



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

A GEF Initiative



# ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

JUNE  
**2024**  
TO JULY  
**2025**

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Photo: planetGOLD Bolivia

# Note from the Programme Manager

This past year saw the planetGOLD programme achieve a new level of maturity, with all but one of the first set of planetGOLD projects reaching completion, making this year an opportune time for deep reflection and stocktaking. This reflection took the form of a comprehensive cross-programmatic assessment of the experiences and achievements of the first five years of the programme, ensuring that its results were well-documented and key lessons extracted. But taking time for reflection did not mean standing still: the next set of planetGOLD countries began to truly hit their stride in their efforts to reduce ASGM mercury use, through the programme's core elements of formalization, access to finance, formal markets and mercury-free technology. Further, the programme continued to expand, with Senegal and Liberia preparing new projects under the programme, making a total of 28 countries that are now part of the planetGOLD family.



In this report you will find examples of progress made across the planetGOLD programme from July 2024 through June 2025. Since its launch in 2018, planetGOLD's success has been the result of collective effort of its country project teams, partner agencies, co-financiers, and private-sector actors and this year is no exception. Yet, the mission remains incomplete. Looking forward, many countries with significant mercury use in ASGM still require assistance to tackle their ASGM challenges. In addition, ongoing engagement is still needed with countries with completed projects, to understand how to best sustain results over the long term.

As the programme continues to mature and expand, ongoing collaboration, open dialogue and knowledge sharing will remain essential to strengthen the programme and improve outcomes. This includes developing strategies to maintain linkages with the countries that have graduated so that continuous learning and collection of results beyond the project lifetime can be achieved. I thank everyone involved in the programme for their continued commitment to the vision of making mercury history in the ASGM sector.

**Ludovic Bernaudat**, Programme Manager for planetGOLD  
Head, GEF Chemicals and Green Chemistry Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch  
UN Environment Programme



Photo: planetGOLD Burkina Faso

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# Note from the GEF

During the past year, the planetGOLD programme continued to evolve and grow, with graduating countries documenting, synthesizing and sharing results and lessons learned, while the next tranche of countries began making significant progress in executing their mercury-reduction strategies. Formalization, technology transfer and access to formal finance and markets are at the heart of planetGOLD, but in an effort to improve the tools for addressing mercury in the ASGM sector, the program is expanding its field of vision, for example by piloting innovative jurisdictional approaches to enhance local collaboration and reduce conflict during the transition to a mercury-free ASGM sector. The programme is also placing greater emphasis on incorporating consideration of biodiversity, gender inequity and engagement with Indigenous Peoples, in line with policies and guidance adopted by the Minamata Convention and aligned with the GEF’s policies on gender, indigenous peoples, private sector and youth and an emphasis on integrated approaches.



This progress report provides the latest information on the efforts of planetGOLD on the ground, providing practical insights on the most effective approaches for, and barriers to, eliminating mercury use in the ASGM sector. The programme’s emphasis on stakeholder engagement and partnerships not only enhances the success of current planetGOLD project activities but will also help to sustain momentum after the projects have closed. The programme’s continued growth will only amplify the need for a strong network of partners at the local, national and international levels, leveraging the efforts of the entire global community aiming to improve the practices of ASGM and eliminate mercury use forever. I wish everyone involved in this journey continued success.

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



Photo: Juan Manuel Chavarria/planetGOLD Colombia

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*Photo: Dawn Po Quimque/planetGOLD Philippines*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Progress Report features key activities, milestones, and background information from country projects across the planetGOLD programme for the July 2024 to June 2025 reporting period. Supported by the Global Environment Facility and led by the UN Environment Programme, planetGOLD 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 artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector.

## Summary of Progress on Core Strategies

Projects participating in the planetGOLD programme work to promote responsible, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining by carrying out interventions related to four main programmatic themes: formalization, access to finance, technical solutions, and access to formal markets. Projects also engage in awareness raising and promote gender equity as issues that cut across these pillars. As planetGOLD wraps up the initial phase of the programme, some common themes and observations have emerged.

Formalization is a foundational component for the planetGOLD programme. The transition to legal, formally recognized and compliant ASGM activity is a prerequisite for achieving access to finance, which is, in turn, key to enabling ASM operators to invest in mercury-free, more efficient processing technologies. As of this reporting period, planetGOLD projects have supported approximately 41,800 miners in their formalization process. Training and capacity-building efforts have helped mining communities better understand how to take part in formalization processes, such as applying for permits and licenses. In many countries, projects have worked directly with miners to guide them through the steps needed to become legally recognized, and in some cases have partnered with governments to create simpler, more user-friendly systems for formalization. Beyond working with individual miners, planetGOLD also supports improvements in national policies, strengthens the skills of government agencies, and helps expand services that support



Photo: planetGOLD Mongolia

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Photo: Dawn Rodriguez/planetGOLD Philippines

different aspects of the small-scale mining sector. By taking part in policy discussions on the legal framework governing the ASGM sector, reviewing existing laws and making recommendations, project teams are working to bring artisanal and small-scale gold mining into the formal economy.

The planetGOLD programme's theory of change maintains that in order for miners to adopt more responsible, mercury-free practices, they require access to formal financing to fund this transition. De-risking the ASGM sector has been identified as a common need in order for financial institutions and formal lenders to consider providing financing to ASGM operators. Because miners cannot typically accommodate commercial banks' normal lending procedures (disclosing asset values, collateral, earnings history), bank managers do not know how to measure and monitor the risks to their portfolios. As a result, ASGM operators largely seek informal finance, although this can mean getting a lower price for their gold in exchange for pre-financing and convenience of transactions.

To address these challenges, projects have made efforts to partner with private lenders and microfinance institutions in an effort to expand financing options for artisanal and small-scale miners. These partnerships have in some cases led to the creation of loan products designed specifically for the ASGM sector. In situations where commercial finance was deemed unavailable or not feasible, alternative financing options such as miner-led savings and credit organizations have been established. Some projects have also engaged with Central Banks to facilitate access to credit from local financial institutions. This strategy aims to de-risk ASGM finance and build the confidence of commercial financial partners by providing proof of legal, responsible operations and showing a track record of mine production. As of this reporting period, planetGOLD projects have developed or supported 20 finance mechanisms and products, which have enabled miners and mine operations to successfully access more than \$1.9 million USD. In addition to supporting the development of these mechanisms, projects have focused on increasing the trust of finance institutions in engaging with artisanal or small-scale mining operators and on improving the financial literacy and overall business practices of ASGM operators.

Regarding technical solutions to reduce or, where feasible, eliminate the use of mercury in mining operations, all projects have designed or are in the process of designing mercury-free processing systems or workflows for project pilot sites. These processing workflows incorporate enhanced gravity-based methods for gold recovery and, in some cases, introduce methods that rely on chemical-based gold extraction. In some countries, planetGOLD projects have undertaken efforts to build all-new mercury-free processing capacity, and in others, country teams have opted to expand existing facilities' ability to process ore without mercury. This was done through capacity building, provision of mercury-free equipment, strengthened existing processing capacity, and/or partnerships with other mining associations to process ore. Miners and ore processors are trained to operate and maintain the new technologies, emphasizing that mercury-free technologies can recover more gold than traditional methods. Project sites are also often used as training facilities to widely spread knowledge about mercury-



Photo: planetGOLD Indonesia

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free mining processes. In addition to direct technology transfer, some country projects have taken up ore sales strategies, incentivizing artisanal and small-scale miners to sell their raw ore to industrial processing plants rather than process the ore themselves using mercury.

As of this reporting period, the technical interventions carried out by projects in the programme had resulted in the prevention, reduction or elimination of 39.3 tonnes of mercury emissions. Three projects that completed their activities during this reporting period—Burkina Faso, Mongolia, and the Philippines—estimate that mercury-free technologies they installed in mining communities will continue to support miners in avoiding an additional estimated 4.5 tonnes of mercury over the next 5-10 years.

In order for miners to do business with legal buyers and get a fair price for their gold, they need better access to formal markets. ASGM producers commonly struggle to access formal gold markets for variety of reasons, instead relying on informal trading routes that can perpetuate a lack of transparency in the supply chain and leave miners vulnerable to a cycle of informality and uncertainty. One key element of engaging formal markets is to ensure that gold produced by artisanal and small-scale miners 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 project beneficiaries to demonstrate that they conform with other key guidance and codes for responsible production.

Activities projects have undertaken to facilitate miners' access to formal markets include: mapping supply chain actors, promoting due diligence and supporting mining organizations to comply with the planetGOLD Criteria (including through trainings and workshops as well as assistance in demonstrating verified compliance), reducing geographical barriers to formal trading, advocating for better regulations and government support, and engaging Central Banks and other local, national, and international market actors in efforts to foster miners' participation in formal markets. To date, projects in the programme have produced 1,414 kilograms of responsible gold produced in conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria. Lessons learned from projects in the programme so far have suggested that mapping each country's ASGM supply chains and broader market system is a critical step to take before designing interventions, that pursuing early collaboration with Central Bank domestic ASGM gold buying programs is highly beneficial, and that training ASGM operation staff as due diligence officers is an effective strategy to build local capacity on responsible supply chain mechanisms.

Awareness raising and communication outreach are an essential component that cuts across the four programmatic pillars of the planetGOLD programme. Communications in the programme goes beyond simply disseminating project results. Project teams disseminate knowledge to advance



Photo: Juan Manuel Chevarria/planetGOLD Colombia

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progress on formalization, access to finance and markets, and uptake of mercury-free technologies. They also execute communication interventions to educate miners and local communities on the dangers of mercury exposure, to encourage miners to take up responsible mining practices, and to broadly reinforce for financiers, government officials and the broader public the socio-economic development potential of responsible, mercury-free ASGM. Projects across the programme elevate the voices and experiences of miners, especially those who can demonstrate the transition to cleaner and better practices, distributing their stories widely online and in key events and film screenings. Some national teams have implemented awareness and education initiatives for children and educators to empower the children and grandchildren of miners to become agents of change in their communities. Utilizing radio and engaging national and local media outlets has been another effective strategy to expand narratives about artisanal and small-scale gold mining, share reliable information, and introduce audiences to promising solutions for the sector.

Finally, projects are making significant effort toward another cross-cutting component: promoting gender equity in the ASGM sector. Projects have integrated gender inclusion across each of the pillars of the programme, seeking to engage with women who choose to work in the ASGM sector in order to support themselves and their families. Teams have made concerted efforts to support women miners through a variety of skill building initiatives and by identifying opportunities for them to fully participate in the ASGM sector and benefit equally from this work. Projects in multiple countries have provided target assistance to help women miners form their own associations or cooperatives, and in some cases, they have provided opportunities for women to pursue alternative sources of livelihood such as food businesses or soap making. Project teams have helped build the evidence base for gender inclusion in artisanal and small-scale gold mining by conducting needs assessments and carrying out studies to identify priority actions and strategies to promote equal rights and opportunities for men and women in ASGM. Some planetGOLD projects have also worked to influence regulations at the local and national levels aimed at creating enabling conditions for women miners to participate equally in the sector.

In addition to this report, an analysis published by planetGOLD in 2025, [Cross-Programmatic Assessment of the planetGOLD Programme](#), provides a comprehensive review of what strategies were taken up in nine countries that were among the first to join the programme—providing deep observations, takeaways, and recommendations that current and future initiatives on artisanal and small-scale gold mining can learn from. [Learn more on the programme website](#), and subscribe to the planetGOLD email list to be sure to receive regular updates on work carried out across the programme.

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# By the Numbers

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 responsible ASGM gold produced;<sup>1</sup> and amount of money made available to ASGM through financial mechanisms. What follows is a snapshot of results in these key component areas as of this reporting period.



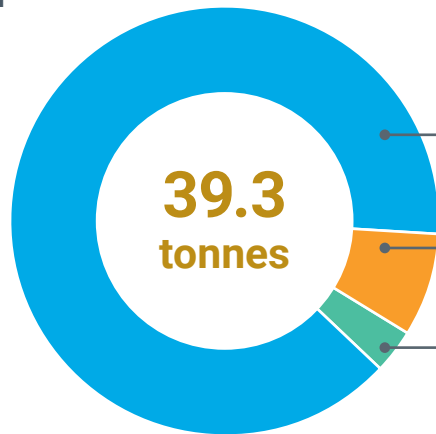
See definitions for each of **planetGOLD's output indicators** as well as **guidance on how they are calculated**

## MERCURY ABATEMENT



Amount of mercury abated to date:

\*Data reported from: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Indonesia, Mongolia, Peru, and the Philippines



Hg prevented:  
**34.9 tonnes**



Hg reduced:  
**3.1 tonnes**



Hg eliminated:  
**1.3 tonnes**

## MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners assisted in their formalization process:

**41,821**

16,071 25,750

\*Data reported from: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

## ACCESS TO FINANCE



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

**20**

\*Data reported from: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Mongolia, Peru, and the Philippines

## RESPONSIBLE GOLD



Amount of responsible gold produced in conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria:

**1,414.3 kilograms**

\*Data reported from: Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Mongolia, and the Philippines

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

**\$1,906,758 USD**

\*Data reported from: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mongolia, Peru, and Uganda

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1. In this context, "responsible" means that operations conform with the planetGOLD Criteria for Environmentally and Socially Responsible Operations

# 2



Photo: planetGOLD Suriname

# PLANETGOLD'S APPROACH



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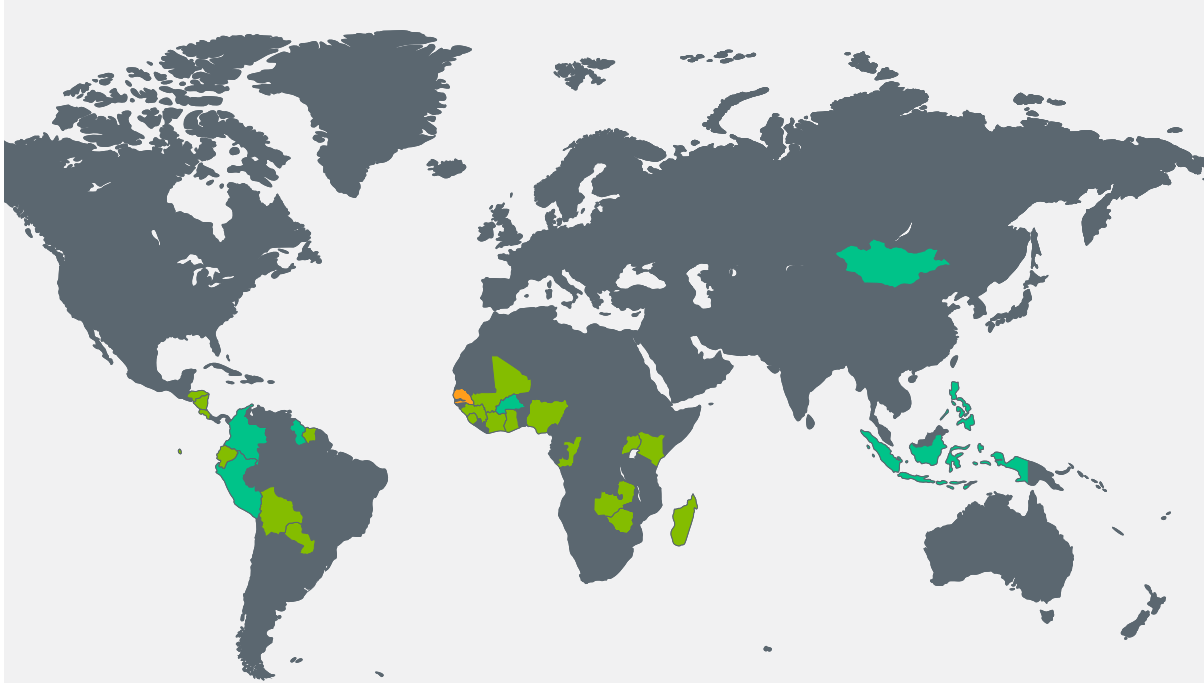
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Supporting countries' commitments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the planetGOLD programme is funded by the Global Environment Facility, led by the United Nations Environment Programme and implemented in partnership with the United Nations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



**UNDER IMPLEMENTATION**

- Bolivia
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Ecuador
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Honduras
- Kenya
- Madagascar
- Mali
- Nicaragua
- Nigeria
- Paraguay
- Republic of the Congo
- Sierra Leone
- Suriname
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

**CLOSED**

- Burkina Faso
- Colombia
- Guyana
- Indonesia
- Mongolia
- Peru
- Philippines

**UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

- Senegal



Photo: planetGOLD Côte d'Ivoire

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Photo: Janeth Lazarte/planetGOLD Peru

# PROGRESS ON CORE STRATEGIES

This chapter summarizes activities and advances made on the programme's four key pillars of work: formalization, access to finance, technology transfer, and access to formal markets. Projects also engage in awareness raising and gender equity interventions as cross-cutting themes across these four pillar areas. More detailed summaries for each country project can be found in [Chapter 4](#).

To see all materials published by planetGOLD projects, [visit our online resource library](#).

## FORMALIZATION

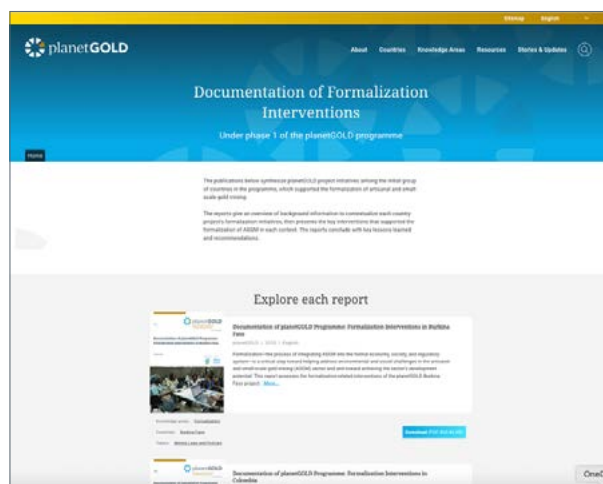
Artisanal and small-scale gold mining is typically characterized by widespread informality, which presents several challenges. Informality keeps ASGM operators in a cycle of poverty and exploitation, leaving them reliant on informal financing and exposing them to risks of extortion and corruption in the absence of relevant licenses, permits, and compliance certificates. The transition to legal, formally recognized and compliant ASGM activity is a prerequisite for achieving access to finance, which is, in turn, key to enabling miners to invest in mercury-free, more efficient processing technologies.



For this reason, formalization is a key foundation for all projects in the planetGOLD programme. The term “formalization” includes not only legal recognition but also the process of integrating the ASGM sector into the formal economy and regulatory system. Projects across the programme not only support the formalization of miners participating in the programme, but they also aim to support improved ASGM policies, build the capacity of miners and relevant government authorities, and increase the provision of services among agencies and institutions that address different dimensions of the ASGM sector.

