a gender analysis of the new ASM Regulation. The Regulation was found gender-neutral, considering neither discrimination against women or men nor the different needs and experiences of women and men working in the ASM sector.



“Participating in the planetGOLD Mongolia project’s trainings and seminars, as well as other international programs, has allowed me to achieve what I have and become successful in the artisanal mining sector.”

– Munkhzaya Purevdorj, Khovd province, Mongolia



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PERU



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:

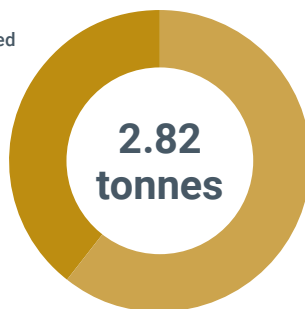


KEY FIGURES

MERCURY

After introducing clean technologies and behavior changes in 3 mining zones in Arequipa and Puno, field measurements have to date shown a reduction of 1.11 tonnes of mercury lost to the environment. An additional strategy enabling miners to sell ore to mercury-free processing plants has prevented the emission of an additional 1.71 tonnes of mercury.

Hg reduced
1.11

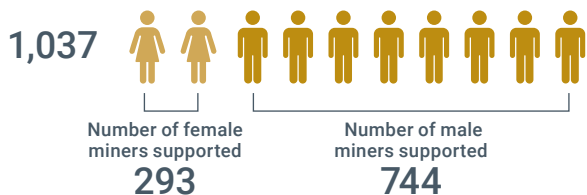


Hg prevented
1.71

MINERS

The project has provided technical assistance for the formalization of 986 ASM workers in Puno, Arequipa and Piura. In addition, the project provided technical assistance to 51 women from 2 organized groups of women gold selectors in Arequipa and Piura to legally incorporate them as associations.

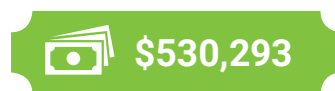
Number of miners supported in their formalization process from direct assistance



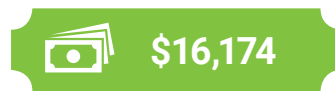
FINANCE

Under the new "4Ps" financial mechanism developed by the project, USD \$530,293 was available for ASGM miners as of the end of the reporting period. During the same period 2 miners received loans totaling USD \$16,174.

Total amount of money made available through new financial mechanism (USD)



Total amount of money successfully accessed by miners/operations via this mechanism (USD)



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JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Project interventions focused on promoting cleaner technologies and habit changes among miners to optimize metallurgical processes resulted in a reduction of 0.64 tonnes of mercury in Arequipa and Puno
- ▶ Installed gravimetric tables in 4 different project sites in the Puno region
- ▶ Delivered mercury-free processing equipment to members of a mining company in Arequipa, including a crusher, mill, agitator tank, recirculation tank, retort and a smelting furnace
- ▶ Joined efforts with processing plants that purchase or collect gold-bearing ore from artisanal miners, thereby preventing the use of an additional 1.36 tonnes of mercury in Arequipa and Piura



Formalization

- ▶ Provided technical assistance for the formalization of a total of 986 ASM members and mining workers (744 men; 242 women) in areas such as compliance with mining, labor, and tax obligations, and assigning specialists to review their documentation.
- ▶ Supported the reactivation of mining companies and development of a technical dossier to achieve formalization for 5 ASM organizations in Cháparra, Arequipa
- ▶ Provided technical support for the members of the Nueva Victoria company in Eugenia, Arequipa so they can continue their formalization process
- ▶ Provided technical support to a total of 88 miners and 180 mine workers from 5 mining organizations in Puno
- ▶ Supported 56 miners and 285 mine workers from 3 ASM organizations in Piura to complete their formalization
- ▶ Assisted 16 women gold selectors in Arequipa to form and legally incorporate the Katarata San Jose Selectors Association
- ▶ Provided technical assistance for 35 women gold selectors in Cuchi Corral to form the Chirinos association of gold selectors, which is the Piura region's first formally constituted and registered association of women miners
- ▶ Access to Formal Markets
- ▶ As part of its search to identify new markets for the commercialization of mercury-free gold, the project signed an institutional agreement with INCA ONE.
- ▶ The project is also working with the Bulmint refinery to market mercury-free gold from the Arequipa and Puno regions.