### Reforming policy frameworks and regulatory processes

In order for artisanal and small-scale gold mining to progress toward formalization, improving or creating new legal and regulatory frameworks governing the sector is fundamental in creating a policy environment that enables the development of a formal, responsible, mercury-free ASGM sector. As a first step to support improving policy frameworks, many country projects recommend, and in some cases support, the creation of national ASGM policies, including assisting with National Action Plans on ASGM (NAPs) as required by the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Projects across the programme undertake detailed analyses of the existing legal and regulatory frameworks around the ASGM sector, with the goal of identifying key elements where projects can assist policy makers in improving or developing new regulations related to the sector.



**Dive Deeper:** These case studies give an overview of formalization interventions undertaken in the initial 9 country projects in the planetGOLD programme

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A common recommendation is to clarify and simplify licensing, to facilitate a more efficient pathway for artisanal and small-scale miners to secure permits. In the Philippines, for example, the project recommended simplifying the applications for the small-scale mining area contracts and mineral processing licenses, reducing bureaucratic barriers and making legal compliance more accessible for ASGM miners. To promote efficiency, transparency, and institutional continuity, the project also supported the development of a [Knowledge Management platform](#) tailored to the needs of the ASGM sector.

The platform includes a centralized digital resource hub for miners, regulators, and partners, and it plays a key role in streamlining the application process for mining permits and licenses—providing step-by-step guides, downloadable templates, regulatory checklists, and explainer tools that clarify complex procedures. By simplifying access to legal and procedural information, the platform supports miners and associations in navigating formalization requirements more efficiently and confidently, while also reinforcing the capacity of local governments and MGB regional offices to deliver consistent guidance and support.

In Kenya, the planetGOLD team supported the development of amendments to the Mining Act of 2016 to include permitting for artisanal miners, to adjust the Act’s definitions of ASM activities based on operational output and production, and to clarify the requirements and procedures for acquisition of licenses and permits. The Bolivia project made headway this reporting period by helping to develop an administrative resolution for the prior authorization of import, export and commercialization of mercury; supporting the development of a ‘Single Mercury Registry’ system to help control the import, export and commercialization of mercury; and cooperating with the Ministries of Mining and Environment to develop a comprehensive proposal for updating existing environmental regulations for mining activities.

In Honduras, the planetGOLD project participated with national mining authority INHGEOMIN in the formulation, consultation and dissemination of a national strategy to promote ASGM formalization through issuance of a Presidential Decree incorporating strategies defined in Honduras’ National Action Plan on ASGM. In Uganda, the country project supported the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in launching new national environment regulations in July 2024, bringing together stakeholders from relevant government ministries, miners’ groups, and private and civil society sectors to establish a framework for managing hazardous chemicals, specifically providing for the prohibition of mercury importation, use, and supply in the country.

Several other projects are laying groundwork for addressing regulatory reform. In Guinea, the project developed regulatory recommendations by establishing local and national consultation groups to facilitate dialogue on ASGM formalization. The project team engaged 722 miners in consultations, meetings, and workshops, focused on formulating and reviewing 11 proposals for new regulatory texts to improve the country’s legislation governing the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector.

The planetGOLD project in Ecuador is conducting a comprehensive assessment of formalization status in target territories and reviewing relevant policies and regulations to better integrate ASGM into national legal frameworks, while acknowledging that the ongoing security crisis in mining regions limits government capacity for advancing specialized reforms. The planetGOLD Ghana project has prepared and submitted policy recommendations to the National Development Planning Commission aimed at mainstreaming project outcomes in the Medium-Term Development Plans of the Metropolitan, Municipal, District Assemblies (MMDAs), to help enable these MMDAs to promote mercury-free mining within their communities.

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## Providing training and knowledge exchange for ASGM operations and government officials

Projects across the programme have continued to support miners in their formalization process by delivering training and other outreach activities to improve their ability to understand and comply with regulatory requirements. Project teams have engaged in, or are in the process of developing, capacity building efforts in mining communities to bolster their understanding of existing legal frameworks governing ASGM and how to engage in processes such as obtaining licenses and permits.

The planetGOLD Mongolia project held extensive capacity building activities for miners. By the time the planetGOLD Mongolia project closed, it had reached 3,144 miners through educational activities on formalization topics, including providing training for 138 miners during this reporting period on environmental legislation, occupational safety and social protection, strengthening compliance and reducing risks. In Ecuador, the planetGOLD project built the capacity of 84 miners in southern Ecuador this year through the launch of the mejORO training program, which promotes responsible planning, legal compliance, and responsible mining practices.

With contributions from local and national stakeholders, including mining actors, administrative authorities, and NGOs, the planetGOLD Côte d'Ivoire project prepared a formalization support guide to assist ASGM operators in navigating the formalization process. The project also provided capacity building workshops for members of cooperatives and mining groups focused on formalization and governance. Similarly, the planetGOLD Burkina Faso project supported the Ministry of Mines in developing a formalization guide, which was in the finalization process when the project closed in 2025. Once adopted, this guide will be disseminated widely. In Ghana, the project trained 280 miners on responsible mining practices and CRAFT Code requirements, strengthening awareness and operational capacity to meet formal standards.

Many planetGOLD projects have also engaged government officials in improving their understanding of the ASGM sector and how policies and regulations can realistically support miners in operating within the formal economy. In Bolivia, for instance, the planetGOLD team collaborated with the state agency EGPP (Escuela de Gestión Pública Plurinacional) and Swiss Better Gold Initiative to offer eight trainings during this reporting period on responsible gold mining and the FPIC process for 355 public officials from relevant state institutions. In Ecuador, the planetGOLD project trained 20 specialized government staff in the operation of five licensed drones, provided by the project, to improve environmental oversight of mining operations. These drones will support environmental inspections, help detect illegal mining, and provide certified georeferenced evidence for judicial processes.

In addition to training workshops, some projects also organize knowledge exchange events to share information and spur discussion among relevant government officials and stakeholders. The planetGOLD Mongolia project, for example, helped to convene an ASM National Conference



Participants at a formalization training organized by planetGOLD Mongolia in Gobi-Altai province

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in September 2024, bringing together over 250 government officials and artisanal miners. The project presented international experiences on formalization, gold traceability, and due diligence to help frame national discussions on the ASGM legal framework, and the conference concluded with a set of recommendations on land access, legal reforms, and multi-stakeholder cooperation, reinforcing momentum for integrating ASGM into Mongolia’s formal economy. Similarly, in the reporting period the Philippines project organized a high-level policy alignment workshop and helped convene a nationwide workshop for local mining regulatory board members, clarifying key provisions of the People’s Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991 and improving coordination on small-scale mining governance. In Zimbabwe, the planetGOLD project hosted a flagship national stakeholders consultative dialogue on the ASGM Strategy for Zimbabwe, which offered a participatory platform for policymakers, government agencies, the Zimbabwe Miners Federation, civil society, and project beneficiaries to comment and shape the strategy’s policy framework.

## Supporting miners in forming cooperatives and complying with existing legal frameworks

Several projects have also provided direct technical support to mining communities in organizing themselves into mining cooperatives and in taking the required steps to achieve formal status. In Mongolia, in partnership with the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining National Federation, the planetGOLD project promoted compliance and provided direct assistance to 17 partnerships in preparing and submitting documentation for land permit applications to the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority of Mongolia. In Burkina Faso, planetGOLD directly supported 826 miners in formalizing and facilitated the establishment of two mining organizations, ONAM-STM and ANAMP-BF, formed by artisanal miners trained and certified through the project’s vocational training program.

The Philippines project provided comprehensive, strategic support to its two partner mining associations, particularly in the areas of documentation, regulatory compliance, and the renewal of critical licenses and certifications—directly supporting 805 miners to navigate the complex regulatory process. The project supported the successful renewal of Small-Scale Mining Contracts for both partner mining associations, which was further strengthened by the approval of the associations’ Mineral Processing License by the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board, formally authorizing operation of the mercury-free processing system installed by the project.

The planetGOLD Uganda project has actively promoted the importance of forming mining cooperatives, supporting 820 miners to date in forming 16 different cooperatives and obtaining two small scale mining licenses in Buhweju and in Kassanda. The planetGOLD Zambia project formed 18 new mining cooperatives and strengthened 16 existing ones during the reporting period. In Kenya, the project has helped organize 3,951 miners into 23 registered marketing cooperatives across six counties, in alignment with the national ASGM formalization strategy. In Guinea, after new regulations implemented in 2024 made environmental impact assessments a requirement for



**Watch:** *Forming cooperatives to help gold miners shift to mercury-free methods in Côte d’Ivoire*

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artisanal and small-scale gold mining entities to operate legally, the project supported 550 miners from 2 mining operations in Mandiana and Siguiri in successfully regaining their formal status by producing and submitting these assessments.

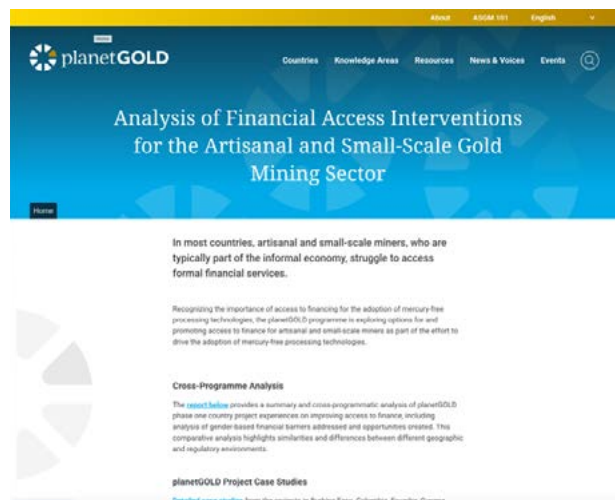
The Bolivia project began implementing a formalization assessment tool it developed with the aim of supporting miners in their formalization process, initiating the process of applying this tool with six different mining organizations.

Technical assistance can also go beyond assisting with document preparation and formation of cooperatives. The planetGOLD Mongolia project conducted cadastral surveys of degraded land in Mandal soum and Tunkhel, updating the database with 23.6 hectares across 11 sites. Four artisanal mining partnerships subsequently submitted land requests, with mentoring from the ASM National Federation on applications and contract formalization. As a result, 9.72 hectares were approved for ASM operations in Mandal soum and Gobi-Altai, granting legal recognition to 158 miners. In Honduras, the project team supported a census of artisanal mining tunnels in Agua Fría Mineral to determine an appropriate area to be requested for artisanal mining, and in the Quimistán municipality collaborated with the local government and INHGEOMIN to designate 81 hectares for artisanal mining in the community of La Mina.

## ACCESS TO FINANCE

Artisanal and small-scale miners typically struggle to access formal financial services. The planetGOLD programme’s theory of change posits that improving access to formal finance is a critical prerequisite for funding artisanal and small-scale miners’ adoption of mercury-free practices. Formal financial institutions generally do not offer financial products or services suitable for ASGM, as they are often hesitant to engage with the ASGM sector due to perceived reputational risks, lack of experience with the sector, and high transaction costs associated with small sized entities. Additionally, miners’ tendency to operate informally and their typical lack of familiarity with formal business procedures often lead ASGM operations to turn to informal, sometimes disreputable sources.

The planetGOLD programme is working to improve miners’ access to finance by devising approaches that can overcome barriers that both miners and financiers face. By piloting different models for access to finance and working with a range of partners including microfinance institutions, Central Banks, commercial banks, national development banks, NGOs, socially responsible investments, and industry partners, the programme is demonstrating how finance for ASGM can be designed to fit a wide range of circumstances and needs.



**Dive Deeper:** This resource page highlights several analyses of financial interventions undertaken by the first set of countries participating in planetGOLD.

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## Supporting miners' access to finance mechanisms and products

Projects across the planetGOLD programme engage with commercial banks and microfinance institutions to help those entities build a greater understanding of the sector, its needs, and potential. Some projects have then gone on to work with select institutions to develop financial products for ASGM. With the support of partner financial institutions, the projects in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ecuador, Mongolia, Peru, and the Philippines have reported rolling out financial mechanisms or products, with a total of \$1,906,758 USD successfully accessed by miners as of the end of the reporting period.

In Burkina Faso, the planetGOLD project provided a first-loss loan guarantee to a partner financial institution, Coris Bank International, to help de-risk their entry into the ASGM sector. The project provided a \$50,000 USD guarantee covering 33% of the total capital made available through the bank. In addition to this guarantee offered by planetGOLD, the bank's ability to draw on a low-interest, government-backed Green Climate Fund when issuing loans has allowed the financial institution to offer miners a low annual interest rate of 8%. The ability of the planetGOLD project to provide a loan guarantee was a critical factor in the creation of this mechanism. At project end, three loans had been distributed from the fund, totaling \$113,000 USD.

Recognizing that commercial banks cannot serve all ASM operators, in some cases projects have explored alternative financing options. The planetGOLD Mongolia project opted to use this approach after engaging with several formal financial institutions and concluding that they would not be able to overcome the insurmountably negative perception held by these institutions of the ASGM sector. After upgrading existing processing facilities to expand mercury-free capacity, rather than planetGOLD Mongolia taking repayment for these upgrades, the project devised a plan to channel repayments as capital to seed a revolving fund managed by a licensed, miner-controlled social enterprise registered as a Savings and Credit Cooperative (SCC). The resulting entity, called Baatarvangiin Khishig Arvijikh, is made up of 57 members, 45 of whom are women. In December 2024, the project signed a cooperation agreement with the two processing plant owners and the SCC, which secured USD \$120,000 in paybacks to be channeled as charitable contributions to the SCC, complemented by USD \$20,000 in grant seed funding. The revolving fund will be dedicated to driving the uptake of mercury-free equipment by repeated investments in the upgrading of equipment.

The project in Bolivia has supported the creation of a similar type of self-managed Savings and Credit Group for women miners, to strengthen their access to financial education and offer suitable health insurance at a subsidized cost. Two groups with 10-12 members each were set up in the San Ramon district during the reporting period, with one paying out a first credit of \$72 USD. The Bolivia project also assisted the state agency Fondo de Financiamiento para la Minería (FOFIM) in supporting mining cooperatives, including by ensuring that mercury use is considered when loan applications from gold mining cooperatives are evaluated. FOFIM granted a loan worth an estimated \$71,500 USD this year to a cooperative that plans to engage in mercury-free cyanidation treatment of ore.



**Watch:** *Unlocking formal finance to help artisanal gold miners make mercury history in Burkina Faso*

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Some projects in the programme are engaging with Central Banks to facilitate access to credit from local financial institutions. This strategy aims to de-risk ASGM finance and instill confidence in commercial financial partners by relying on the due diligence efforts of the Central Bank under domestic gold buying programs. These efforts can provide proof of legal, responsible operations and concrete evidence of a mine production track record. The planetGOLD Philippines project, for example, devised a mechanism for miners to be able to access debt financing from formal financial institutions through the collateralization of a supplier agreement between the miners and the Philippine Central Bank, which acts as the formal buyer of ASM gold in the country.



Collateralization of the planetGOLD Philippines supplier agreement (source: planetGOLD Philippines)

Under the agreement, the Central Bank agrees to purchase gold from miners from ASGM associations in project sites that meet the planetGOLD Criteria. Miners can then use the forward purchasing agreement to secure a loan from participating local commercial banks. As of the end of the project’s implementation, the supplier agreement was in the final stages of review by the Central Bank, with a supporting statement from another major national bank.

Multiple other project teams are in the process of developing new ASGM finance mechanisms, including alternative financing arrangements in cases where formal financial inclusion work remains challenging due to ongoing perceptions of the ASGM sector as too high-risk. The project in Ecuador, for example, is exploring alternative pathways such as working with equipment vendors to facilitate different payment mechanisms for miners. That project is also exploring the development of community-based savings and credit cooperatives for miners, similar to in Mongolia and Bolivia. These would be self-managed and member-exclusive, providing internal mechanisms for savings and lending.

Work has begun in Ecuador to strengthen associative processes and improve financial literacy as a foundation for later creating these financial cooperatives. However, these strategies have been affected by changes in national financial regulations in the country. Recent reforms have transformed large cooperatives into banks, weakening the cooperative sector and reducing their presence in rural communities—precisely where this project could have the greatest impact. Several other projects that are still early in their implementation are engaging stakeholders including financial institutions, government agencies, and development partners in discussing financing needs and exploring potential innovative financing models.

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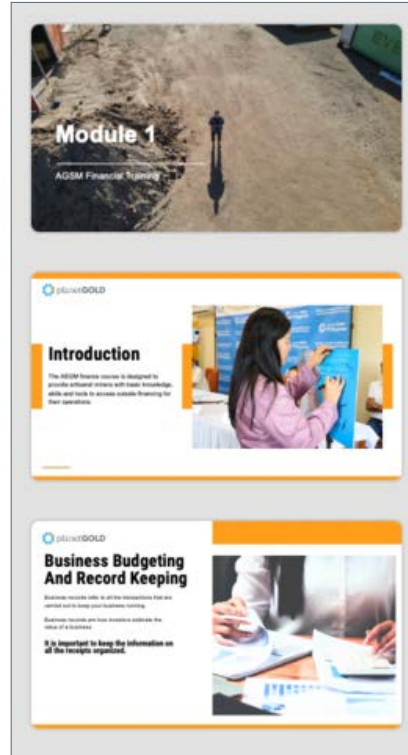
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## Educating miners and financiers

Understanding that many ASGM operators lack the financial literacy to enter into formal financial agreements, and that financial institutions may not always have a deep understanding of the realities of the ASGM sector, bridging knowledge gaps for both miners and financial institutions is key to fortifying the development of these new financial models. In order for artisanal and small-scale mining to transition away from being a predominantly informal activity linked to social and environmental problems, and towards a formal, professional and respected livelihood activity, miners require the business infrastructure, financial literacy and planning skills necessary to secure loans and seek out new investors.

Since the launch of the planetGOLD programme, projects in all phases have undertaken training to educate financial institutions about the ASGM sector and to improve miners' financial literacy and business skills, training them on creating business plans and on processes for applying for loans. These initiatives enhance miners' ability to navigate formal financial systems, improve their readiness to access loans and investment opportunities, and strengthen their long-term prospects for inclusion in responsible gold trading networks. Through this miner education as well as outreach to banks and other financial institutions to enhance formal financiers' understanding of the realities of the ASGM sector, the programme is working to promote and pilot viable opportunities to provide financing for responsible, mercury-free mining operations.

To help build a more responsible, formal, and professional ASGM sector worldwide, this year the planetGOLD programme published an [ASGM Finance Course](#), with a curriculum of eight modules intended to help teach fundamental business skills to artisanal and small-scale gold miners. The teaching and learning materials in this curriculum are designed to be “open source,” made freely available to programs, organizations and institutions of all kinds, and are meant to be used as basic materials that can be modified and adapted to suit the learning needs of artisanal miners in different contexts globally.