Access to Finance

- ▶ Created in partnership with Solidaridad the pilot loan "Emprende Pallaquera" for amounts up to USD \$3,000. This community banking model aims to allow these women mineral selectors to access finance and, along with training, to promote entrepreneurship in mining communities
- ▶ Carried out a training for "Emprende Pallaquera," where prizes of up to USD \$4,000 were granted to women miners who completed the training and worked on their own business plan to complement or phase out mining activity
- ▶ Signed a new low value subsidy agreement with Solidaridad for the promotion of entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in ASM, with emphasis on women gold selectors. This agreement is expected to implement a solidarity credit financial product aimed at financing the complementary businesses of the women gold selectors, with the goal of placing a minimum of USD \$25,000.
- ▶ Under a grant agreement between Solidaridad, Minera OREX and Caja Los Andes via the project's "4Ps" financial model, 2 miners accessed loans totaling USD \$16,174 for the strengthening of technical capacities

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Awareness Raising

- ▶ Held 8 face-to-face and virtual workshops for public officials and miners in Arequipa, Piura, and Puno with a total participation of 371 people (32% women; 68% men).
- ▶ Reached 597 people (40% women; 60% men) through the “Expedition Mercury” Campaign conducted in digital media and local radio during the July 2022-June 2023 reporting period. Awareness raising activities to date have achieved a national and local reach of more than 52,000 people.
- ▶ Through transfer of gravimetric tables, technical assistance in good mining practices, and workshops to raise awareness of the impacts of mercury on human health, reached 12,615 inhabitants of Ananea district to date
- ▶ Reached 11,179 inhabitants of Suyo and 10,510 inhabitants of Sapillica in the Piura region to date through technical assistance in good mining practices and workshops on the impacts of mercury
- ▶ In Arequipa, reached 3,685 inhabitants of Caravelí, 6,997 of Camaná, and 3,263 of Condesuyos to date through transfer of equipment, technical assistance in mining practices, and workshops on the impacts of mercury



Gender Equity

- ▶ Launched the “Rinconada Plan” in collaboration with Solidaridad and The Swiss Responsible Gold Initiative in October 2022. This initiative benefits 6 associations of women gold selectors, strengthening capacities in good mining practices, financial education, design and validation of a financial mechanism, and awareness on the impacts of mercury and on gender violence.
- ▶ Provided technical training on mercury-free technologies for 17 women miners from Puno
- ▶ Trained approximately 166 women gold selectors from the regions of Arequipa, Piura and Puno on associativity, leadership, financial education and awareness-raising on the use of mercury
- ▶ Trained 83 regional energy and mining authorities and officials on gender approaches applied in ASM, the SDGs, and health impacts of mercury
- ▶ Supported the registration of Piura’s first formally constituted association composed of 35 women gold selectors
- ▶ Supported establishment of the *Katarata San José Association of Gold Handpickers* in Arequipa, composed of 17 women



UD Perú / planetGOLD Perú (Jane Lazarte)

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PHILIPPINES



PRIOR TO 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



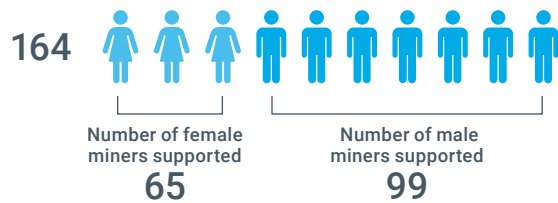
KEY FIGURES

MINERS

Number of miners supported in their formalization process from **direct assistance**



Number of miners supported in their formalization process from **educational activities**



Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process from **direct assistance**



RESPONSIBLE GOLD

Amount of responsible gold produced by operations verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria (in kilograms)



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JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Commenced commissioning individual equipment within the project's mercury-free processing system (MFPS) in Paracale, with commissioning of the full plant scheduled for the next reporting period
- ▶ Completed construction of training center in Paracale

- ▶ Obtained a declaration for a mineral processing zone in Sagada, enabling the project to initiate construction of a common/shared processing facility and a suitable tailings pond for existing processing activities within the Minahang Bayan (people’s small-scale mining area)
- ▶ Established a collaborative partnership with the Camarines Norte State College and Mountain Province State Polytechnic College to implement capacity development activities in Paracale and Sagada, respectively
- ▶ Organized the following capacity development activities: Operations and Management of the MFSP in Paracale, Technical Lecture on Gold Processing in Sagada; Basic Occupational Health and Safety trainings in both project sites; Health Effects of Mercury and Other Chemicals Used in SSM; Permitting workshop for the establishment of MFPS in both project sites
- ▶ Virtually attended a Technical Seminar in Ethiopia in January 2023 to present mercury-free gold extraction technologies and ASGM best practices
- ▶ Conducted a Rapid Environmental and Health Assessment in Paracale in partnership with the Department of Health



Formalization

- ▶ Completed an assessment of the legal framework and illicit financial flows, which played a vital role in initiating policy discussions
- ▶ Organized a series of policy workshops on the formalization process at the national and local levels, designed for small-scale miners and government officials, on topics including permitting, Republic Act No. 7076 Amendment, and Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act of 7076
- ▶ Gathered recommendations and action plans formulated during policy workshops and provincial planning activities and shared these with partner government agencies, contributing to ongoing efforts to amend the Small-Scale Mining Law of the Philippines
- ▶ Collaborated on the development of a new Knowledge Management platform to serve as a centralized hub for small-scale mining-related transactions with the government and to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the permitting process for ASGM operations



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Signed a Memorandum of Agreement with partner mining associations and the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board (PMRB) of Camarines Norte publicly declaring their commitment to abide by the principles and guidelines outlined in the planetGOLD Criteria
- ▶ Project focal point person in Paracale drafted the initial CRAFT Code planetGOLD report for the Samahan ng mga Minero sa Barangay Casalugan (the project’s partner ASGM mining association in Paracale), which encompasses monthly monitoring reports
- ▶ Created a Technical Working Group for planetGOLD Criteria implementation
- ▶ Conducted a workshop on developing gold trading arrangements with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the Central Bank of the Philippines



Access to Finance

- ▶ Worked to develop 2 new financial mechanisms for artisanal and small-scale miners, in collaboration with the BSP: the Supplier Agreement and the Credit Surety Fund
- ▶ Developed a Social Investment Plan (SIP) for operations at the project’s mercury-free processing plant in Paracale, for presentations to national investors following the commissioning of the new facility
- ▶ Organized a workshop on financing and gold trading with the Central Bank and Mines and Geosciences Bureau
- ▶ Sought membership for partner mining association in Sagada, including 19 other ASGM associations, in the National Coalition of Small-Scale Miners in the Philippines, Inc., a platform through which small-scale miners can collaborate and engage with potential investors



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Conducted extensive awareness-raising sessions, such as photo exhibitions, broadcasting the “Gold Talk” Radio Program, participating in radio guesting on Radyo Pilipinas Bontoc, and developing various IEC materials in both print and digital formats.

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- ▶ Participated in the 3rd National Assembly of the National Coalition of Small-Scale Miners in the Philippines in July 2022, presenting the project's implementation progress and pipelined activities
- ▶ Launched a dedicated Facebook Group tailored for ASGM stakeholders to facilitate discussions, exchange of ideas, and information sharing
- ▶ Reached 516,278 users and garnered 3,832 followers on the [planetGOLD Philippines Facebook page](#)



Gender Equity

- ▶ Completed a Gender Mainstreaming workshop in Sagada in partnership with the Philippine Commission on Women, resulting in the development of a gender action plan delineating specific actions, objectives, and timelines for integrating gender-sensitive approaches into project implementation
- ▶ Conducted a two-day entrepreneurial skills training in partnership with Camarines Norte State College, aiming to support additional income opportunities for women and bridge the gender gap in income and employment in the ASGM sector
- ▶ Presented the project's gender mainstreaming efforts during the 3rd National Assembly of the National Coalition of Small-Scale Miners in the Philippines
- ▶ Organized an orientation for women on Cooperative Preregistration



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BOLIVIA



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



Approved for implementation: June 2022

BACKGROUND

- ▶ ASGM gold is a main export, critical to Bolivia's economy
- ▶ An estimated 99% of gold produced in Bolivia comes from mining cooperatives
- ▶ About 180,000 people are believed to be directly involved in artisanal and small-scale gold mining
- ▶ 10,000+ women are directly involved in ASGM activities
- ▶ In 2021, the country reported exporting 46 tonnes of gold
- ▶ Bolivia has become a regional hub for the informal mercury trade
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 18 tonnes

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Organized an official launch event in January 2023 at the request of the Ministry of Environment and Water, with high level participation from government and broad participation of stakeholders. This event represented a first step in creating better awareness of the project as such, and of the issues that need to be addressed during implementation.
- ▶ Focused on planning activities around the main programme themes to be performed for the duration of the project
- ▶ Planned activities based on wide stakeholder consultations, study visits to mining operations, desktop studies, and on participatory working sessions with Fundacion Medmin, Fundacion Profin, the company Cumbre de Sajama, and other associated partners
- ▶ Collaborated closely with the Swiss Better Gold Initiative (SBGI) to learn from its attempts to establish transparent gold value chains in Bolivia
- ▶ Partnered with SBGI to organize visits to mine sites and mining districts with the dual purpose of sensibilization of miners and other stakeholders regarding mercury and its dangers, and sharing lessons learned regarding the challenges of providing technical assistance to mining cooperatives in Bolivia
- ▶ Collaborated to publish a [webpage](#) for the project