**Explore:** This 8-module curriculum available in English, French and Spanish can help teach fundamental business skills to artisanal and small-scale miners



Photo: planetGOLD Madagascar

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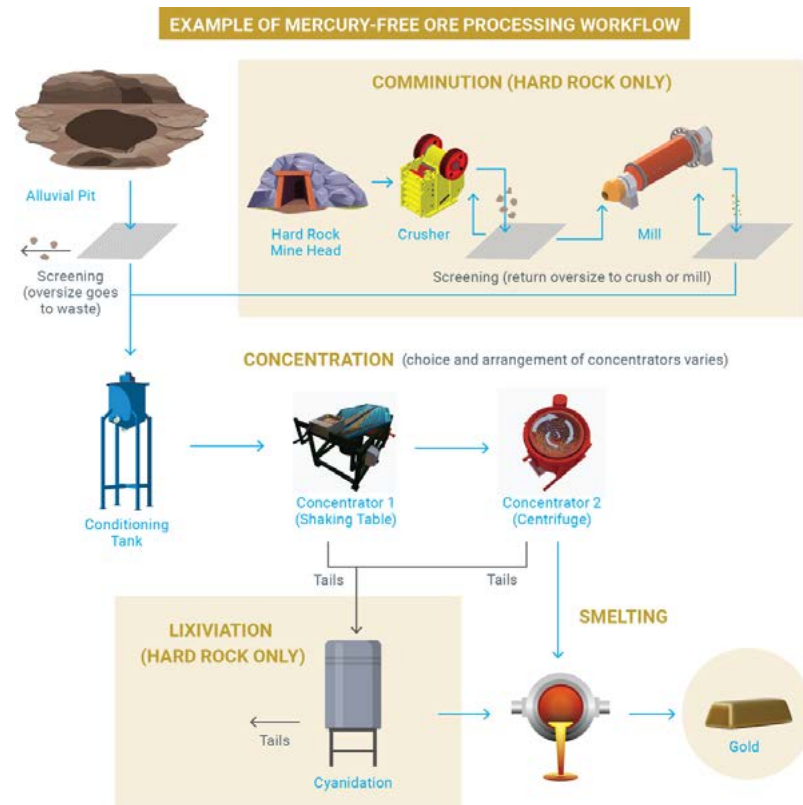
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# TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

Mercury-free technologies and processing methods can extract a greater amount of gold than processing methods that utilize toxic mercury. When used properly, these cleaner methods also lead to more income for miners and their families while protecting their health, their communities, and the environment. All projects across the planetGOLD programme work to promote, design and pilot technologies and practices that prevent, eliminate, or reduce the use of mercury in ASGM (see [Country Project Highlights](#)). While every site is unique, these mercury-free production methods usually involve improved crushing and milling techniques, improved gravity concentration tools such as centrifuges and shaking tables, and/or chemical leaching processes.

Some projects have additionally adopted a strategy of persuading miners to sell their ore to existing mercury-free processing businesses, rather than extracting the gold themselves using mercury. Projects also carry out training and capacity building activities to increase miners' knowledge of, and comfort with, mercury-free mining practices. And to ensure acceptance and sustainability of the technical interventions, projects prioritize gaining the consent, trust and cooperation of key stakeholders, including miners themselves, governments, and local communities. Altogether, as of September 2025 the technical interventions undertaken by planetGOLD projects have resulted in the prevention, reduction or elimination of 39.3 tonnes of mercury emissions.



*This figure illustrates typical components of a mercury-free ore processing workflow*

## Advancing mercury-free mining

In several countries, project teams have undertaken efforts to build all-new mercury-free processing facilities for use by miners and for training or demonstration. In others, country teams have taken stock of existing gold processing facilities in their project areas and are opting to strengthen or expand these existing facilities' ability to process ore without mercury through provision of equipment and/or technical assistance.

The planetGOLD Philippines project completed the commissioning of two new mercury-free processing systems in the communities of Paracale and Sagada, formally turning over the facilities

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to the project's partner mining associations. The gravity concentration process includes centrifugal concentrators, a helicoidal concentrator, shaking table, and gold smelting tools. The helicoidal concentrator is a very new technology seldom known or used elsewhere. It is relatively easy to construct, including by local fabricators. The tailings are stored in the settling tanks awaiting chemical processing, which Paracale has on-site. Although a leaching circuit was planned for Sagada, consultations with surrounding communities found that locals were concerned about the environmental risks of chemical leaching, which led the project to use only gravity concentration at that mine site and to develop a process for transporting final tailings offsite for further processing. At project closure, these mercury-free technologies had prevented 60.3 kilograms of mercury use at the project's Sagada and Itogon sites, and eliminated 329 kilograms of mercury use at the Paracale site. Educational interventions and activities in the surrounding areas of both Sagada and Paracale enabled the project to prevent an additional estimated 2.96 tonnes of mercury. The project estimates that over the next 10 years, these two mercury-free processing systems will help the mining associations avoid the use of an additional 3.9 tonnes of mercury.



**Watch:** New processing facility in Paracale, Philippines enables miners to go mercury-free

The planetGOLD Burkina Faso project, which completed its implementation in March 2025, officially handed over to the Zemstaaba miners cooperative the chemical-free gold ore processing plant it constructed at it Gnikpière project site, with the active support of local authorities. Designed to accommodate both alluvial and hard rock ore, the processing plant includes standard crushing and grinding equipment with screens for size control and a conditioning tank to optimize slurry density and feed rate to the shaker table. The plant can recover between 70% and 85% of the gold in the ore feed.

As of this reporting period, planetGOLD Kenya was in the process of constructing six gravimetric and micro-leaching plants in Masara and Osiri (Migori County), Rosterman and Bushiangala (Kakamega County), Chambiti (Vihiga County), and Lolgorian (Narok County). All plants comprise process lines for both gravimetric equipment line and micro-leaching with an optimal continuous crushed and concentrate slurry flow rate of 5 tonnes/hour.

### Improving existing facilities and ore sales strategies

The fastest, easiest, and cheapest way to increase mercury-free processing capacity is to modify an existing plant. Existing equipment can be optimized without having to purchase new equipment, these facilities already have supportive infrastructure in place, and they are normally operating with a reasonably reliable ore supply. The planetGOLD Mongolia project took up this strategy, introducing new mercury-free processing systems in two existing plants. The plants have a large tailings management facility to store the tailings, which contain roughly 30-40% of the total gold, for potential further processing by leaching or flotation. These two plants have not yet begun operation due to land conflicts and regulatory barriers, including lengthy process for ASM land permitting, coordination challenges and overlapping mineral licenses. Once operational, the two mercury-free processing systems are expected to prevent 65.3 kilograms of mercury use annually.

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Another efficient way to divert ore away from mercury amalgamation processes is to incentivize artisanal and small-scale miners to sell their raw ore to industrial processing plants, rather than process the ore themselves using mercury. This strategy was adopted previously by projects in Ecuador and Peru, and the current planetGOLD Ecuador project has continued this approach, with 0.48 tonnes of mercury emissions prevented during this reporting period through sustained engagement and technical assistance to two ore processing plants previously strengthened by the National Chemicals Management Programme. The planetGOLD Bolivia project has also taken up this model, assisting small scale miners in the San Ramon district to sell their untreated ore to a local mercury-free processing plant instead processing it themselves with mercury.

## Training and technical assistance to advance responsible mining practices

Projects across the programme have also engaged miners and gold processors in trainings on how to reduce their mercury use or to utilize mercury-free equipment, and have in some cases provided extensive technical assistance to support ASGM operators in improving efficiency and reducing or eliminating mercury use. Technical training topics have included: improved crushing and size reduction operations, gravity concentration methods and equipment, smelting, and refining. 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. 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.

In Ecuador, the planetGOLD project launched a new training program titled “mejORO - Comprehensive School for Responsible and Mercury-Free ASGM,” initiating training for an inaugural group of 84 miners. The program was launched in partnership with Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL) to strengthen knowledge in gravity concentration, flotation, and cyanidation, supported by modules on toxicology, environmental regulation, and safe handling of materials. The program includes 66 academic hours, and graduates will receive official UTPL university certification.



**Learn More:** Read highlights from the launch of mejORO, a comprehensive training program for responsible, mercury-free ASGM in Ecuador (in Spanish) | Photo: planetGOLD Ecuador

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In Bolivia, the planetGOLD project has provided significant technical assistance for two mining cooperatives and one small mining company, delivering support in geological exploration and in improved ore processing, including the use of cleaning tables coupled with a smelting crucible to enable small-scale and artisanal miners to employ the direct smelting method. The Bolivia project also provided technical advice to upgrade Universidad Mayor de San Andrés's (UMSA) metallurgical laboratory, which supports practical training and analysis for several cooperatives, and delivered a diploma course titled “Responsible gold mining without the use of mercury” in partnership with UMSA and the Swiss Better Gold Initiative. These efforts encourage cooperatives to adopt more efficient, mercury-free or reduced-mercury methods for gold recovery. In Ghana during this reporting period, planetGOLD Ghana organized expert-led trainings for 235 miners in Atiwa West and roughly 140 miners in the Western Region on mercury free technologies, covering basic geology, sustainable practices, mercury-free processing, and environmental management.

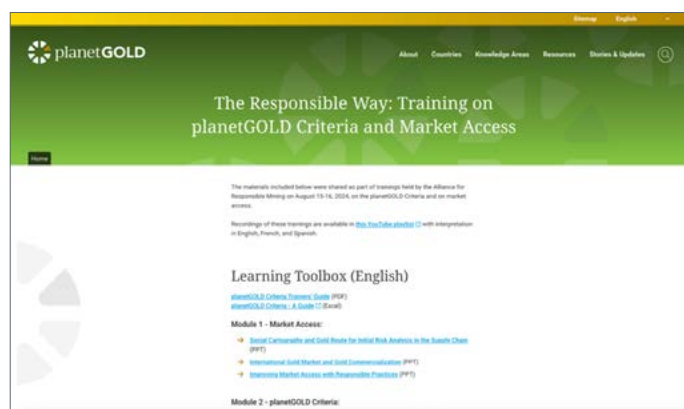
## ACCESS TO FORMAL MARKETS

Facilitating miners' access to formal markets can improve their ability to obtain fair prices for their gold and to seek essential financial support such as loans and investments. In turn, this allows them to adopt more socially and environmentally responsible ASGM practices, including transitioning away from the use of mercury. However, ASGM producers commonly struggle to access formal gold markets for variety of reasons, instead relying on informal trading routes that can perpetuate a lack of transparency in the gold supply chain and leave miners vulnerable to a cycle of informality and uncertainty.



Projects in the planetGOLD programme seek to support miner market access as a crucial step toward integrating responsible ASGM sources into formal supply chains. The planetGOLD programme aims to connect miners to responsible gold buyers such as international refiners, potential domestic gold markets, and central banks to facilitate the direct sale of their gold, reducing intermediaries and thereby potentially increasing the price miners receive. One key element of engaging formal markets is to ensure that the gold artisanal and small-scale miners produce 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. 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.



**Dive Deeper:** Explore this toolbox of materials on responsible market access and the planetGOLD Criteria, available in English, French and Spanish

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Activities projects have undertaken to facilitate miners' access to formal markets include: mapping supply chain actors; promoting due diligence and supporting mining organizations to comply with the planetGOLD Criteria (including through trainings and workshops as well as assistance in demonstrating verified compliance); reducing geographical barriers to trading; advocating for better regulations and government support; and engaging local, national, and international market actors in efforts to establish a transparent gold supply chain for responsibly mined, mercury-free gold.

## Promoting due diligence and compliance with the planetGOLD Criteria

Sites participating in the planetGOLD programme are expected to conform with the planetGOLD Criteria, which ensures that artisanal and small-scale mining entities participating in the programme undertake sufficient efforts to comply with environmental standards and show evidence of their verification. Demonstrating compliance plays a crucial role, as formal market actors require this information to align with their responsible sourcing standards. As of this reporting period, project-supported mining organizations have produced approximately 1,414 kilograms of responsibly produced, mercury-free gold in compliance with the planetGOLD Criteria.

Many country projects in the programme have provided training on the planetGOLD Criteria and due diligence topics for various stakeholders along the ASGM supply chain (mostly focused on miners but, on some occasions, also on traders, processors, or other actors). These training efforts aim to improve alignment to responsible mining practices and standards, thereby strengthening miners' capacities to engage with formal markets. Training is typically tailored to specific needs and situations of artisanal and small-scale organizations, emphasizing practical tools for managing production, sales, and establishing connections with formal market buyers. The training initiatives often include modules on legislation and regulations, international gold market rules, production enhancements, financial literacy, and management.

In addition to ensuring adherence to the planetGOLD Criteria, some projects also actively support miners in documenting their verified compliance on an ongoing basis, which was sometimes embedded in regular site operations. For example, in both Mongolia and the Philippines, compliance with the planetGOLD Criteria was demonstrated through monthly reporting prepared by trained CRAFT Code officers. These officers received training from the planetGOLD country teams and had access to the necessary resources to document compliance. Both country projects shared this information with buyers (their Central Banks) and expect that this documentation will continue even after the project concludes, as the CRAFT officers are paid through their appropriate mining organizations, ensuring ongoing adherence to standards.



**Explore:** This training book explains how participating in responsible gold trade can benefit Bolivian small-scale gold miners

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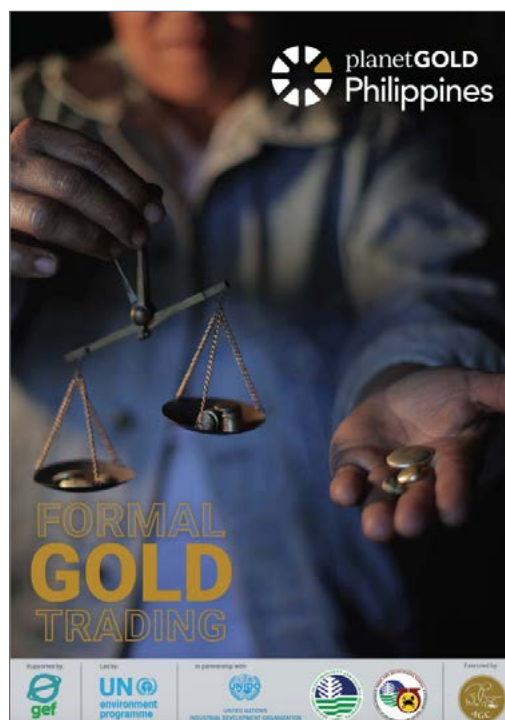
Country projects such as Burkina Faso and the Philippines provided miners with diverse structured tools and resources such as booklets to assist them in recording certain types of their activities related to their commitment to the planetGOLD Criteria. These records included equipment purchases, production data, and expenses, essential for demonstrating adherence to required standards. As part of this activity, capacity-building initiatives were undertaken to enhance miners' capabilities in record-keeping and due diligence reporting. In the Philippines, when the project closed, the traceability booklet was formally handed over to the mining associations to be used by them, process plant operators, financiers, and tunnel owners to document production and trade, thereby ensuring transparency and supporting compliance with government regulations. By providing verifiable records, the booklets can also expand access to fair markets and financing.

## Engaging with Central Banks and other key market actors

A number of projects have actively engaged a wide range of market actors—including traders, processing plants, jewelers, international refiners, Central Banks, NGOs, and the media—to support trade and export linkages and promote the development of the ASGM sector. These efforts, at times carried out in collaboration with government and regulatory officials, have included multistakeholder trainings, awareness-raising activities, organized events, collaborations, forums, and study visits. In Mongolia, for example, study trips and forums allowed stakeholders to explore the gold supply chain, discuss challenges, and highlight investment opportunities. The project collaborated closely with the Bank of Mongolia to facilitate gold buying from formalized miners, including hosting miners at regional buying centers. By project closure in 2025, planetGOLD Mongolia had helped secure access to the formal gold market for all formalized artisanal miners in its project areas following the Financial Regulatory Commission's issuance of official trading licenses to gold traders and processing plant owners, ensuring that these miners can participate in the responsible gold trade.

The planetGOLD project in the Philippines worked with the Central Bank of the Philippines to support associations in obtaining gold trader accreditation—a key milestone achieved after the project helped the associations complete essential requirements, including a Certificate of Good Standing and a Tax Clearance from relevant agencies. By assisting these associations in meeting accreditation standards and navigating legal procedures, the project facilitated their formal participation in gold trading.

The planetGOLD Philippines project also actively engaged with the Central Bank and PJ Lhuillier, Inc. (PJLI), a prominent micro-financial institution specializing in pawn-broking, to strengthen its new gold buying program by establishing new gold trading hubs as alternatives to the Central Bank's limited number of gold buying stations. PJLI launched its gold buying operations in Paracale and Sagada, the project's two pilot site areas, in September 2024 and March 2025, respectively. This program offers a dependable market for gold, coupled with financial and social protection services such as loans and insurance, tailored specifically for miners.



**Take a Look:** This informational brochure explains in simple terms the Central Bank of the Philippines' gold buying program

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Following the successful pilot phase of this gold buying program with the Central Bank, PJI established a separate entity, Auro Resources Trading, Inc, to manage its gold supply operations moving forward as a Central Bank accredited gold buyer. The planetGOLD project supported its two partner mining associations in establishing formal gold trading partnerships with Auro Resources Trading Inc., enabling them to sell responsibly sourced gold from their Minahang Bayans (government-declared small-scale mining areas) through Auro’s more accessible trading hubs. At the time of planetGOLD Philippines’ project closure, 1,077 kilograms of gold produced by the project’s partner mining associations had been sold to the Central Bank and Auro Resources Trading, Inc.

In Uganda, the planetGOLD project has similarly been working with the Central Bank of Uganda to formulate a domestic purchase program strategy for ASM gold. The strategy, which is expected to be completed soon, will contain provisions ensuring that compliance with the planetGOLD Criteria is required for entities that sell gold to the bank. The planetGOLD Ecuador project is also engaging with the Central Bank of Ecuador in a collective effort to develop an institutional agreement that will support legal, technical, and operational instruments to strengthen ASGM formalization.

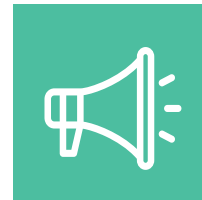
## AWARENESS RAISING






Despite the significant contributions artisanal and small-scale gold mining makes to the world’s gold supply and to local economic development in some of the world’s most deprived areas, environmental degradation, unsafe work practices, and other negative impacts associated with the sector still dominate how it is perceived. This negative reputation blocks its potential: it weakens political support for regulatory reform, discourages financiers and investors, and often undermines the interest of formal market buyers. Against the backdrop of this negative perception of the ASGM sector, the planetGOLD programme recognizes the significant role that strategic, inclusive communications practices can play in helping build greater support for a transformed ASGM sector—and in drawing attention to the benefits ASGM can bring to local communities when it receives adequate support and fair access to formal financing and markets.