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 - Approved prior to 2022
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GHANA



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



Approved for implementation: March 2022

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Known as the 'Gold Coast' until 1957, Ghana has an ancient mining history and is currently Africa's largest gold producer
- ▶ One-third of Ghana's gold is produced by artisanal and small-scale miners
- ▶ The country's ASGM sector employs at least 1 million rural Ghanaians
- ▶ 50% of the ASGM workforce are women (IIED 2016 Country Report)
- ▶ 70%-80% of ASGM operations are largely informal (IIED 2016 Country Report)
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 9 tonnes

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Organized a 3-day annual workplan meeting in January 2023
- ▶ Hosted an inception workshop and technical session in February 2023
- ▶ Organized inaugural Project Steering Committee meeting in March 2023 where the project's workplan was reviewed and approved
- ▶ Formed a Technical Working Group to develop 12 Terms of Reference for the procurement of consultancy services
- ▶ Collaborated to develop a [webpage](#) for the project

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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GUINEA



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



Approved for implementation: December 2022

BACKGROUND

- ▶ ASGM supports the livelihoods of more than 245,000 miners in Guinea
- ▶ 65% of those involved in ASGM are women
- ▶ The country is the 10th overall producer of gold in Africa
- ▶ An estimated 32 tonnes of gold are produced by the ASGM sector per year using approximately 42 tonnes of mercury
- ▶ The ASGM sector contributes an estimated \$300 million USD to the country's economy each year
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 13 tonnes, support 5,000 artisanal gold miners, and produce 200 kgs of artisanal gold meeting the planetGOLD Criteria

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Raised awareness by organizing the project's inception workshop and steering committee meeting in April 2023 in Conakry, sharing media clips and photos of these events.
- ▶ Held consultations with key stakeholders for reviewing the Mining Act
- ▶ Held discussions with the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Mines, National Union of Artisanal Mines, and Large-Scale Gold Mining company Anglo Gold Ashanti Guinea on the regulation of informal ASGM activities in the country.
- ▶ Prepared and approved the technical field trip's terms of reference
- ▶ Conducted the baseline study tours to the Kouroussa, Siguiiri and Mandiana regions, reinforcing the engagement with local stakeholders.
- ▶ Collaborated to publish a [webpage](#) for the project and social media presence.

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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HONDURAS



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022

Approved for implementation: June 2022

Project inception workshop: 29-30 June 2023

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Honduras is a global biodiversity hotspot situated at the convergence of tropical and subtropical ecosystems in northern Central America
- ▶ The ASGM sector employs roughly 3,000 people
- ▶ An estimated 17,000 people indirectly involved in the sector
- ▶ The ASGM sector uses an estimated 9 tonnes of mercury each year
- ▶ ASGM in the country is characterized by diverse local mining techniques; mechanized operations coexist with artisanal miners
- ▶ ASGM activities take place in 6 communities in the country
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 8 tonnes

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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NICARAGUA



Implemented and executed by:



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022

The planetGOLD Nicaragua project was approved for implementation in December 2022 but had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ ASGM is one of the main sources of income for approximately 40,000-60,000 people, of whom 15 percent are women
- ▶ Around 9 tonnes of gold is produced by the ASGM sector each year
- ▶ Estimates range from 1.5 tonnes to tens of tons of mercury use per year in ASGM, with a central estimate of 3.52 tonnes
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 3.5 tonnes



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



Approved for implementation: June 2022

BACKGROUND

- ▶ ASGM is the primary livelihood source for 5,000 miners in 8 districts
- ▶ Most of the mining in the region is alluvial, with operations characterized by rudimentary panning, whole ore mercury amalgamation, and open burning
- ▶ More than half a century of mining has resulted in significant contamination of human and natural environments
- ▶ The Republic of Congo has over 200km² of forest; the project will collaborate with the GF Congo Basin Impact Programme to reduce biodiversity impacts caused by ASGM activities
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 3 tonnes, the mobilization of USD 100,000 of finance for ASGM miners and the production of 10 kg of artisanal gold meeting the planetGOLD Criteria

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Engaged in preparatory brainstorming, holding meetings with the Ministry of Mines to identify gold ore types, ASGM practices, and clean technology options for future sites
- ▶ Collected and analyzed data, preparing reports on ASGM sites using mercury, miner demographics, environmental impacts, and health implications



Formalization

- ▶ Defined site selection criteria, mapped ASGM regions, formulated field trip terms, coordinated with regional directorates, and obtained Ministry of Environment authorization
- ▶ Conducted visits to Sangha, Cuvette-Ouest, Kouilou, and Bouenza ASGM regions from April to June, with specific mine sites surveyed in each region
- ▶ Designed a program for formalization and initiated multi-stakeholder platforms
- ▶ Compiled a resource person list and drafted a training plan for capacity building
- ▶ Prepared terms of reference for a strategic steering committee meeting, which selected six localities for project implementation

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Access to Finance

- ▶ Carried out preliminary work on a plan to identify finance access gaps in ASGM communities for national ASGM data update field trip



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Prepared press articles on ASGM in Congo
- ▶ Worked to finalize an annual communication plan
- ▶ Prepared informative documents for government officials and finalized all necessary administrative documents for field trips
- ▶ Collaborated with the Congolese government's environmental and mining directorates
- ▶ Facilitated inventory data collection and gained support from military and administrative authorities
- ▶ Collaborated to publish a [webpage](#) for the project



SURINAME



Implementing Agency: 

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022

The planetGOLD Suriname project was approved for implementation in June 2022 but had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ The artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector directly employs between 20,000-40,000 miners, of which 17,000 individuals are officially registered
- ▶ The sector produces an estimated 17 tonnes of gold, representing at least 50 percent of the total annual gold production
- ▶ The ASGM labour force is dominated by Brazilian (Garimpeiros) and Surinamese Maroons (tribal peoples of African descent)
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 8 tonnes

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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UGANDA



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2022



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



Approved for implementation: April 2022

BACKGROUND

- ▶ ASGM is the primary livelihood source for 31,600 miners in five regions of the country
- ▶ An estimated 15+ tonnes of mercury is released by the ASGM sector each year
- ▶ 73% of ASGM gold produced in the country each year is extracted using mercury
- ▶ The workforce is characterized by a high proportion of women, especially in alluvial mining.
- ▶ Children comprise 20-30 percent of the workforce.
- ▶ End of project target: to prevent or eliminate mercury use by 15 tonnes

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Commenced an assessment of the Kayonza-Kitumbi mining site to evaluate the site's readiness for the introduction of a mercury-free demonstration facility as well as training and sensitization activities
- ▶ Contracted an environment officer who will work with the mining expert, and the entire project team, to build capacities of miners and stakeholders on issues related to mercury reduction



Formalization

- ▶ Supported the launch of the Mining and Minerals (Licensing) Regulations of 2023, which clearly outline key steps for the formalization of Small-Scale Mining activities, including the ASGM sector
- ▶ Supported the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to conduct a workshop with members of Parliament representing regions with mining activities, to share information on planetGOLD Uganda project and to discuss formalization, as well as Uganda's ASGM National Action Plan under the Minamata Convention
- ▶ With natural resource legal experts and consultants on formalization, reviewed the first draft of the Mining and Minerals (Licensing) Regulations developed by the Directorate of Geological Survey and Mines (DGSM). Later helped organize a four-day workshop for other Ministries, Departments, and Agencies to review the substantive draft of these regulations.

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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- ▶ Organized national workshop to sensitize stakeholders and to disseminate information pertaining to recent legal developments including the new Mining and Minerals Act of 2022, the ICGLR Act of 2018, the ICGLR regulations of 2023, and the Mining and Minerals (Licensing) Regulations of 2023. Participants included miners, exploration entities, mineral dealers and exporters, relevant MDAs, Development Partners, refiners and smelters, potential chain of custody service providers, potential auditing entities and Civil Society Organizations.
- ▶ Commissioned a study to collate legal and regulatory frameworks affecting ASGM in Uganda to identify gaps and opportunities within the sector, ultimately providing recommendations for the government to enhance its regulatory framework
- ▶ Undertook visits to all project districts to introduce the planetGOLD project to Local Government District leaders
- ▶ Recruited an ASGM Association and Cooperative Officer to support formalization efforts and to assist in the organization and registration of miners' groups, including the formalization of their mining operations



Access to Finance

- ▶ Initiated work on a study on financial inclusion initiatives in Uganda to inform action for improving access to finance for the ASGM sector, examining programmes meant to support financial inclusion as well as financial institutions and credit facilities that have the potential to empower women and women's groups engaged in mining
- ▶ Identified financial institutions with experience in supporting SMEs in informal and emerging sectors to explore potential collaborations, including the Stanbic Bank Business Incubator and its upcoming Women for Development digital financial inclusion project
- ▶ Interacted with two miners' groups with a strong focus on women's participation in mining activities in Kassanda and Buhweju districts, in preparation for attracting lenders with a focus on women-led businesses