The planetGOLD programme aims to raise awareness among miners and local communities about the hazards of mercury use and exposure and the benefits of shifting to more responsible, mercury-free methods—and to help 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 miners’ stories and voices to influence public opinion

To help expand and ground narratives about the ASGM sector in reality while demonstrating a pathway to more responsible, mercury-free small-scale mining, the planetGOLD programme has focused on spotlighting the perspectives and experiences of miners and the ways in which they and project teams are working to positively transform the ASGM sector.



|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Training gold miners to eliminate toxic mercury in Burkina Faso</b><br>planetGOLD • 8K views • 2 years ago        |
|  | <b>Financial inclusion for women miners in Colombia</b><br>planetGOLD • 57K views • 1 year ago                       |
|  | <b>Partnering with Ugandan miners to formalize &amp; #MakeMercuryHistory</b><br>planetGOLD • 55K views • 1 year ago  |
|  | <b>How this gold mine in the Philippines has gone #mercuryfree</b><br>planetGOLD • 29K views • 1 year ago            |
|  | <b>Supporting alternative livelihood options for women miners in Bolivia</b><br>planetGOLD • 2.5K views • 1 year ago |

**Watch:** Miner stories and project strategies come to life in the “Dispatches from the Field” video series

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Documentary films sharing the stories of miners and the realities they face in transitioning to more responsible methods as a popular form of video content created across the programme—reflecting the shifts that audiences across the world are making in the ways they find and engage with content. Throughout the year, planetGOLD continued to produce and disseminate “[Dispatches from the Field](#),” a video series featuring miners’ stories and spotlighting project initiatives and 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.

Many projects have profiled miners to share real-life stories of the people who work in the ASGM sector and the challenges they face, linking these with messages about the types of support and solutions needed for the ASGM sector to become more responsible and professional—sharing these stories in both social media and traditional media. In countries with high linguistic diversity, planetGOLD project teams have translated these stories and awareness raising materials into multiple local languages, exhibiting a best practice in communications that helps ensure accessibility and cultural relevance.

Profiles and testimonials from miners have been widely published on YouTube, social media, and the planetGOLD website. In the Philippines, the planetGOLD project rounded out its impactful [ASGM Champion Spotlight](#) series on social media, especially Facebook, highlighting compelling stories of miners and communities transitioning to mercury-free and responsible practices, and showcasing resilience, leadership, and innovation. The project also produced a [series of video documentaries](#) capturing the real-life experiences of miners, women workers, and community leaders in Sagada and Paracale. Widely used in forums, training events, and radio broadcasts, these documentaries have helped communicate impact and mobilize broader support for sectoral reform. Other stories from project teams can be found in the news articles published on the [website](#).

## Campaigns with miners and local communities

To be effective, communication with miners and affected communities must be grounded in a strong understanding of local cultural, economic, and institutional contexts. To this end, several project teams have conducted contextual studies and field visits to project areas to identify the most appropriate and effective ways to reach these communities. Projects often find that information is best received when it is presented visually, such as through video, infographics, or posters. Multiple country projects have also employed the arts when disseminating and reinforcing awareness raising messages on the hazards of mercury use and exposure, the benefits of taking up responsible mining practices, and other health and safety messages. In Zambia, for instance, the planetGOLD team enlisted a drama troupe to deliver a performance at Labour Day event in Nyanja attended by over 300 people, focusing on clean, safe, and responsible mining for a sustainable environment and improved livelihoods.

In Bolivia, the project identified the popular “mini fairs” organized in mining districts as an effective venue to reach and sensitize miners and other target audiences. In the last year, the project in cooperation with partner mining federations was able to reach nearly 1,700 people with content on the dangers of mercury and information about more responsible mining practices. One such fair held in cooperation with FEDECOMIN Cochabamba featured the Vice-Ministry of Mining Cooperatives as co-organizer. Another creative campaign carried out in mining communities this reporting period was planetGOLD Philippines’ “[Youth for Responsible Gold](#)” educational roadshow, incorporating mural painting, documentary screenings, and interactive games that encourage creativity while deepening attendees’ understanding of responsible mining in a fun, engaging way.

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Recognizing that local schools are well positioned to share information in mining communities and to help catalyze positive change in the ASGM sector, the project team in the Philippines went into multiple local schools and community spaces to hold these appealing, age-appropriate awareness events.

This exhibits a strategy taken up by multiple project teams of targeting awareness efforts at children and educators in an effort to break the intergenerational cycle of mercury use. 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. Children can also help influence the adults in their life become agents of change in their community and help inform their parents and other adults in their life about what they learn. Examples of engaging materials that have been disseminated by planetGOLD projects in campaigns like these include comic books, posters, booklets, coloring sheets, stickers, playing cards, and wall calendars.

### Engaging media to expand narratives and explore solutions

The planetGOLD Philippines project continued its successful [Media Kapihan](#) (media briefing) series, convening dozens of targeted journalists to provide a platform for dialogue and facilitate accurate reporting on the ASGM sector. Journalists gained direct access to reliable information about the ASGM sector and updates on the project’s progress, and reporters were able to provide feedback on how messages could be better tailored to reach wider audiences. As a result of these briefings and the project’s other media engagements including inviting journalists to cover key project events and public information campaigns, the Philippines project achieved high media visibility, with guest appearances on state TV, documentary features on national channels, and stories in prominent outlets like Rappler and Reuters. In Mongolia, the planetGOLD project engaged with 65 journalists, organizing meetings to disseminate information and to receive input for better media communication. As a result, during the life of the project, at least 150 news articles were published on media channels, sometimes leveraging interviews conducted on members of the team.

In areas where internet connection and access to broadcast media are intermittent, radio is a key media format utilized by several planetGOLD projects in order to reach local communities. In Burkina Faso, the team organized debates on local radio shows to discuss ASGM formalization, featuring ASM trade unions and mining sector experts from the country. The planetGOLD Uganda project conducted five radio talk shows across the project’s target areas this reporting period, featuring key figures from the national and local government as well as artisanal gold miners, all discussing the project’s initiatives and priorities for advancing responsible ASGM.

The planetGOLD Philippines team also continued distributing its “[Gold Talk](#)” show—the first-ever radio program in the country dedicated to promoting responsible gold mining practices and amplifying the voices of small-scale gold miners. Aired in both Camarines Norte and Mountain



**Watch:** Highlights from the “Youth for Responsible Gold” educational roadshow in Sagada, Mt. Province, Philippines

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Provinces, it aimed to empower miners by providing reliable information, facilitating timely discussions, and addressing pressing issues within the sector. Notably, the Provincial Information Office of Camarines Norte has pledged to continue the radio program there now that the planetGOLD project has completed its implementation—a strong testament to its impact and sustainability.

Multiple other planetGOLD projects have organized media breakfasts, field visits and workshops with influential national and regional journalists to deepen their understanding of the ASGM sector and the potential it holds to support livelihoods and local economies while mitigating negative impacts on the environment and human health. The planetGOLD Zambia project, for instance, organized a [media tour](#) for journalists from seven prominent media houses, providing firsthand exposure to ASGM conditions and miner livelihoods. Projects have also leveraged key project events and fora on mining, inviting members of influential media outlets and providing opportunities for project stakeholders, experts, and government officials to share key messages and information. For example, the planetGOLD Uganda project does targeted media outreach around its Annual Stakeholder Meeting, securing participation and [informed coverage](#) from the country’s leading media outlets.

In September 2024 the planetGOLD programme at the global level facilitated a workshop on the solutions journalism approach in Paracale, Philippines, bringing together 6 international journalists to deepen their understanding of efforts to transform the ASGM sector and to explore the role of journalism in investigating not only problems but solutions to complex issues. This workshop involved a site visit to the Philippines project’s mercury-free processing facility and resulted in stories covering efforts to advance responsible mining published in outlets including the [Guardian](#), [Chemical & Engineering News](#), and other outlets.

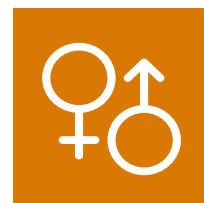


Members of prominent media outlets attend a tour organized by planetGOLD Zambia in Mpika District  
Photo: planetGOLD Zambia

## GENDER EQUITY

Women are an essential part of the ASGM workforce around the globe, yet they often face gender-specific barriers that prevent them from fully participating in the sector and reaping equal benefits. The planetGOLD programme views gender equity and inclusion as cross-cutting themes across all of the planetGOLD programme’s core programmatic pillars, recognizing the critical roles they can play in advancing more environmentally and socially responsible artisanal and small-scale mining practices.

Projects in the planetGOLD programme promote the participation and advancement of women who choose to work in ASGM to provide for themselves and their families. The programme works to help women formalize and take on positions of leadership, gives women miners access to safer, mercury-free technologies, and helps them access financing to support their transition to better practices—all while addressing structural barriers and regulations that often prevent women from fully realizing the benefits of this work.



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## Enhancing inclusion of gender issues in data collection, evaluation, and policy formulation

Women are routinely excluded from decision-making processes and power, which leads to ASGM sector policies that fail to address gender barriers. Women are also typically underrepresented in positions of leadership within ASGM operations and businesses. Projects across the planetGOLD programme engage policy makers, male miners and other stakeholders to promote gender equity and inclusion at all levels. Often an initial step for projects is to assess the situation of women in ASGM communities in different countries in order to map out different roles women and men play in ASGM value chains, to determine the level of access and control women have over resources, and to identify actions and recommendations to promote equal rights and opportunities for men and women in ASGM.



**Watch:** Making small-scale gold mining safer with and for all women

In Uganda, the planetGOLD project has supported a Gender Impact Assessment for new ASM Regulations, engaging 55 government officers in workshops aimed at ensuring that the new rules would guide the implementation of national mining legislation in a way that considers gender equality. The project also conducted a Gender Impact Assessment for mercury-free adoption as a risk identification approach in all major project districts of Busia, Buhweju, Namayingo and Kassanda, and participated in a series of field visits led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to eight of its project sites to carry out a gender impact assessment of the project's planned mercury-free technology interventions.

During this reporting period, the planetGOLD Zimbabwe project gathered baseline data on gender and child labor matters by way of initial site profiling across seven districts and spearheaded a high-level working session in Harare on Gender and Child Labour in ASGM with miners, representatives of government agencies and the media, mapping out specific awareness-raising approaches recommending community radio campaigns, stakeholder workshops, and social media engagement.

## Building women's capacities and amplifying voices

The planetGOLD programme aims to provide targeted assistance to build the capacity of women who work in the ASGM sector through workshops, trainings, discussions, and other exchanges. The Mongolia project continued to provide targeted support to the women-led Baatar Vangiin Khishig Arvijikh Savings and Credit Cooperative during this reporting period, delivering training on operational management, internal monitoring and loan policies. The project also advanced gender mainstreaming through the active engagement of the Mandal soum Gender Committee, which organized a training



Participants from a technology training in Mongolia to increase women's opportunities and participation in responsible mining | Photo: planetGOLD Mongolia

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session on the CRAFT code and planetGOLD Criteria and shared implementation experiences with miners in Tunkhel village. As the project closed, it conducted a review of capacity-building activities which confirmed that Gender Committee training significantly enhanced members' business skills, strengthened responsible mining practices, and expanded livelihood opportunities. The project team also handed over a gender and human rights training module to the ASM National Federation for continued use, embedding gender-sensitive approaches into future capacity-building efforts.

In Guinea, the project trained focus group members in Kouroussa, Siguiri, and Mandiana on gender-based violence prevention, complaint management, and safeguarding in ASGM settings and delivered leadership training to 27 women to enhance women's participation in ASGM governance structures. The Côte d'Ivoire project supported three cooperative groups to strengthen governance and management structures, with attention to inclusive decision-making processes, and identified structural barriers to women's participation in cooperative leadership.

The planetGOLD Burkina Faso project organized a sensitization campaign on women's involvement in ASGM in collaboration with Women In Mining Burkina Faso (AFEMIB) and continued to support a women's cooperative interested in applying for the revolving fund established by the project with Coris Bank International. The team also ensured that women were included in trainings and field visits organized for miners in partnership with another ASGM project. In carrying out similar capacity building interventions, planetGOLD Philippines recognized that women often face barriers related to household responsibilities, time constraints, and prevailing gender norms that can prevent them from participating. To ensure that women could attend trainings and contribute in various events, the Philippines project applied measures such as gender-sensitive scheduling and targeted invitations, which facilitated equitable access to training opportunities for women miners and informal workers.



**Watch:** Supporting alternative livelihood options for women miners in Bolivia

To provide capacity building opportunities outside the mining sector, the planetGOLD Bolivia project delivered alternative livelihood training activities for women in the Larecaja Tropical and San Ramon districts, with training in soap making, gastronomy, baking and barista skills. The project also helped build the evidence base for gender inclusion by completing a comprehensive socioeconomic and environmental baseline study of 552 female miners in San Ramon and Larecaja. The project organized several other activities, including trainings for women miners on the theme of [sisterhood](#), a regional exchange with the Peru National Network of Women in ASGM with support of the planetGOLD Peru project, and a number of workshops on topics including violence prevention, leadership, financial education, and responsible mining in partnership with the female miners network, SBGI, and the French Embassy in Santa Cruz.

Many projects across the programme also seek to advance women's leadership in mining organizations and to improve the visibility of women who work in the ASGM sector, elevating the contributions they make as well as the unique barriers and challenges they face. In the Philippines, the project created the Council for Women Workers in the Informal Economy in Paracale, which now serves as a platform to amplify women's voices, advocate for safer working conditions, and promote economic opportunities. The project also hosted a national gender forum for International Women's Day in partnership with UNIDO Philippines, Clean Air Asia, and BAN Toxics, bringing together women miners, government representatives, civil society, academia, and the media to highlight the intersections of gender equality, economic empowerment, and environmental sustainability.

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Photo: planetGOLD Côte d'Ivoire

# COUNTRY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

RECENTLY CLOSED PROJECTS

PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT



# RECENTLY CLOSED PROJECTS

This section features activities and results from the country projects in Burkina Faso, Mongolia, and the Philippines. These three projects completed their field activities during this reporting period. Information on four other projects that closed prior to the reporting period—[Colombia](#), [Guyana](#), [Indonesia](#), and [Peru](#)—can be found on the planetGOLD website.

[Burkina Faso](#)

[Mongolia](#)

[Philippines](#)



# Burkina Faso

The planetGOLD project in Burkina Faso completed its implementation in March 2025. All resources published by the project can be found [here in the online resource library](#).

Implementing Agency:



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Executing Partner:



## KEY FIGURES

### MERCURY ABATEMENT



Total amount of mercury prevented as of June 30, 2025:

## 258.2 kilograms

Through direct transfer of mercury-free technologies at its Gnikpiere mine site, the project eliminated 2.2 kilograms of mercury. Through additional educational activities the project eliminated an additional estimated 256 kilograms.



Total amount of mercury projected to be avoided over the next 5 years:

## 3.6 kilograms

From 2025 to 2030, it is projected that these technical interventions will help mining groups avoid the use of an additional 3.6 kilograms of mercury.

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through direct assistance:

## 826

224 602

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

## 28

8 20

### RESPONSIBLE GOLD



Amount of responsible gold produced by operations verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria:

## 1 kilogram

### ACCESS TO FINANCE



Total amount of money made available through 1 new finance mechanism:

## \$150,000 USD

The project developed a revolving fund mechanism in collaboration with Coris Bank International

Amount of money successfully accessed via this finance mechanism

## \$113,000 USD

46 miners have received funds via the revolving fund mechanism (11 female; 35 male)

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# Burkina Faso

## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Carried out monitoring of ore processing operations at Gnikpière, the project's pilot mine site.
- ▶ Officially handed over the mercury-free mineral processing equipment to the Zemstaaba miners cooperative in Gnikpière, via the commune of Dano, with the active support of their local authorities. This transition aims to ensure the long-term viability of the responsible practices initiated by the project, and to empower local players to produce more responsible, environmentally-friendly artisanal gold.
- ▶ Secured full commitment from the commune of Dano, through the Prefect, President of the Special Delegation, to supporting the cooperative in achieving its objectives, in order to preserve the health of the local population and ecosystems.
- ▶ Carried out post-training monitoring of the trained miners showing that the training program's operationalization helped to reduce gender inequalities linked to access to knowledge, thanks to the adoption of a gender-sensitive training approach, with 49 women out of 159 (31%) trained and certified in mercury-free technologies. Survey data collected in 2024 shows that the training program is helping to improve educational mercury indicators, as 76% of those trained and certified adhered to the principles of mercury-free processing technologies.
- ▶ Presented training certificates to miners who completed mercury-free ore processing training program.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Launched a revolving fund mechanism, which supports ASGM sector financing through Coris Bank International. When the project completed its implementation in March 2025, 46 loans had been distributed from this fund, totaling \$113,000 USD. The objective of the fund is to provide accessible financial resources for miners to purchase equipment, tools, or other basic needs to enable them to carry out more environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and efficient operations.
- ▶ Assisted 7 artisanal mining cooperatives in drawing up business plans and loan applications, which were submitted to the management committee for review before being forwarded to the bank for examination and approval. Of the 7 miner cooperatives that applied for funds, 3 of them received loans.
- ▶ Developed a donor mobilization strategy aiming to increase the pool of available loan guarantee funds.
- ▶ Coordinated efforts with other planetGOLD projects in Francophone Africa where Coris Bank has operations, to increase the size and impact of the revolving fund through a regional fundraising effort. As of the end of the reporting period, discussion was ongoing with Coris Bank to extend the revolving fund mechanism to other countries implementing planetGOLD projects in the region, including Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea, and Senegal. The fund's management committee indicated its willingness to continue monitoring the fund under the leadership of the Artisanal Gold Council, thus ensuring its sustainability.



### Formalization

- ▶ Facilitated the establishment of 2 organizations called ONAM-STM and ANAMP-BF, formed by artisanal miners trained and certified in the training program.
- ▶ Contributed to the development of a formalization approach at the national level as part of ongoing mining sector reforms in Burkina Faso.
- ▶ Supported the Ministry of Mines in developing a formalization guide, which was in the finalization process at time of reporting. Once adopted this guide will be disseminated widely.

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# Burkina Faso



## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Combined a multi-stakeholder workshop in October 2024 with a training session on gold marketing and international gold market rules, providing an opportunity to connect and train stakeholders on the gold supply chain and pricing, as well as the international gold market. It brought together 125 participants (92 men and 33 women), including 68 artisanal miners (50 men and 18 women) from the project's areas of intervention, public and private organizations, partner NGOs, artisanal mining umbrella organizations, and students.
- ▶ Delivered a total of 11 presentations and made 2 field trips, one to SONASP and the other to the office of the Federation of Artisanal Mining Associations of Burkina Faso. During the field trips, the participants were trained on the gold supply chain and pricing, with presentations focused on gold marketing, including modules on gold trade policies.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Organized a workshop to disseminate final project results and impacts in June 2025, with 40 participants including project steering committee members, various ASGM stakeholders, and high-level government officials who presented the national mercury elimination strategy and outlined the country's approach to managing the artisanal mining sector. The Secretary General of the national artisanal miners group Syndicat National des Artisans Miniers du Burkina (SYNEMAB) spoke about the impact of the project in terms of organizational reinforcement, training and in imparting a sense of responsibility to miners.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Organized a sensibilization campaign on women's involvement in ASGM in collaboration with Women In Mining Burkina Faso (AFEMIB).
- ▶ Continue to support a women's cooperative interested to apply for the revolving fund established by the project with Coris Bank.
- ▶ Developed training and field visits for miners in partnership with another ASGM project, with women comprising 30% of participants.