Awareness Raising

- ▶ Engaged with stakeholders in project areas as well as miners from different mining communities in Kassanda, Busia, Karamoja, Buhweju and Kisoro
- ▶ Disseminated awareness raising materials and more than 500 fact sheets on the project
- ▶ Delivered one radio talk show in Busia District via Jogoo radio whose coverage also includes Namyingo, Buguiiri, and Tororo, to raise awareness about mercury
- ▶ Visited two mining sites, Tiira and Nakodi, located in Busia and Namyingo districts, respectively, to engage with leaders of local artisanal miners who actively use mercury in gold mining
- ▶ During a national workshop organized by DGSM, conducted a sensitization session on clean gold mining stimulating discussions on mercury reduction, mercury-free technologies, environmental protection and the Minamata Convention

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CÔTE D'IVOIRE

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



Approved for implementation: January 2023

BACKGROUND

- ▶ More than 500,000 people work in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector
- ▶ At an estimated 40 tonnes per year, the country is currently the 22nd largest producer of gold in the world and the 7th largest in Africa
- ▶ Mercury use is estimated at about 13 tonnes annually
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 6 tonnes, the production of 34 kgs of artisanal gold meeting the planetGOLD Criteria and the support to 2,000 artisanal gold miners

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES



Technical Solutions

- ▶ Conducted a joint field visit to meet “Just Gold” project beneficiaries, particularly the COODEPA mining cooperative, assessing equipment provided for mercury-free ore processing
- ▶ Recognized COODEPA as a beneficiary for both “Just Gold” and planetGOLD projects, with a focus on leveraging past achievements for enhanced mercury elimination in mineral processing
- ▶ Engaged with cooperative leadership regarding activities under planetGOLD project’s technical solutions component and visited multiple locations for area identification



Formalization

- ▶ Reviewed national formalization and regulatory frameworks in mining, encountering consultation challenges with key stakeholders, particularly from the Ministry of Mines
- ▶ Conducted a strategic meeting with Société de Développement Minier de Côte d'Ivoire (SODEMI) focusing on the project’s training and educational aspects
- ▶ Initiated dialogues with major mining sector actors to improve and enforce sectoral policies, advocating for artisanal miners’ access to mining sites
- ▶ Recognized a new directive by the Ministry of Mines, enabling SODEMI to enter agreements with artisanal miners, facilitating their access to exploration permits



Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Began identifying direct project beneficiaries
- ▶ Joined discussions in forums like the London Bullion Market Association’s Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Working Group, the Swiss Working Group on Responsible Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining Gold, and the Public Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade, aiming to collaborate with downstream companies, especially refiners, to discuss and address challenges in directly sourcing from ASGM

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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Awareness Raising

- ▶ Hosted a project inception workshop in April 2023 in Abidjan with over 40 attendees
- ▶ Secured coverage in 6 media outlets for the inception workshop, including 3 print media, 1 online press, the National Radio of Côte d'Ivoire, and private television, enhancing communication outreach
- ▶ Held inaugural session of the project steering committee to validate the first year's activities
- ▶ Developed social media channels and collaborated to publish a [webpage](#) for the project



Gender Equity

- ▶ Ensured the active participation of women in project inception workshop and steering committee inaugural meeting
- ▶ Organized a working session during the joint field visit, focusing on the specific needs of women in mining cooperatives, to inform the project's action plan with gender mainstreaming and inclusion strategies

MADAGASCAR

Implementing Agency:
 UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Executing Partners:
 REPUBLIKANY MADAGASIKARA
 Filanankana - Fahandrohana - Faharavonana

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

The planetGOLD Madagascar project was approved for implementation in September 2023 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Artisanal and small-scale gold mining is a livelihood source for 600,000 people in Madagascar
- ▶ Mercury use in the country's ASGM sector is estimated at over 18 tonnes annually, with an estimated gold production of 14 tonnes.
- ▶ Madagascar was the first country in the world to submit an Action Plan on ASGM to the Minamata Convention Secretariat
- ▶ The country has lost many areas of its original forests, which are home to more than 60 percent of Madagascar's biodiversity
- ▶ Madagascar has been declared as one of the world's 200 global hotspots for biodiversity due to its endemism and threat status.
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate the use of mercury in ASGM use by 5 tonnes

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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MALI



Implementing Agency:



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

The planetGOLD Mali project was approved for implementation in November 2023 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Half a million people reportedly rely directly on artisanal and small-scale gold mining activities, of whom 38% are women
- ▶ The ASGM sector is a vital source of livelihoods for those living in rural and remote areas where alternatives are limited
- ▶ The sector produces an estimated 26 tonnes of gold per year
- ▶ A reported 33 tonnes of mercury enter the environment annually due to ASGM
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 24 tonnes



NIGERIA



Implementing Agency:



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

The planetGOLD Nigeria project was approved for implementation in January 2023 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ About 200,000 miners participate in ASGM, and the sector serves as an indirect livelihood source for 500,000 people
- ▶ The country's gold production is an estimated 13 tonnes per year, with more than 90 percent of all gold production carried out by ASGM miners
- ▶ Mercury use is approximately 14 tonnes
- ▶ In 2010, Nigeria experienced deaths from exposure to lead that co-occurred with gold ore
- ▶ In Nigeria's northwest states, ASGM activities contribute to deforestation and desertification, adding a burden to the already arid and water-scarce region.
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 5 tonnes

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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SIERRA LEONE



Implementing Agency:

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

The planetGOLD Sierra Leone project was in the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Phase in the period of July 2022-June 2023. This project was endorsed for implementation in September 2023 and is expected to report progress in the period July 2023-June 2024.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Duration of the project's implementation phase: January 29th, 2024 - May 31st, 2030
- ▶ The artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector supports the livelihoods of at least 80,000 artisanal gold miners
- ▶ Gold production is estimated at nearly 3 tonnes annually.
- ▶ Estimated mercury use in the ASGM sector is 352 kg per year, at a national scale.
- ▶ Little attention has been paid to the country's ASGM sector, as national and international development efforts have largely focused on diamond mining.
- ▶ End of project target: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 0.325 tonne



ZAMBIA



Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



IMPLEMENTATION STARTING IN 2023

The planetGOLD Zambia project was approved for implementation in December 2023 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ An estimated 98 percent of the 30,000 people who work in Zambia's artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector are informal miners
- ▶ The ASGM sector uses 286 kilograms of mercury to produce about 143 kilograms of artisanal gold
- ▶ Although current mercury use estimates are low, Zambia has an emerging ASGM sector
- ▶ Recent discoveries of gold in numerous locations in the country are changing the landscape
- ▶ End of project targets: prevent or eliminate mercury use by 1.14 tonnes, 11,000 miners supported (with 40% of miners formalized), 243,800 hectares of landscapes improved and USD 500,000 made available for miners in different financial products
- ▶ The project's inception workshop is expected to take place in Lusaka in Q2 2024

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5

GLOBAL PROJECT PROGRESS

Recognizing the importance of understanding lessons learned and expanding planetGOLD's impact, the programme includes a global coordination project to collect, synthesize and disseminate knowledge and to communicate programme results. The planetGOLD global project fosters collaboration and communication across all projects in the programme, while supporting knowledge sharing and outreach with a wide range of international stakeholders engaged in improving the ASGM sector.

The global project focuses on:



**FINANCIAL
ADVOCACY**
*promoting investment in
ASGM through education
and connection with the
international finance
community*



**KNOWLEDGE
MANAGEMENT**
*disseminating relevant
information about the
programme, and about
ASGM generally, to
the global community
of practice*



COMMUNICATIONS
*sharing information,
key messages, and
success stories with
the goal of improving
public perceptions of the
ASGM sector*

During this 2022-2023 reporting period the global project focused on finalizing new synthesis documents and planning the annual programme meeting, held in-person for the first time in Kenya. The project also dedicated considerable effort to finalizing guidance for calculation of the programme’s cross-programmatic output indicators and launched engaging new media and communication initiatives.

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023 KEY ACTIVITIES

Promoting financing and investment

- ▶ Participated in the 2023 Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) and Social Capital Markets (SOCAP) conferences to build on the network of potential investors and broader finance community and provide additional education on the ASGM sector
- ▶ Assisted 5 country projects to apply the technical report template, a tool tailored for ASGM that mimics standard technical investment documents mandated for large scale miners, as a means of identifying promising investment opportunities
- ▶ Developed associated business plans in 3 countries (Burkina Faso, Guyana and Kenya)
- ▶ Developed and piloted a course to familiarize financial specialists with the basics of ASGM
- ▶ Began creating a standard set of training modules to improve financial literacy of ASGM actors
- ▶ Held Financial Advocacy Network meetings among programme financial specialists to discuss investment evaluation tools and development of pitches



planetGOLD project staff from Mongolia and the Philippines speaking to visitors at PDAC 2023

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Developing and sharing knowledge