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# Mongolia

The planetGOLD Mongolia project completed its implementation in September 2025. All resources published by planetGOLD Mongolia can be found here in the Resource library.

### Implementing Agencies:

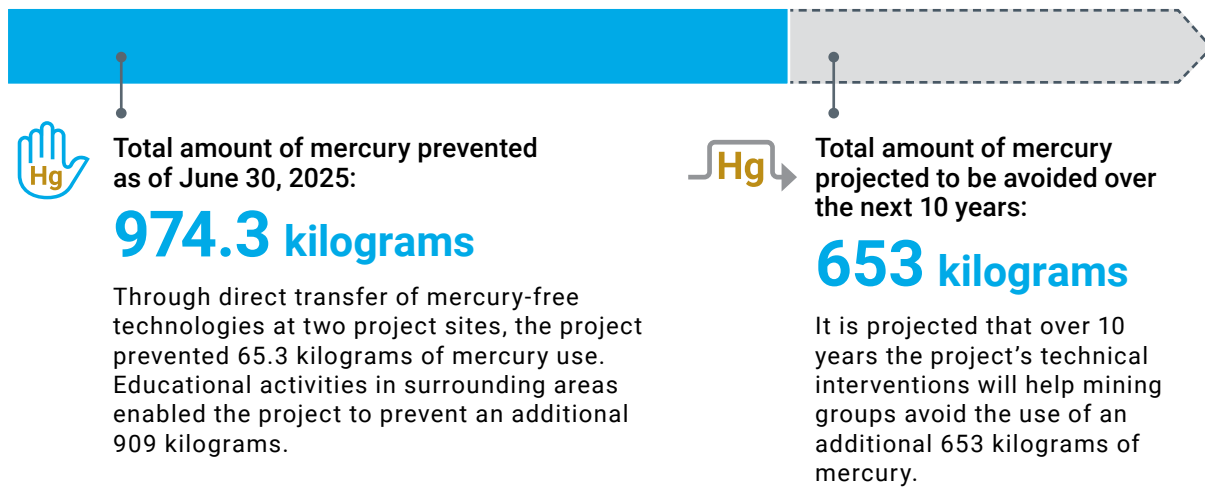


### Executing Partners:



## KEY FIGURES

### MERCURY ABATEMENT



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### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through direct assistance:

**438**

80 156

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**3,144**

1,300 1,844

### RESPONSIBLE GOLD



Amount of responsible gold produced by operations verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria:

**13.6 kilograms**

This gold was responsibly produced as a result of the project introducing and implementing the planetGOLD Criteria with 3 artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnerships in project areas.

### ACCESS TO FINANCE



Total amount of money made available through 1 new finance mechanism:

**\$140,695 USD**

Amount of money successfully accessed via this finance mechanism:

**\$2,625 USD**

These funds were made available via a Savings and Credit Cooperative established through the planetGOLD Mongolia mercury-free processing system investment.

## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Formalization

- ▶ Made significant efforts to advance the formalization of the ASGM sector by supporting consistent implementation of the ASM Regulation. In partnership with the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining National Federation (ASM NF), the project promoted compliance and provided direct assistance to 17 partnerships in preparing and submitting documentation for land permit applications to the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority of Mongolia (MRPAM).
- ▶ Collaborated with the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources (MIMR) and MRPAM to convene the ASM National Conference in September 2024, which brought together over 250 government officials and artisanal miners. The project presented international experiences on formalization, gold traceability, and due diligence, helping to frame national discussions within a global context. The newly appointed Minister underscored the government's commitment to accelerate the issuance of ASM land permits and to revise the ASM Regulation. The conference concluded with a set of recommendations on land access, legal reforms, and multi-stakeholder cooperation, reinforcing momentum for integrating ASGM into Mongolia's formal economy.
- ▶ Conducted cadastral surveys of degraded land in Mandal soum and Tunkhel, updating the database with 23.6 hectares across 11 sites. Four artisanal mining partnerships subsequently submitted land requests covering 4.51 hectares in Noyot and 4.94 hectares in Tunkhel-Budanch, with mentoring from ASM NF on applications and contract formalization. As a result, 9.72 hectares were approved for ASM operations in Mandal soum and Gobi-Altai, granting legal recognition to 158 miners (50 female /108 male).
- ▶ Provided training for 138 miners (53 female /85 male) on environmental legislation, occupational safety and social protection, strengthening compliance and reducing risks.
- ▶ Reinforced policy frameworks, improved land access, and supported miners' organizations through collaboration with ASGM stakeholders, laying critical groundwork for advancing ASGM formalization in Mongolia.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Enhanced financial inclusion for ASGM miners by establishing and strengthening the *Baatar Vangiin Khishig Arvijikh* Savings and Credit Cooperative (BVKA SCC) in Selenge province. Since its launch in September 2024, membership expanded to 57 miners (45 female /12 male), and 9.4 million MNT (roughly \$2,625 USD) in loans were disbursed to 25 miners (21 female /4 male), improving access to finance for mercury-free technologies and formalization.
- ▶ Established an agreement with mercury-free processing system owners in December 2024 securing \$120,000 USD in paybacks to be channeled as charitable contributions to the Savings and Credit Cooperative, complemented by \$20,000 USD in grant seed funding. Together, these measures established a sustainable, member-driven financial mechanism that strengthens miners' resilience, promotes gender-inclusive participation, and ensures equitable benefit-sharing from mercury-free gold processing.
- ▶ Built the institutional capacity of BVKA SCC through multiple training cycles delivered by the Mongolian Confederation of Credit Unions covering cooperative governance, financial management, reporting, and business planning. Members also undertook an experience-sharing visit to successful cooperatives in three provinces, gaining practical lessons on loan management, collateral, risk funds, and member education. These insights informed their action plans, promotional strategies, and training programs, thereby enhancing transparency, governance, and member confidence in the cooperative.
- ▶ Facilitated discussions with the Mandal Soum Governor to oversee payback, support permitting, and enable future cooperation between artisanal miners and large-scale mining operations in Tunkhel Village. Due to permitted delays for the mercury-free processing system in Tunkhel, which has land overlapping with large scale mining concessions, the processing system has been idle and unable to repay investments to the Savings and Credit Cooperative. To resolve this, the SCC agreed to contribute 25% of the payback amount to the Soum Development Fund. With a capacity of 20 tonnes per day and assessments completed, the new processing system is well-positioned for mercury-free, environmentally responsible gold processing in the future once formal cooperation is established.

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## Technical Solutions

- ▶ Installed concrete flooring at one mercury-free processing system (MFPS) to reduce dust and noise, and added safety guards at the crusher station for the project's second mercury-free processing facility to strengthen safe and responsible operations.
- ▶ Performed technological validation which confirmed the effectiveness of mercury-free processing. Laboratory testing of ore from the Bulag site under the MFPS-2 Feasibility Study demonstrated that gravity separation achieved 75.6% recovery with concentrate grades of 958.91 g/t, proving the high efficiency of the selected technology under local conditions.
- ▶ Developed comprehensive safety protocols and translated the processing system operations manual to Mongolian for distribution to mining partnerships, enabling miners and staff to apply standardized operating, maintenance, and inspection procedures.
- ▶ Achieved regulatory progress for one of the plants, with the approval of the Feasibility Study for MFPS-1 in May 2025, the General Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) underway and the Detailed EIA to follow. In Mandal soum, an 8.8-hectare ASM site was allocated, and six ASGM partnerships, including Shijir Khishig, signed tripartite agreements with the governor and the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining National Federation (ASM NF).
- ▶ Determined that once operational, the two mercury-free processing systems are expected to prevent 65.3 kilograms of mercury use annually, making a direct contribution to Mongolia's commitments to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.



## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Secured access to the formal gold market for all formalized artisanal miners in the project areas following the issuance of official trading licenses to gold traders and processing plant owners by the Financial Regulatory Commission. This marks an important step toward integrating ASGM into Mongolia's regulated economy, improving transparency, and ensuring that miners can benefit from responsible and traceable gold trade.
- ▶ Advanced the implementation of the planetGOLD Criteria by working with 3 ASGM organizations and strengthening the capacity of their designated CRAFT officers.
- ▶ Carried out a mock audit (self-assessment) in April 2025 to evaluate compliance with the CRAFT Code. The Shijir Khishig partnership in Mandal soum successfully met all requirements, demonstrating readiness for responsible gold production under international standards. In Tunkhel village, the audit was conducted as a practice exercise, as ASM land allocation and active mining operations have yet to be secured there. Overall, of the 43 criteria reviewed, only one was identified as non-compliant, linked to the unresolved land formalization challenges in Tunkhel. This outcome reflects strong progress in advancing responsible supply chains in Mongolia's ASGM sector and highlights the critical importance of resolving land access issues to fully operationalize mercury-free and responsible gold production.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Organized Regional Project Steering Committee meeting, facilitating peer learning with the Philippines project and field visits to mercury-free processing sites.
- ▶ Hosted a conference and a series of multi-stakeholder consultations at the national level, which engaged over 200 government officials and miners, strengthening policy dialogue on ASM formalization and responsible gold supply chains.
- ▶ Ensured the regular operation of the [ASM Knowledge Hub](#), continuously updated with news, blogs, and information, education and communication materials.
- ▶ Expanded digital engagement significantly, with 366 social media posts reaching nearly 201,155 individuals, and followers growing to 2,552. Videos in English and Mongolian showcased the benefits of mercury-free technologies, while quarterly and annual e-newsletters in both languages reached an average of 230 stakeholders.
- ▶ Published article on access to finance in Mining Insight and disseminated to government institutions, investors, and civil society, along with a second feature article on artisanal mining and rural development highlighting the ASGM sector's contribution to sustainable livelihoods.

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# Mongolia

- ▶ Produced more than 2,000 advocacy and promotional materials distributed during trainings, meetings, and conferences.
- ▶ Deposited policy and research reports in 3 national libraries, ensuring long-term accessibility for an estimated 70,000 users.
- ▶ Organized the project's closing event in May 2025, which brought together 50 participants (32 female / 18 male) to celebrate six years of achievements. The event highlighted lessons learned, showcased progress in mercury-free processing and formalization, and served as a platform for stakeholders to reflect on the project's contributions to awareness raising, policy reform, and community empowerment, while identifying pathways for sustaining progress in the ASGM sector.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Provided targeted support to the women-led *Baatar Vangiin Khishig Arvijikh* Savings and Credit Cooperative (SCC), strengthening its operations and institutional capacity.
- ▶ Delivered training on operational management, internal monitoring, and loan policies to 24 members of the SCC (18 female / 6 male) and contributed to a membership increase to 57, of which 44 are women. This growth demonstrates the SCC's role as an emerging, sustainable financial mechanism that improves financial access and resilience for artisanal miners and their families.
- ▶ Advanced gender mainstreaming through the active engagement of the Mandal soum Gender Committee. Members organized a training session on the CRAFT code and planetGOLD Criteria and shared implementation experiences with miners in Tunkhel village. A review of capacity-building activities from 2022–2024 confirmed that Gender Committee training significantly enhanced business skills, strengthened responsible mining practices, and expanded livelihood opportunities. The Committee also played a leadership role in advancing gender equality, human rights, and social inclusion in the ASGM sector.
- ▶ Consistently applied gender integration considerations across project activities, including by involving women owners and staff of processing plants in technical training on mercury-free processing systems, ensuring equitable access to new technologies.
- ▶ Handed over a gender and human rights training module to the ASM National Federation for continued use, embedding gender-sensitive approaches into future capacity-building efforts.



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# Philippines

The planetGOLD Philippines project completed its implementation in September 2025. All resources published by planetGOLD Philippines can be found [here in the Resource library](#).

## Implementing Agencies:



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

## Executing Partners:



## KEY FIGURES

### MERCURY ABATEMENT



Total amount of mercury prevented as of September 30, 2025:

**3 tonnes**

Through direct transfer of mercury-free technologies at its Sagada and Itogon sites, the project prevented 60.3 kilograms of mercury use. Educational interventions and activities in the surrounding areas of both Sagada and Paracale enabled the project to prevent an additional estimated 2.96 tonnes.



Total amount of mercury eliminated as of September 30, 2025:

**0.3 tonnes**

Through direct transfer of mercury-free technologies at its Paracale site, the project eliminated 329 kilograms of mercury use.



Total amount of mercury projected to be avoided over the next 10 years:

**3.9 tonnes**

It is projected that over 10 years the project's technical interventions will help mining groups avoid the use of an additional 3.9 tonnes of mercury.

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through direct assistance:

**805**

162 643

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**545**

103 442

### RESPONSIBLE GOLD



Amount of responsible gold produced by operations verifying conformance with the planetGOLD Criteria and sold to the formal market:

**1,077 kilograms**

### ACCESS TO FINANCE



Number of new financial mechanisms for the ASGM sector supported by the project:

**2**

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## JULY 2024-2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Sustained strong engagement with local financial institutions, complemented by targeted capacity-building activities for partner mining associations.
- ▶ Conducted structured training sessions on business planning, financial literacy, and investor relations to strengthen organizational capacity and financial management practices. Collectively, these initiatives enhanced miners' ability to navigate formal financial systems, improved their readiness to access loans and investment opportunities, and strengthened their long-term prospects for sustainability and inclusion in responsible gold trading networks.
- ▶ Achieved the signing of a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the SMBC miners association, the Municipal Local Government Unit (MLGU) of Paracale, and Artisanal Gold Council in January 2025. The MOU formally established gold production under the mercury-free processing system installed by the project as a social enterprise. This agreement legitimizes SMBC's role as the primary operator and beneficiary of the processing system while embedding a strong social responsibility mechanism. Notably, it mandates that 1.5% of profit after expenses be allocated to community development projects to be jointly identified, planned, and implemented with the Paracale MLGU. This ensures that the benefits of responsible gold production extend beyond the association, directly contributing to the socio-economic development and well-being of the wider community.
- ▶ Facilitated 2 financial solutions: a Supplier Agreement and financing with Auro Resources Trading, Inc. The Supplier Agreement was in the final stages of review by the Philippine Central Bank at the time of reporting, with a supporting statement from another major national bank already submitted. Implementation of the partnership with Auro Resources Trading, Inc. will follow when the Central Bank signs the agreement. Once finalized, these solutions will expand miners' access to formal financing and responsible gold trading channels, further strengthening financial inclusion in the ASGM sector.



### Formalization

- ▶ Extended comprehensive support to partner mining associations in documentation, regulatory compliance, and the renewal of key licenses and certifications, critical steps to ensure that mining operations remain legal, responsible, and aligned with environmental standards.
- ▶ Supported the successful renewal of Small-Scale Mining Contracts (SSMC) for both the SMBC and NSBSSMAI mining associations, achieved through close coordination to navigate the complex regulatory process. This was further strengthened by the approval of the associations' Mineral Processing License by the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board, formally authorizing the operation of the mercury-free processing system.
- ▶ Assisted the LIPMA mining association in Sagada with its Mineral Processing License application.
- ▶ Supported the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in convening a nationwide workshop for Provincial/City Mining Regulatory Board members, which clarified key provisions of the People's Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991 and improved coordination on small-scale mining governance.
- ▶ Advanced gender mainstreaming with the formal creation of the Council for Women Workers in the Informal Economy in Paracale, established through a local executive order and launched in January 2025.
- ▶ Continued to strengthen knowledge management systems by enhancing the national Knowledge Management Platform to improve usability, transparency, and institutional learning.
- ▶ Held a Policy Alignment Workshop in May 2025 to reinforce policy coherence, bringing together key government offices to review and prioritize actionable project recommendations, ensure consistency with agency mandates and set a roadmap toward formalization of the ASGM sector.



### Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Executed targeted awareness campaigns and information sessions on the Central Bank of the Philippines' gold-buying program, enabling the project's two partner mining associations to gain direct access to formal markets.

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- ▶ Facilitated the successful accreditation of the NSBSSMAI miners association as a BSP gold trader, a key milestone that was achieved with the project's support in completing essential requirements, including a Certificate of Good Standing and a Tax Clearance from relevant agencies.
- ▶ Supported both NSBSSMAI and SMBC mining associations in establishing formal gold trading partnerships with Auro Resources Trading Inc., enabling them to sell responsibly sourced gold from their Minahang Bayans (government-declared small-scale mining areas) through Auro's more accessible trading hubs, offering an alternative to the Central Bank's Gold Buying Stations. To further align with Auro's policies, the project also facilitated a review of NSBSSMAI's Constitution and By-Laws, ensuring compliance and strengthening the association's operational foundation.
- ▶ Actively engaged with PJ Lhuillier, Inc. (PJLI), a prominent micro-financial institution specializing in pawn-broking, to strengthen its gold-buying program in partnership with the Central Bank. PJLI launched its gold buying operations in Paracale and Sagada, the project's two pilot site areas, in September 2024 and March 2025 respectively. This program offers a dependable market for gold, coupled with financial and social protection services such as loans and insurance, tailored specifically for miners. Following the successful pilot phase of this gold buying program with the Central Bank, PJLI established a separate entity, Auro Resources Trading, Inc, to manage its gold supply operations moving forward.



## Technical Solutions

- ▶ Formally turned over mercury-free processing systems (MFPS) installed in Paracale and Sagada to the partner mining associations, marking a major milestone in advancing safer and more responsible mineral processing technologies. To support effective use, the project conducted a series of technical optimization activities and refresher training sessions on MFPS operation, troubleshooting, and maintenance. In Sagada, these efforts included the upgrade of the Tailings Storage Facility to meet government environmental standards, ensuring safer and more responsible operations.
- ▶ Handed over to both partner mining associations the MFPS Operations Manual to further strengthen sustainability and local ownership.
- ▶ Formally turned over capacity development manuals to the MGB Core Group of Trainers at the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and to academic partners. These comprehensive references drawn from various trainings delivered throughout the project will enable MGB Regional Offices and partner institutions to scale training initiatives, reinforce safe and responsible mining practices, and ensure the continuity of technical knowledge beyond the project's duration.
- ▶ Achieved a total of 3.3 tonnes of mercury abated as of the closure of the project, with 2.9 tons attributed to educational interventions. Through training sessions, community awareness activities, and on-site demonstrations, these interventions significantly enhanced miners' understanding of mercury's harmful impacts and promoted practical, mercury-free alternatives.
- ▶ Conducted an Electrical Maintenance Training for 9 miners in Sagada aimed at enhancing their technical skills in maintaining and troubleshooting electrical systems in processing facilities. The training improved participants' understanding of safety protocols and preventive maintenance practices, ensuring the reliable and safe operation of the MFPS.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Made significant progress in advancing knowledge management, reaching 40,585 individuals through a diverse set of tools, content, and platforms that foster learning, information sharing, and behavior change in the ASGM sector. These initiatives were designed to ensure that knowledge is accessible, reusable, and contributes to long-term sustainability beyond the project's duration.
- ▶ Produced and distributed a variety of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials in culturally appropriate and visually accessible formats, tailored to the needs of diverse audiences, including Indigenous Peoples and women miners, in order to reinforce key messages and strengthen grassroots learning.
- ▶ Amplified outreach through digital platforms including the project's Spotlight Series on social media highlighting compelling stories of miners and communities transitioning to mercury-free and responsible practices, and showcasing resilience, leadership, and innovation. By June 2025, the project Facebook page had grown to 8,998 followers, generating over 48,000 views and 1,711 engagements.

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- ▶ Produced [a series of video documentaries](#) capturing the real-life experiences of miners, women workers, and community leaders in Sagada and Paracale. Widely used in forums, training events, and radio broadcasts, these documentaries have helped communicate impact and mobilize broader support for sectoral reform.
- ▶ Convened a [Media Kapihan](#) (media briefing) with 34 journalists, providing a platform for dialogue, accurate reporting, and stronger partnerships with local media. Journalists gained direct access to reliable updates on the project's progress and were able to provide feedback on how messages could be better tailored to reach wider audiences.
- ▶ Organized educational campaigns to reach new demographics, including an interactive roadshow in Paracale attended by 246 participants.
- ▶ Aired 3 [Gold Talk](#) radio episodes via Radyo Pilipinas, while a Solutions Journalism Workshop engaged international media in exploring the role of journalism in driving change, culminating in a visit to the MFPS in operation. Collectively, these efforts mainstreamed responsible ASGM, broadened public awareness, and mobilized diverse stakeholders toward a more responsible and inclusive mining sector.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Designed and implemented targeted strategies to strengthen women's participation, representation, and empowerment in ASGM operations, recognizing the distinct challenges faced by women in mining communities.
- ▶ Created the Council for Women Workers in the Informal Economy in Paracale, which now serves as a platform to amplify women's voices, advocate for safer working conditions, and promote economic opportunities.
- ▶ Hosted the national gender forum "Unite for All Women: A Just, Green, and Inclusive Economy!" on 7 March 2025 for International Women's Day in partnership with UNIDO Philippines, Clean Air Asia, and BAN Toxics. The forum brought together 81 participants (19 men; 62 women), including women miners, government representatives, civil society, academia, and the media, to highlight the intersections of gender equality, economic empowerment, and environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Launched the [Mina Minera storybook](#) through a live storytelling performance by a local theatre group. The storybook introduces young audiences to responsible ASGM while promoting sustainability, environmental stewardship, and gender inclusion.
- ▶ Achieved the project's gender inclusion target, with women comprising 30% of participants in diverse capacity development activities. To address barriers related to household responsibilities, time constraints, and prevailing gender norms, the project applied measures such as gender-sensitive scheduling and targeted invitations, which facilitated equitable access to training opportunities for women miners and informal workers.



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# PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

This section features activities, results and background information from country projects currently approved for implementation.

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# Bolivia



The planetGOLD Bolivia project was approved for implementation in June 2022.

Implementing Agency:



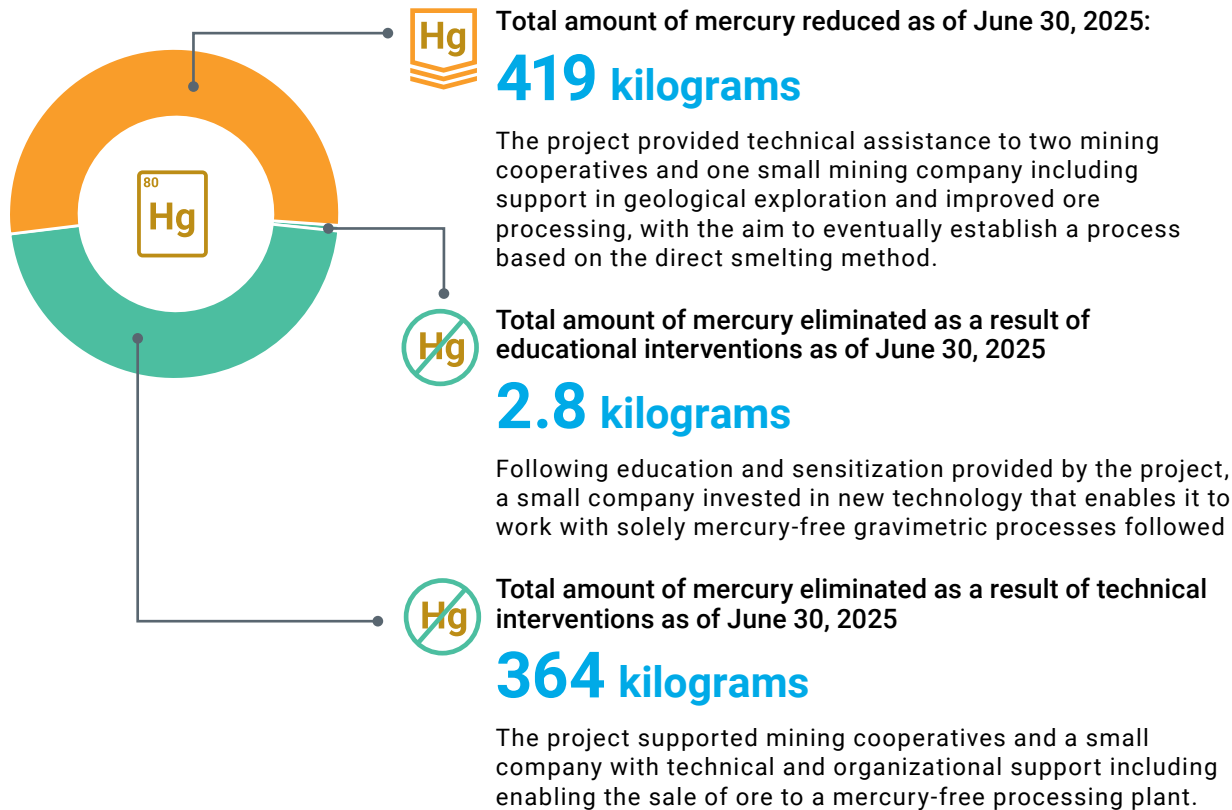
UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Executing Partners:



## KEY FIGURES

### MERCURY ABATEMENT



### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through direct assistance:

**65**

**31** **34**

The project supported 2 mining operations by performing a due diligence audit to identify measures needed to improve miners' formalization, introducing a health insurance scheme, and helping informal gold washers improve their organization and work practices through the creation of 2 micro credit schemes.

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**648**

**294** **354**

The project conducted training and awareness building activities through "mini fairs" organized in cooperation with mining federations.

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## ACCESS TO FINANCE



Number of financial products/mechanisms for ASGM developed/supported by the project:

**3**

Total amount of money successfully accessed by miners/operations via new financial mechanisms:

**\$104,972 USD**

The project assisted a mining cooperative and the state financial mechanism Fondo de Financiamiento para la Minería (FOFIM) to enable a loan of \$71,500 to support the construction of a mercury free processing plant. The project also supported a Savings and Credit Group of women miners from the Santa Rosa de la Mina community, issuing a first credit of \$72. And after project capacity building, 2 pilot mining cooperatives and 1 small company raised a total of \$33,400 as contributions from associates and shareholders for the purchase of gravimetric equipment to reduce mercury use.



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## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Identified and promoted improved processing technologies, including the use of cleaning tables coupled with a smelting crucible to enable ASGM miners to employ the direct smelting method.
- ▶ Implemented a Brazilian designed amalgamator in a cooperative, which enables miners who work with mercury in closed circuits to amalgamate the mercury in a safer and faster way, that does not lead to the creation of so called "mercury flour" that readily escapes to the environment.
- ▶ Conducted the second version of a diploma course titled "Responsible gold mining without the use of mercury" in partnership with Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA) and the Swiss Better Gold Initiative (SBGI).
- ▶ Assisted, funded, and provided technical advice to upgrade UMSA's metallurgical laboratory, which supports practical training and analysis for several cooperatives. These efforts encourage cooperatives to adopt more efficient, mercury-free or reduced-mercury methods for gold recovery.
- ▶ To date, 459 miners, including 129 women, have been made aware of mercury-free technologies through participation in metallurgical testing conducted at UMSA's metallurgical laboratory.
- ▶ Assisted the Pedro Domingo Murillo Technical Institute in La Paz in providing technical training for ASGM miners on courses such as milling, crushing and gravimetric processing methods, which have to date included a total of 584 miners (148 women).



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Supported a Self-Managed Savings and Credit Group for women miners to further strengthen access to financial education and offer suitable health insurance at a subsidized cost. Two groups with 10-12 members each were set up in the San Ramón district, with one paying out a first credit of \$72 USD.
- ▶ Assisted the state agency Fondo de Financiamiento para la Minería (FOFIM) in supporting mining cooperatives, including to ensure that mercury use is considered when loan applications from gold mining cooperatives are evaluated. FOFIM granted a loan worth an estimated \$71,500 to 1 cooperative that plans to engage in mercury-free cyanidation treatment of ore.
- ▶ Collaborated with FOFIM in developing a software system to better monitor clients and their respective performance.
- ▶ Conducted 2 studies in the San Ramón and Andean regions around current financing methods used by ASGM operators. An additional study was produced concerning the current perceptions of financial entities in relation to ASGM financing. Based on this work, and to stimulate interest in ASGM funding, two events were organized for financial institutions to discuss possibilities for funding ASGM.

- ▶ Coordinated extensive training to the cooperative sector, with the support of Regional Federation of Gold Mining Cooperatives (FERRECO) and with FOFIM. The courses “Efficient and Responsible Cooperative Mining Operations” and “Basic Course on Accounting for ASGM” both provided knowledge to cooperatives that were set to receive financial support from these institutions.
- ▶ Collaborated with SBGI to enhance SENARECOM’s SINACOM digital system, which regulates mineral commercialization in Bolivia, with a specific component that controls mineral exports (including gold).
- ▶ Through coordination with the national financial control agency ASFI (Autoridad de Supervisión del Sistema Financiero), a specific code called CAEDEC was created to track funds invested or otherwise allocated to the ASGM sector.
- ▶ Supported an international exchange for Bolivian officials to visit Ecuador and gain insights into financing models and responsible gold marketing practices, providing valuable references for Bolivia.



## Formalization

- ▶ Developed and approved regulations through an administrative resolution for the “Prior authorization of import, export and commercialization of mercury.”
- ▶ Supported the development of a “Single Mercury Registry” system that assists in the control of import, export and commercialization of mercury.
- ▶ Developed a comprehensive proposal for updating the existing “Environmental Regulations for Mining Activities – RAAM,” in cooperation with the Ministries of Mining and Environment.
- ▶ Collaborated with the state agency EGPP (Escuela de Gestión Pública Plurinacional) and SBGI to offer 8 separate trainings on responsible gold mining and the FPIC process to a total of 355 public officials from different state institutions.
- ▶ Initiated application of the project’s “formalization assessment tool” to 6 mining organizations.
- ▶ Commenced collaboration with relevant authorities to establish a Jurisdictional Approach mechanism for efficient, responsible and mercury-free ASGM in three municipalities in the Ñuflo de Chavez province.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Sensitized a total of 1,676 people (616 women) regarding the dangers of mercury through multi-disciplinary “mini fairs” organized in mining districts in cooperation with mining federations. One such fair held in cooperation with FEDECOMIN Cochabamba featured the Vice-Ministry of Mining Cooperatives as co-organizer.
- ▶ Reached an additional total of 72,441 individuals with information material produced by the project, including social media publications, radio jingles and special magazines targeting the mining sector.
- ▶ Produced 71 publications reaching a diverse audience interested in these issues, including blogs, news articles, events, photo essays, videos, and an analysis of past experiences of projects and initiatives that have attempted to address the issue of mercury use in the Bolivian ASGM sector.
- ▶ Developed and held 2 technical training courses for ASGM miners, with the curriculum, list of participants, and certificates endorsed by the Ministry of Education.



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# Bolivia



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Organized several activities in partnership with the female miners network, SBGI and the French Embassy in Santa Cruz for FEDECOMIN (La Federación Departamental de Cooperativas Mineras) including a workshop on violence prevention, leadership and financial education, environment and responsible mining trainings for cooperatives belonging to FEDECOMIN Santa Cruz, and 2 trainings on the theme of sisterhood for women miners from FERRECO and FENCOMIN.
- ▶ Hosted a total of 6 events for ASGM female leaders with 231 women in attendance.
- ▶ Organized a regional interchange with women miners from Peru and Bolivia, in cooperation with the Peru National Network of Women in ASGM and with support of the planetGOLD Peru project.
- ▶ Provided alternative livelihoods training and capacity building activities for women in the Larecaja Tropical and San Ramón districts, with training in soap making, gastronomy, baking and barista skills, including a total of 58 women to date.
- ▶ Completed a comprehensive socioeconomic and environmental baseline study targeting female miners in San Ramón and Larecaja, collecting 552 completed surveys.



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PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

# Costa Rica

The planetGOLD Costa Rica project was approved for implementation in June 2025 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period.

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



## BACKGROUND

- ▶ Industrial gold extraction decreased after a 2010 ban on open-pit metal mining, leaving artisanal and small-scale mining as the primary gold extraction activity in the country.
- ▶ Extraction relies mainly on manual excavation and often involves the illegal use of explosives. The most widely used processing method is amalgamation with mercury.
- ▶ Mercury use is estimated at an average 34.4 tonnes per year.
- ▶ Costa Rica's current legal and regulatory framework presents significant challenges to the effective management and formalization of the ASGM sector.
- ▶ The project aims to reduce mercury use by 8.6 tonnes during the project lifetime and to benefit approximately 28,000 people.



# Côte d'Ivoire

The planetGOLD Côte d'Ivoire project was approved for implementation in January 2023

Implementing Agency:



Executing Agencies:



## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**801**

151 650

Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process:

**5**

The project provided workshops, trainings and other awareness raising activities on cooperative management, formalization and governance.

## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Conducted community sensitization sessions in five target communities to introduce the project and engage community leaders and local populations.
- ▶ Delivered follow up sensitization sessions focused on the environmental and health risks of mercury use, available alternatives, and safe handling practices.
- ▶ Established a network of five community focal points to facilitate ongoing focus group discussions with miners and community members.
- ▶ Implemented a mass sensitization campaign in June across all project locations, reaching 685 participants, including 197 women and 487 men.
- ▶ Developed the Toolkit Supporting Best Practices at Artisanal Gold Mines in collaboration with planetGOLD Uganda and Global Affairs Canada.
- ▶ Conducted practical demonstrations and distributed retorts procured through a local manufacturer to five ASGM groups for testing.
- ▶ Trained a total of 102 participants on improved environmental, health, and safety practices.
- ▶ Conducted initial follow up with beneficiary groups, which indicated positive reception of the training and tools, with further uptake assessment planned for the following year.



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# Côte d'Ivoire



## Access to Finance

- ▶ Conducted a mapping exercise and outreach with 30 financial institutions to assess interest and capacity to engage with the ASGM sector in Côte d'Ivoire.
- ▶ Initiated advanced discussions with MANSABANK, which demonstrated interest in the project, including the development of a joint work plan and preparation of a field visit.
- ▶ Identified persistent barriers to financing ASGM, notably limited knowledge of the sector and prevailing mistrust related to gold mining practices.
- ▶ Strengthened the capacity of five ASGM groups selected by the Project Steering Committee through targeted technical assistance.
- ▶ Organized a weeklong capacity building workshop in Yamoussoukro on cooperative constitution, governance, and management, bringing together 30 cooperative members, including 6 women and 24 men.
- ▶ Provided technical support to three legally registered cooperatives to align internal regulations and statutes with OHADA legal requirements.
- ▶ Convened a multistakeholder capacity building workshop on innovative ASGM practices, benefiting 38 participants, including 9 women and 27 men.
- ▶ Delivered training on legal requirements, market expectations, and responsible supply chain standards, including OECD Due Diligence Guidance, the CRAFT Code, and additional planetGOLD criteria.



## Formalization

- ▶ Conducted an analysis of the regulatory and legal framework governing ASGM formalization in Côte d'Ivoire.
- ▶ Developed proposed textual amendments to support the revision of the national mining code, led by a legal consultant.
- ▶ Prepared a formalization support guide with contributions from local and national stakeholders, including mining actors, administrative authorities, and NGOs.
- ▶ Organized a national validation workshop to ratify the formalization support guide.
- ▶ Delivered a training workshop for 35 stakeholders from three cooperatives and two artisanal groups focused on formalization and governance.
- ▶ Convened a capacity building workshop on local content development in pilot areas, with 49 participants, including 35 men and 14 women.
- ▶ Conducted framing and mapping of local stakeholders under the jurisdictional and landscape approach in the Bouaflé department.
- ▶ Undertook consultations, data collection, and a SWOT analysis of ASGM activities to inform the development of the AJ PA model.
- ▶ Presented the jurisdictional model to local stakeholders, with participation from 238 individuals, including 205 men and 33 women.



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## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Supported three cooperative ASGM groups to improve internal management practices and prepare for engagement with formal market actors.
- ▶ Engaged with the London Bullion Market Association and one of its members to explore potential sourcing opportunities from Côte d'Ivoire.
- ▶ Maintained participation in regular LBMA ASM Task Force calls to remain aligned with international responsible sourcing initiatives.
- ▶ Initiated discussions with an intermediate refiner based in Canada seeking to expand operations in West Africa.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Conducted occupational health and safety awareness and training sessions in five pilot locations, emphasizing the use of personal protective equipment at ASGM sites.
- ▶ Reached 88 artisanal miners through these sessions, including 15 women and 73 men.
- ▶ Organized an information and capacity building workshop for prefectural authorities and key administrative stakeholders to present project objectives and strengthen institutional engagement.
- ▶ Engaged 110 participants in the workshop, including 88 men and 22 women, with strong representation from the prefectural body, community leaders, and miners.
- ▶ Held a mass awareness session in Lagrikro on best mining practices and formalization, reaching over 500 participants, including 102 miners.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Supported three cooperative groups to strengthen governance and management structures, with attention to inclusive decision making processes.
- ▶ Identified structural barriers to women's participation in cooperative leadership due to male dominated group formation.
- ▶ Achieved a 29 percent participation rate of women in mass sensitization activities, closely aligning with the project target of 30 percent.