- ▶ At the request of the Minamata Convention on Mercury Secretariat the project drafted an [information document synthesizing technology transfer activities](#) across the planetGOLD programme, to be shared at the Convention's fifth Conference of Parties
- ▶ Published a [report on overcoming barriers preventing miners from accessing international supply chains](#)
- ▶ Published translated versions of the publication [Best Management Practices for Cyanide Use in Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector](#) in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)
- ▶ Drafted [research and guidance on agreements and engagement with rightsholders in ASGM](#) (in draft form during the reporting period)
- ▶ Organized a planetGOLD Colombia and Alliance for Responsible Mining presentation on the implementation of the planetGOLD Criteria verification report and CRAFT report in July 2022
- ▶ Hosted two virtual gatherings with planetGOLD gender experts (September 2022 and April 2023), two Programme Advisory Group meetings (October 2022 and March 2023), and bimonthly calls among country project managers and project staff
- ▶ Commissioned "Guidance for Calculation of planetGOLD Cross Programme Output Indicators" and templates for project reporting on finance and technology interventions



In November 2022 the global project hosted the first in-person planetGOLD Annual Programme Meeting in Kisumu, Kenya. The meeting was attended by planetGOLD country managers, communication and topical experts, and local representatives. Over five days the event offered: (1) country project presentations on activities, challenges and success stories; (2) thematic sessions led by country project experts; (3) three mine site visits to both hard rock and alluvial deposit sites; (4) discussions with women and men miners on formalization experiences in Kenya; and (5) a country project communication expert network meeting.



A special session was dedicated to a case study of Kenya formalization, with experiences shared by local miners and Artisanal Mining Committee representatives. The panel shared challenges that hinder women from advancing in the mining sector, such as patriarchal beliefs about women's roles and substantial barriers to owning land. Additional challenges identified were access to energy, the negative image of miners, and how large-scale operations' exclusive mineral rights block small-scale miners from gaining access to mineral rights.

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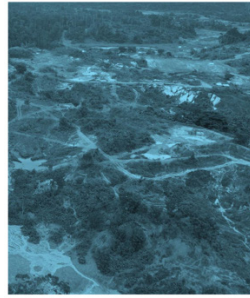
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Communicating and raising awareness

- ▶ Launched “[Dispatches from the Field](#),” an ongoing series of videos spotlighting unique stories about project work or miners that are working to demonstrate a path to more responsible, mercury-free mining
- ▶ To support and reinforce projects’ communications outreach, convened 3 virtual gatherings with all project communications officers and hosted the programme’s first in-person communications network meeting in Kenya
- ▶ Produced a [360-degree interactive virtual tour](#) of the Guyana project’s mercury-free demonstration site and began developing an interactive global map of all planetGOLD countries and pop-up booth for exhibiting the interactive experience
- ▶ Created video vignettes of miner perspectives on pursuing formalization, access to finance, and mercury-free mining technologies
- ▶ Provided country projects and partners with editing or publication support for more than 60 blog articles and videos, disseminating this content on the programme’s communication channels
- ▶ Showcased project updates and progress through the programme’s quarterly [email newsletter](#) and the [2021/2022 planetGOLD Annual Progress Report](#)



▶▶ *Take a 360° interactive tour of the Guyana project’s mercury-free demonstration site*



108,669 video views on YouTube



1,976 new social media followers



1,134 total email subscribers

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LOOKING AHEAD



In the next reporting period, the planetGOLD programme will continue building on advances made over the last four years, particularly by country projects that launched in the first phase of the programme. As activities ramp up among the projects that launched in 2022 and 2023, many of the country projects that pioneered this work in the initial phase of planetGOLD will begin wrapping up their activities and will move into a period of final documentation and reporting.

These teams will reflect on their experiences, results, and lessons learned both on what worked well and what challenges remain for advancing responsible, mercury-free ASGM in their countries. The programme will continue to collect, evaluate and disseminate this knowledge across the planetGOLD family, and with the broader range of international stakeholders engaged in improving the ASGM sector.

With four new standalone projects under development and another already endorsed by the GEF, the knowledge gained and documented in the first phase of the programme will also be an invaluable resource for those just embarking on their work. In addition to addressing access to finance, mercury-free technical solutions, formalization and access to formal markets, these new projects will incorporate additional interventions designed to mitigate land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change impacts.

To facilitate the exchange of key experiences and information, the programme looks forward to organizing its highly anticipated Global Forum on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in June 2024. This flagship event will bring together a wide range of stakeholders – including miner representatives, government officials, international agencies, policy and technical experts and members of the private sector – to inform, educate, and exchange best practices for improving and professionalizing the ASGM sector.

To keep updated on important news and updates from planetGOLD, visit the [programme website](#), [sign up](#) for email updates, and follow the programme on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

Notes from the programme manager & GEF

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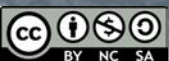
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