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# Ecuador

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



The planetGOLD Ecuador project was approved for implementation in June 2023.



Click here for a summary of results from of the National Programme for Chemical Management, planetGOLD's partner project in Ecuador executed from 2018-2024

## KEY FIGURES

### MERCURY ABATEMENT



Total amount of mercury use prevented as of June 30, 2025:

# 0.48 tonnes

By encouraging miners to process their ore at 2 mercury-free processing plants strengthened by the project, it has so far prevented 0.48 tonnes of mercury use.

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

# 84



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## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Successfully prevented 0.48 tonnes of mercury emissions in artisanal and small-scale gold mining through sustained engagement and technical assistance to 2 ore processing plants previously strengthened by the National Chemicals Management Programme.
- ▶ Developed a territorial implementation strategy that includes the installation of two mercury-free pilot plants, training for 150 operators, and formal agreements with 3 responsible gold buyers. Activities will be focused in Loja and Zamora Chinchipe, including Chinapintza. Technologies to be implemented have demonstrated gold recovery rates above 85%.
- ▶ Carried out a baseline survey on mercury use in Zamora, Macará, La Maná, and surrounding areas, in collaboration with the Geological and Energy Research Institute (IIGE), revealing low recovery rates (30-60%) and extremely high mercury to gold ratios, especially in Nambija, Río San Carlos, Río Zamora, and Río Nambija, where over 40% of mercury is consumed for minimal gold recovery.
- ▶ Began training 84 miners (52 men; 32 women) in mercury-free processing through the launch of the training program mejORO – Comprehensive School for Responsible and Mercury-Free ASGM. The program was launched in partnership with Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL) to strengthen knowledge in gravity concentration, flotation, and cyanidation, supported by modules on toxicology, environmental regulation, and safe handling of materials. The program includes 66 academic hours and graduates will receive official UTPL university certification.
- ▶ Held a mejORO launch event in June 2025 with 125 participants (88 men; 37 women), and 124 individuals registered to complete the first training module in the next reporting period.
- ▶ Developed technical tools with IIGE to complement the training, including a [Guide on Drilling and Blasting in Small-Scale Underground Mining](#) and educational card sets on [Mining Curiosities and Rocks and Minerals](#).
- ▶ Initiated a study with DEMEX (EPN) to identify mercury-free alluvial gold recovery techniques. The first phase involved samples collected from Zamora Chinchipe to analyze at DEMEX labs, with a focus on concentrate, feed, and tailings.
- ▶ Launched a study on mercury and heavy metal bioaccumulation with EPN in Zamora, with local miners supporting the collection of environmental samples and water measurements.



## Access to Finance

- ▶ Completed a comprehensive study titled *Assessment, Development, and Strengthening of Financial Products for the ASGM Sector* aimed at promoting mercury-free technologies, conducted in four key mining areas: La Maná, Macará, San Carlos de las Minas, and Nambija. Findings highlighted persistent barriers to credit access: lack of collateral, high interest rates (15-18%), limited financial literacy, and institutional mistrust. San Carlos de las Minas had the highest credit access (37%, albeit under unfavorable conditions), while Macará had the lowest (5.9% applied, with no approvals).
- ▶ Identified 6 financial institutions with prior experience/presence in the ASGM territories: Banco de Loja, COOPMEGO, COAC Chibuleo, COAC Sumak Kawsay, CACPE Zamora, and Banco Pichincha. Despite the existence of a National Financial Inclusion Strategy, however, these institutions were hesitant to engage with ASGM due to regulatory and perception-based barriers.
- ▶ Initiated outreach to financial institutions to address these barriers, presenting the project's objectives and potential opportunities. The project gained visibility within the financial system through engagement with the Financial Policy and Regulation Board.
- ▶ Developed a financial education guide to help miners prepare and submit credit applications more effectively.
- ▶ Began preparing a complementary guide targeted at financial institutions. This resource will aim to "demystify" the ASGM sector, mitigate perceived risks, and promote collaboration.
- ▶ Made preparations to propose creating a competitive grant mechanism that would allow mining organizations and associations to submit proposals for mercury-free technologies, aligned with their own needs and realities.
- ▶ Advanced strategic initiatives to improve women's access to finance within ASGM communities, including:
  - Discussing with Seguros Pichincha and Banco de Loja the potential to link health microinsurance with credit lines for "jancheras" (artisanal women miners), using the CRAFT Code to strengthen trust with financial partners.
  - Supporting implementing the UNDP Equality Gender Seal in BanEcuador to improve financial inclusion for women entrepreneurs, including those in mining or mining-related businesses.
  - Exploring the development of community-based Savings and Credit Cooperatives that would be self-managed by miners and member-exclusive, providing internal mechanisms for savings and lending. Work has begun to strengthen associative processes and improve financial literacy as a foundation.



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# Ecuador



## Formalization

- ▶ Began conducting a comprehensive assessment of formalization status in target territories, analyzing current licensing, permits, declarations, and water rights, aligned with the CRAFT Code, planetGOLD Criteria, and Central Bank guidelines. The study also reviews relevant policies and regulations to better integrate ASGM into national legal frameworks. Results will be presented in the next period.
- ▶ Conducted a needs assessment with MAATE national and provincial offices, resulting in the inclusion of 3 new technical positions in the 2025 Annual Operating Plan. These experts will support legal diagnostics, improve templates for resolutions, and enhance Environmental Impact Assessment monitoring to streamline formalization processes.
- ▶ Built key regulatory and technical skills among 84 miners (52 men; 32 women) in southern Ecuador through the launch of the mejORO Training Program – Comprehensive School for Responsible and Mercury-Free ASGM. The program promotes responsible planning, legal compliance, and sustainability in mining practices.
- ▶ Delivered five licensed drones and trained 20 specialized MAATE staff in their operation to improve environmental oversight of mining operations. These drones will support environmental inspections, help detect illegal mining, and provide certified georeferenced evidence for judicial processes.
- ▶ Advanced in making an institutional agreement with the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE) that will support legal, technical, and operational instruments to strengthen ASGM formalization.
- ▶ Participated in training on the Jurisdictional Approach as part of the global planetGOLD initiative, and developed terms of reference to pilot its implementation and conduct a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) in the prioritized territories.



## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Recorded 70.5 kilograms of gold produced without mercury through continued project engagement and technical support with processing plants supported by the previous planetGOLD partner project in Ecuador, helping to sustain progress made in formalization and traceability under that project. The planetGOLD Ecuador team has not yet confirmed these operations' compliance with the CRAFT Code or planetGOLD Criteria, as certification activities are still in early stages.
- ▶ Organized a workshop for 38 public officials (22 men; 16 women) from key institutions including MAATE, MEM, BCE, ENAMI, EPN, and the Ecuadorian Chamber of Mines, introducing the CRAFT Code and planetGOLD Criteria standards, strengthening institutional understanding of these frameworks and identifying opportunities to implement responsible ASGM standards nationally
- ▶ Launched a study on the ASGM gold supply chain to identify and profile key actors and commercial dynamics in Cotopaxi, Loja, and Zamora Chinchipe. Preliminary results indicate high informality, persistent mercury use, low traceability, and limited participation of authorized buyers such as the Central Bank. Final results will be available in the next reporting period.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Engaged a total of 572 individuals (390 men; 182 women) with awareness materials and engagement activities, including members of public institutions, media outlets, ASGM communities, and other key stakeholders, strengthening awareness of mercury-free mining, promoting inclusion, and laying the groundwork for a robust education-communication campaign.



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# Ecuador

- ▶ Organized the project launch event in Quito and territorial workshops in La Maná, Zamora, and Macará/Loja reaching 259 people (174 men; 85 women) from over 50 institutions. These events introduced project objectives, presented thematic pillars, and discussed challenges in ASGM formalization.
- ▶ Engaged 45 individuals (39 men; 6 women) during field missions in La Maná, San Carlos de las Minas, and Nambija, conducting interviews to document current practices, offer recommendations, and assess training needs for each site.
- ▶ Produced educational brochures for the mejORO Training Program and visibility materials such as waist bags, notebooks, infographics, and other tools designed to reinforce the project's position supporting responsible, mercury-free mining.
- ▶ Organized a demonstration workshop on mercury-free technologies in San Carlos de las Minas and Nambija, promoting awareness of safer alternatives for gold recovery and reducing environmental and health risks.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Engaged 14 public officials (10 women; 4 men) from key government institutions in a 25-hour training based on the "Purple Boots" methodology, strengthening their institutional capacities in intersectionality, inclusive language, and gender-sensitive communication. As a result, a collaborative action plan was developed and will be integrated into the project's updated gender action plan.
- ▶ Initiated a gender diagnosis with an intersectional approach in the ASGM intervention territories, using participatory and culturally appropriate tools, designed to highlight any structural gender gaps and active roles women play throughout the gold value chain. This information will serve as the foundation for affirmative actions and tailored strategies for organizational strengthening.
- ▶ Identified female leadership in the territories, laying the groundwork for the creation of a future National Network of Women Miners and strengthening the social and institutional sustainability of the project.



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# Ghana



The planetGOLD project in Ghana was approved for implementation in March 2022

**Implementing Agencies:**

**Executing Agency:**


## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners directly supported in their formalization process:

# 280

24 256

The project conducted a baseline assessment of CRAFT Code compliance for 4 mining operations and trained 280 miners on responsible mining practices and the CRAFT requirements, strengthening awareness and operational capacity to meet formal standards.

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

# 2,100

650 1,450

The project held awareness raising activities and an educational roadshow, reaching 2,100 miners from 210 mining operations across the Ashanti and Central Regions. Formalization support focused on practical guidance for license acquisition procedures, the health impacts of mercury, and options for mercury-free processing technologies.

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## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Collected ore samples from four project pilot sites for laboratory analysis to determine ore type and mineralogy, to help determine the appropriate mercury-free intervention for each site.
- ▶ Held training on mercury free technologies in Prestea-Gambia and Asankrangwa for miners in the Western Region and Atiwa West at Eastern Region in March and May 2025 respectively. Modules covered basic geology, sustainable practices, mercury-free processing, and environmental management. Experts from UMaT, EPA, and the Minerals Commission facilitated the training. 235 miners (131 men, 104 women) were trained at Atiwa West and about 142 miners (124 men and 18 women) were trained in the Western Region.
- ▶ Engaged with the Precious Minerals Marketing Company (PMMC) and the University of Mines and Technology (UMaT) to explore collaborations for establishing assay laboratories to determine ore composition.
- ▶ Worked to recruit consultants for: assessment of suitable sites for assay laboratories, a processing plant, and a training center; mineral reserve estimation and design of gender-responsive, mercury-free processing methods; and a Gender Impact Study on new technology introduction and alternative livelihood audits.



## Access to Finance

- ▶ With a consultant, conducted a comprehensive qualitative analysis of the financial inclusion landscape for ASGM in Ghana, identifying key barriers, opportunities, and specific financial constraints faced by women in the sector.
- ▶ The Consultant developed and submitted a comprehensive 10-module training manual in June 2025 to equip miners with the knowledge to manage finances, access formal funding, and operate sustainably. The modules cover topics from sourcing finance and taxation to business planning and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles.



## Formalization

- ▶ Developed Social License to Operate (SLO) Protocol with a Technical Working Group, which was reviewed and validated by key stakeholders from Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Miner Associations.
- ▶ Prepared and submitted Policy recommendations to National Development Planning Commission of Ghana for the mainstreaming of planetGOLD Project outcomes in the Medium Term Development Plans of the Metropolitan, Municipal, District Assemblies (MMDAs), to enable the MMDAs plan and implement the outcomes of the Project and promote mercury-free mining within their communities.
- ▶ Developed a planetGOLD Safeguard Policy for Artisanal Small-scale Miners in Tier One Pilot Sites in Ghana.
- ▶ Established Grievance Redress & Child Protection Committees (GRaCPCs) at Community, District, Regional, and National levels in the Western, Ashanti, and Eastern Regions. These committees are designed to promote effective complaint management, create Child Labour Free Zones, and ensure ethical mining operations.
- ▶ Established in 2025, Ghana GoldBod is the Government's central authority with exclusive responsibility to buy, sell, weigh, grade, assay, value, and export gold and other precious minerals in Ghana. While the project did not create GoldBod, it treats this institutional reform as a critical path for formalization and responsible market access.
- ▶ The project will formally engage GoldBod in Q1 2026 and coordinate throughout implementation to ensure alignment with GoldBod policies and planetGOLD objectives.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Conducted extensive education and sensitization workshops across multiple mining districts in the Ashanti and Central Regions. These sessions targeted miners, stakeholders, and students, covering the health impacts of mercury, the CRAFT Code, and mercury-free technologies. Engagement with over 2,100 (1,450 males & 650 Females) participants was supplemented by radio and television coverage (Nkomo FM, Duapa FM, TV3, Adom TV). An additional 89,354 people were reached with awareness raising materials via social media leveraged from the EPA website, WhatsApp, media website with national and global reach.
- ▶ The Health Education Technical Working Group assessed and reviewed existing health promotion resources (posters, videos, jingles) for relevance to ASGM health and safety concerns, focusing on mercury exposure, environmental safety, and gender inclusivity.
- ▶ Participated in the global planetGOLD Communication Network meetings. Published a featured article on the global planetGOLD portal and shared digital awareness posters via X (formerly Twitter) to amplify project visibility.
- ▶ Developed TORs to recruit a communication consultant to design and implement a comprehensive project communication and outreach strategy. Produced and shared a project factsheet with stakeholders.



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# Guinea



The planetGOLD Guinea project was approved for implementation in December 2022

Implementing Agency:



Executing Agency:



## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners directly supported in their formalization process:

**550**

220 330

After new regulations in October 2024 made the execution of environmental impact assessments a requirement for the legal practice of artisanal and small-scale gold mining, the project supported 550 miners from 2 mining operations in Mandiana and Siguiri in successfully producing and submitting this assessment, regaining their formal status.

Number of miners who have participated in training and awareness raising activities about formalization:

**722**

289 433

The project engaged 722 miners in consultations, meetings, and workshops formulating and reviewing 11 proposals for new regulatory texts to improve the country's legislation governing the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector.

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## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Identified artisanal mining groups in target areas and conducted an inventory of existing mineral processing methods.
- ▶ Promoted good ASM practices and disseminated information on updated regulatory provisions.
- ▶ Distributed 15 locally manufactured retorts to artisanal mining groups for testing and adoption.
- ▶ Maintained active use of seven retorts, supported by lower frequency of burning operations and the predominance of alluvial gold ores requiring reduced mercury use.
- ▶ Supported the adoption of concentrating amalgamation practices, contributing to the production of approximately 43.68 kilograms of artisanal gold.
- ▶ Prevented an estimated 56.8 kilograms of mercury from being released into the environment through improved processing practices.
- ▶ Initiated technical studies to inform the transition toward mercury free processing technologies in response to identified limitations and environmental risks.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Initiated the development of a national financial inclusion strategy for the artisanal and small-scale mining sector through inclusive and transparent consultations.
- ▶ Conducted grassroots consultations at local, prefectural, and national levels, engaging 528 participants, including 158 women and 370 men.
- ▶ Engaged six financial institutions and artisanal gold traders to ensure diverse stakeholder representation in the strategy development process.
- ▶ Strengthened engagement with financial institutions to promote financial inclusion for ASM actors.

- ▶ Secured commitments from three banks and two microcredit institutions to support ASM stakeholders.
- ▶ Continued consultations to finalize the national financial inclusion strategy.
- ▶ Positioned the validated strategy to serve as a foundation for future training and awareness raising activities to improve access to finance in the ASM sector.



## Formalization

- ▶ Established local and national consultation groups to support dialogue on ASM formalization.
- ▶ Facilitated the development of practical formalization options and operational texts to strengthen the legal framework for ASGM.
- ▶ Supported collaboration between the project, the Ministry of Mines and Geology, and the Ministry of the Environment.
- ▶ Contributed to the issuance of four new regulations supporting ASM formalization.
- ▶ Developed a formalization guide to support implementation of the regulatory framework.
- ▶ Conducted an inventory of existing ASM related regulatory texts.
- ▶ Formulated eleven proposals for complementary legislative texts to reinforce Guinea's ASGM gold sector.
- ▶ Submitted draft legislative texts for governmental review and validation.
- ▶ Supported 550 miners from the Wassolo group in Mandiana and the Bouré Women's Miners group of Kintinian in Siguiro prefecture in regaining formal status. The project initiated discussions with the environmental department to assist other miners' groups in the process of being formalized.
- ▶ Reached 722 participants through consultations, meetings, and workshops, including 433 men and 289 women.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Delivered targeted training sessions for health, environmental, and mining officials, site managers, and health workers.
- ▶ Strengthened capacity to identify clinical signs of mercury poisoning among frontline professionals in Kankan region.
- ▶ Implemented extensive awareness campaigns on the health and environmental risks associated with mercury exposure.
- ▶ Reached a total of 3,269 individuals through awareness and capacity building activities, including 1,324 men and 1,945 women.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Trained focus group members on gender-based violence prevention, complaint management, and safeguarding in ASGM settings in Kouroussa, Siguiro, and Mandiana.
- ▶ Strengthened the capacity of 21 women through training on gender based violence prevention and response mechanisms.
- ▶ Delivered leadership training to 27 women to enhance women's participation in ASGM governance structures.
- ▶ Conducted community awareness campaigns on gender equity, mercury risks for women and children, and women's leadership.
- ▶ Identified the need to shift gender programming toward transformative inclusion by embedding women in decision making and leadership structures.



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# Honduras



The planetGOLD Honduras project was approved for implementation in November 2022.

Implementing Agency:



Executing Agency:



## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Formalization

- ▶ Participated with the national mining authority INHGEOMIN in the formulation, consultation and dissemination of a national strategy to support ASGM to promote its formalization and comprehensive development through the issuance of a Presidential Decree, which responds positively to the 9 strategies defined in the National Action Plan of Honduras.
- ▶ Witnessed the first mining cooperative in Honduras granted legal status and established in the community of Agua Fría Mineral in the municipality of Danlí. The project supported the application to INHGEOMIN for the cooperative named Casablanca, which aims to benefit roughly 130 miners.
- ▶ Supported a census of artisanal mining tunnels in Agua Fría Mineral to determine the optimal area to be requested for artisanal mining in favor of the Municipal Government of Danlí.
- ▶ Initiated coordination with the municipality in the La Playa community in Macuelizo to obtain an artisanal mining permit.
- ▶ With the municipal government and INHGEOMIN, delimited an area of 81 hectares designated for artisanal mining in the community of La Mina in the Quimistán municipality.
- ▶ Organized the first women-only Mixed Mining Cooperative in Honduras, located in the valley of the municipality of Irióna, Department of Colón.
- ▶ Established and granted Legal Personality to the second Mining Cooperative in Honduras, located in the valley of Quimistán, Department of Santa Bárbara. During this event, the artisanal mining area delimitation was granted in favor of the Municipal Government of Quimistán, with the support of the Director of INHGEOMIN.



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Visited mine sites and confirmed that miners in different sites generally use common gold beneficiation techniques, practice raw amalgamation and, in some sites, carry out cyanidation of tailings contaminated with mercury.



### Awareness Raising

- ▶ Disseminated awareness messages about the risks of mercury and the importance of the organization and formalization of the sector.
- ▶ Began preparations of an activity plan within the project communications strategy.



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# Kenya



The planetGOLD Kenya project was approved by the GEF for implementation in June 2018.

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partner:



## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners directly supported in their formalization process:

**3,951**

687 3,264

Number of mining operations supported in their formalization process:

**23**

The project supported 3,951 miners to organize into 23 cooperatives in four pilot counties: Migori, Narok, Kakamega, and Vihiga. 660 miners in these mining cooperatives also received capacity building training on financial management and record keeping. The project additionally advocated for accelerated formalization with relevant regulatory agencies.

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**15,754**

6,459 9,295

The project engaged ASGM mining group leaders and operators, focusing on formalization of mining operations, dangers of mercury exposure, permitting processes, and record keeping.

## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Signed MOUs with six sites in four project county governments to provide public land for the construction of pilot mercury-free gold processing plants, and completed environmental and social impact assessments for these sites.
- ▶ Began construction of six gravimetric and micro-leaching plants, with the goal of having the equipment installed and operational before the project's closure.



### Formalization

- ▶ Conducted a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise, identifying ten key institutions with regulatory and enforcement mandates relevant to ASGM.
- ▶ Trained officials from these institutions -- including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, State Departments for Mining, Cooperatives, and Interior, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), National Administration, Kenya Institute of Business Training, Department of Labour, and Department of Trade—on mercury-free interventions.
- ▶ Engaged these government entities in the formalization and permitting processes for the upcoming mercury-free pilot sites.
- ▶ Organized 3,951 miners in six project counties into 23 registered marketing cooperatives, in alignment with the national ASGM formalization strategy.

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- ▶ Trained 660 cooperative leaders on the planetGOLD Criteria, financial management, and record keeping.
- ▶ Advocated for accelerated formalization with relevant regulatory agencies, with the aim to expedite the issuance of mining permits.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Reached over 37,985 individuals—13,990 females and 23,995 males -- on the dangers of mercury and strategies to reduce its use in ASGM, through awareness-raising efforts.
- ▶ Observed a noticeable shift in interest toward the practical implementation of mercury-free technologies, highlighting the need to complement awareness efforts with tangible demonstrations of safer alternatives.



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# Madagascar

The planetGOLD Madagascar project was approved for implementation in September 2023

## Implementing Agency:



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

## Executing Partners:



## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Conducted community awareness sessions on the risks associated with mercury use in the Betsiaka rural commune at the Andrafiava site.
- ▶ Reached 47 artisanal gold miners through these sessions, including 10 women and 37 men.
- ▶ Delivered awareness sessions on mercury risks at municipal level and ASGM sites in Ambalamanasa, Vohilava rural commune, and Mananjary.
- ▶ Engaged 122 participants in these sessions, including 65 women and 57 men.
- ▶ Conducted awareness raising activities on the benefits of mercury free technologies at the Ambalamanasa ASGM site in September 2024.
- ▶ Implemented awareness sessions on mercury free technologies at the Andrafiava ASGM site, engaging 47 participants, including 10 women and 37 men.
- ▶ Identified and validated appropriate mercury free extraction methods in consultation with artisanal gold miners and small scale operators.
- ▶ Finalized and validated the Mercury free Extraction Methods document in May 2025, following local and national level consultations.
- ▶ Developed a proposal for a study on mercury distribution in the environment at the beginning, during, and end of the project.
- ▶ Validated and made available the mercury distribution study proposal through the National Committee for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention.
- ▶ Continued importation of portable equipment for environmental mercury monitoring.
- ▶ Developed and validated mercury-free gold extraction methods across four target sites.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Conducted advocacy sessions with financial institutions at national, regional, and local levels across four target sites to promote access to finance for artisanal gold miners.
- ▶ Engaged financial institutions and stakeholders at central level, reaching 3 participants, including 2 men and 1 woman.
- ▶ Delivered advocacy sessions in Antanimbaray at regional and local levels, engaging 40 participants, including 23 women and 17 men.
- ▶ Conducted advocacy sessions in Andrafiava at regional and local levels, reaching 34 participants, including 12 women and 22 men.
- ▶ Organized regional level advocacy sessions in Ambalamanasa, engaging 16 participants, including 13 women and 3 men.
- ▶ Implemented advocacy sessions in Farezy at regional and local levels, reaching 43 participants, including 16 women and 27 men.
- ▶ Established value chain traceability and control procedures, with the reference document finalized and available.
- ▶ Initiated information, education, and awareness sessions to support the application of traceability and control procedures.

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# Madagascar

- ▶ Conducted an assessment of technical and material capacity needs of ASGM sector institutions, including Madagascar Gold Center at regional level and four rural municipalities.
- ▶ Validated and made available the institutional capacity assessment document in January 2025.
- ▶ Developed and validated mercury-free gold extraction methods across four target sites.
- ▶ Initiated a partnership agreement with the Central Bank of Madagascar and UNIDO Madagascar to support project objectives and LBMA certification.
- ▶ Conducted coordination meetings with partners; agreement pending validation by UNIDO Vienna Legal Department.
- ▶ Carried out field missions to assess and validate technical and material capacities of regional Gold Centers and Rural Communes.
- ▶ Strengthened capacities of local structures supporting artisanal and small-scale miners across target sites.



## Formalization

- ▶ Completed one of eight planned activities for the reporting period, with four activities under implementation and three pending initiation.
- ▶ Conducted an inventory of the legal and regulatory framework governing ASGM activities.
- ▶ Developed and adopted a regional approach tailored to ASGM zones of the planetGOLD Madagascar project in February 2025.
- ▶ Established and signed partnership agreements with four municipalities and one local NGO to support formalization and deployment of mercury free technologies.
- ▶ Conducted geo prospecting studies across four project sites, including Antanimbary, Andrafiava, Farezy, and Ambalamanasa.
- ▶ Finalized and made available the interim geo prospecting report for the four sites.
- ▶ Drafted the legal framework relating to ASGM following field missions to all target sites, with the document finalized in January 2025.
- ▶ Advanced the development of regulatory texts on ASGM in collaboration with Madagascar Gold Center and the Ministry of Mines.
- ▶ Evaluated the technical and institutional capacities of ASGM sector institutions and finalized the assessment report in February 2025.
- ▶ Launched a call for expressions of interest to recruit consultants and service providers to strengthen institutional technical and material capacities.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Developed and validated the project communication plan, national strategies, and training plan by September 2024.
- ▶ Developed, validated, and made available training manuals and learner guides in January 2025.
- ▶ Conducted training of trainers at central level, strengthening the capacity of 20 participants.
- ▶ Delivered four training sessions at project sites using the learner guide, reaching 198 learners, including 67 women and 131 men.
- ▶ Implemented site level trainings across Diana, Vatovavy, Betsiboka, and Antsimo Andrefana regions.
- ▶ Produced two educational films to support advocacy and awareness raising activities.
- ▶ Highlighted project implementation and local authority engagement through the first film.
- ▶ Amplified women's voices in ASGM through a second film featuring a female gold miner's experience with mercury risks and transition to safer practices.
- ▶ Conducted advocacy sessions with regional and local authorities at ASGM sites in Andrafiava and Ambalamanasa.
- ▶ Strengthened stakeholder engagement through participation of project representatives in international ASGM forums and conferences.

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# Madagascar

- ▶ Conducted training sessions for approximately 250 stakeholders on mercury risks, mercury-free technologies, and project components.
- ▶ Participated in a national mining sector event organized by the Madagascar Mining Cadastre Office.
- ▶ Raised awareness on the health and environmental risks of mercury use in ASGM.
- ▶ Promoted adoption of responsible mercury-free technologies among miners and stakeholders.
- ▶ Strengthened project visibility and mobilized stakeholders, reaching approximately 200 participants.



## Gender Equity and Inclusion

- ▶ Applied a gender responsive approach across all project activities.
- ▶ Ensured active participation of women in project implementation processes.
- ▶ Participated in International Women's Day celebrations in March 2025 to promote women's roles in ASGM.
- ▶ Engaged in national waste management exhibitions to raise awareness on environmental protection and gender inclusion in the mining sector.



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# Nicaragua

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

Implementing Agency:



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

## 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

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# Paraguay

The planetGOLD project in Paraguay was approved for implementation in November 2024 and had not initiated activities during this reporting period

Implementing Agency:



Executing Partners:



## BACKGROUND

- ▶ Approximately 1,100 individuals are engaged along various stages of the gold value chain and 1 tonne of mercury is emitted by the ASGM sector annually.
- ▶ Although progress has been made in recent years toward formalization and improved organization, many ASGM miners continue to operate in informal settings and still face significant challenges in accessing finance, technical support, and capacity-building opportunities.
- ▶ The main challenge in the ASGM sector in Paraguay is limited technical capacity and knowledge, which drives both the persistence of mercury-based practices and the rapid expansion of the inappropriate use of cyanide, generating significant risks.
- ▶ The project has targets to reduce 0.4 tonnes of mercury, improve management of 64,000 hectares, and to benefit approximately 28,500 people.

# Sierra Leone

The planetGOLD project in Sierra Leone was endorsed for implementation in September 2023.

Implementing Agency:

CONSERVATION  
INTERNATIONAL



Executing Agency:



## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Conducted baseline assessments at pilot sites to evaluate current gold processing practices.
- ▶ Identified existing use of excavators, crushers, and locally manufactured sluice boxes among a limited number of artisanal miners.
- ▶ Determined that limited knowledge and high costs remain key barriers to the adoption of environmentally friendly processing technologies.
- ▶ Identified willingness among artisanal miners to adopt innovative technical solutions if made affordable and accessible.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Completed a rapid pilot site validation and a detailed baseline assessment of the ASGM sector during the reporting period.
- ▶ Mapped national financial institutions, financial instruments, and regulatory frameworks relevant to ASGM financing.
- ▶ Assessed economic activities at pilot sites and documented access to formal and informal finance within ASGM communities.
- ▶ Conducted a stakeholder assessment to identify key financial institutions, including commercial banks, community banks, and microfinance institutions, as well as relevant regulators.
- ▶ Engaged the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank to inform future development of financial instruments targeting ASGM communities.
- ▶ Initiated the recruitment of a Jurisdictional Approach consultant.
- ▶ Positioned the consultancy to support the development of a participatory and gender sensitive Landscape Finance Plan and to facilitate dialogue between financial institutions and ASGM stakeholders, including women.



### Formalization

- ▶ Developed terms of reference and initiated recruitment of consultants to support ASGM formalization activities.
- ▶ Conducted a baseline assessment of ASGM activities and mercury use, including a needs assessment on willingness and readiness to formalize.
- ▶ Initiated recruitment of national consultants to review ASGM policies related to licensing, land tenure, and gender equality.
- ▶ Supported the development and review of gender sensitive ASGM policy and regulatory frameworks.
- ▶ Mapped and engaged key stakeholders within the Ministries of Environment and Mines and Mineral Resources, as well as the National Minerals Agency.
- ▶ Initiated co development of capacity building sessions to support the implementation of gender sensitive ASGM formalization and mercury reduction policies.

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# Sierra Leone



## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Determined through baseline assessment that no formal ASGM gold buying outlets exist at pilot sites.
- ▶ Identified negligible volumes of officially declared and exported ASGM gold from Sierra Leone.
- ▶ Confirmed that a formal and traceable ASGM gold supply chain mechanism has not yet been established.
- ▶ Scheduled development of responsible sourcing and traceability mechanisms for subsequent project phases.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Formally launched the project implementation phase in November 2024 with participation from national authorities, community leaders, miners, and media representatives.
- ▶ Strengthened project visibility through the maintenance of the planetGOLD Sierra Leone communication page.
- ▶ Initiated recruitment of a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices expert to support the development of a gender sensitive awareness raising and advocacy strategy.
- ▶ Developed and disseminated a project fact sheet and an accountability and grievance mechanism poster.
- ▶ Promoted project objectives and activities through radio programming.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Mainstreamed gender considerations across project activities.
- ▶ Encouraged and tracked women's participation in workshops, meetings, and project related employment.



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# Uganda



The planetGOLD Uganda project was approved for implementation in April 2022.

Implementing Agency:



Executing Agency:



## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners directly supported in their formalization process:

**820**

300 520

Number of mining operations directly supported in their formalization process:

**16**

The project supported miners to form cooperatives and to obtain two small scale mining licenses in Buhweju and in Kassanda. The team also helped a group of miners to register a small-scale company to enable them to patent a locally conceived micro-leaching system.

Number of miners supported in their formalization process through educational activities:

**2,200**

1,000 1,200

The project held community training activities and trainings with mining operators, organized sensitization drives using loudspeaker vehicles, and participated in radio talkshows on formalization topics.

### ACCESS TO FINANCE



Total amount of money successfully accessed by miners/operations via new financial mechanisms:

**15,000 USD**

This amount represents miners' personal investment in purchase of mercury free equipment in Karamoja region by using land as collateral.

### ADDITIONAL GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS



Area of land under improved practices (hectares):

**4.2 hectares**

This represents an area in Tiira, Busia where open cast mining had left large, open pits that frequently filled with water, presenting a hazard to people and animals. These were drained and the land refilled and levelled.



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## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Reviewed a draft gender-sensitive strategy for securing buy-in from miners/operators for mercury-free equipment as well as a Technical Assistance Plan for miners at pilot sites.
- ▶ Conducted research field visits to six project target mine sites to capture current data on mercury usage at these sites, interacting with 265 miners (103 female and 162 male) during these visits. Completed site profiling in the Amudat, Nakabaat, Buhweju, Kisoro, and Moroto districts to understand gold processing methods and mercury usage, to inform a new strategy for identifying and acquiring mercury-free processing equipment.
- ▶ Held meetings in Kassanda, Namayingo & Busia in November and December 2024 to continue the sensitization among miners of the dangers of mercury use and exposure, reaching 165 miners (108 male and 57 female). Undertook retort-use demonstrations at 10 of these sites to show miners how to eliminate open air burning of amalgam containing mercury.
- ▶ Conducted an assessment for a small-scale miners' processing site laboratory, to identify the items needed to optimize operations in the laboratory and support equipping since the laboratory is to be used together with other artisanal and small-scale miners in Kitumbi-Kayonza site, Kassanda district.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Conducted financial literacy training in August 2024 for 120 miners (45 women and 75 men) from the Karamoja region, who were working to establish cooperatives. Continued training in March 2025 with specialized financial literacy training for the Kitumbi-Kayonza Women Miners Cooperative Society Ltd., designed to empower the cooperative's 53 (31 women and 22 men) members and leaders to manage their finances more effectively.
- ▶ With the Artisanal Gold Council, piloted a finance course for 20 (10 women and 10 men) miners from all 11 project sites, introducing them to new financial models.
- ▶ The Uganda Microfinance Support Centre assessed five gold miners' cooperatives in December 2024, a crucial step to determine the cooperatives' eligibility for financing to help them invest in their mining operations and move toward more responsible practices.



### Formalization

- ▶ Supported the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to launch the National Environment (Management of Hazardous Chemicals and Products Containing Hazardous Chemicals) Regulations, 2024 on July 17, 2024. This significant event brought together 157 stakeholders from various government ministries, miners' groups, and private and civil society sectors to establish a framework for managing hazardous chemicals specifically providing for the prohibition of mercury importation, use and supply in Uganda.
- ▶ Supported registration of six mining cooperatives in the Karamoja region. This formalization activity, which brought together 180 miners (80 women and 100 men), provided a pathway for these groups to operate legally and more safely. These cooperatives received their certificates during the project's Annual Stakeholders' Workshop in October 2024.
- ▶ Held training on jurisdictional and landscape approaches in Busia District in March 2025. This training, attended by 30 participants including district officials and miners, focused on helping miners reduce their use of mercury and transition to more environmentally friendly methods.



### Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Worked since mid-2024 with the Central Bank of Uganda to formulate a domestic purchase program strategy for ASM gold in the country. The strategy is soon to be completed and will contain provisions ensuring that planetGOLD Criteria are complied with by entities that supply gold to the bank.

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# Uganda



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Held the second Annual Stakeholder's meeting in Kampala on October 4, 2024, bringing together a diverse group of 150 stakeholders (70 women and 80 men) including government officials, civil society organizations, development partners like NEMA and UNEP, and Members of Parliament. The theme for the year, "From mines to markets: Strengthening artisanal and small-scale gold mining through cooperative networks," emphasized the importance of collaboration for a more responsible artisanal gold mining sector.
- ▶ Conducted five radio talk shows across the project target areas featuring key figures from the Directorate of Geological Survey and Mines (DGSM), NEMA, planetGOLD project, local government, and artisanal gold miners, all discussing the project's initiatives.
- ▶ Organized a training workshop for 22 (8 women, 14 men) participants from the Police Mineral Protection Unit focusing on mercury use, its effects, reasons for its use, sources, available alternatives, and the legal frameworks in place to curb its use. The officers were apprised of their key role in the elimination of mercury use in ASGM by ensuring that mercury supply does not enter the sector.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Supported a Gender Impact Assessment for new ASM Regulations, with workshops held in July 2024. These sessions, that included 55 government officers, were crucial for ensuring that the new rules would guide the implementation of the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022 in a way that considers gender equality.
- ▶ Participated in a series of field visits led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to eight of the eleven project mine sites during the first quarter of 2025. These visits allowed for gender impact assessment of the project's mercury-free technology planned intervention.
- ▶ Conducted a gender monitoring exercise, providing baseline and follow-up data on gender integration.
- ▶ Aligned monitoring tools and indicators with the Gender Action Plan and overall project objective.
- ▶ Conducted a Gender Impact Assessment for mercury-free adoption as a risk identification approach in all major project districts of Busia, Buhweju, Namayingo and Kassanda.



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# Zambia



The planetGOLD Zambia project was approved for implementation in December 2023.

**Implementing Agency:**



**Executing Agency:**



## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Initiated the groundwork for site profiling two mercury-free processing sites and updated mercury use in the ASGM sector baseline information.
- ▶ Engaged with communities in 13 ASGM sites to introduce the project and set a foundation for the project work.
- ▶ Conducted Geological Feasibility Studies in 10 ASGM sites to understand the quantities of gold in the sites, processing methods to ultimately inform site profiling for the mercury free processing sites.
- ▶ Conducted a contextual study in six ASGM sites to study the ASGM sector and update baseline information on mercury use.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Engaged an array of stakeholders to explore innovative financing models for ASGM including with financial institutions, development partners, and government agencies to align on financing needs and mechanisms.
- ▶ Encouraged collaboration between mining cooperatives and private sector actors to unlock capital and technical support.
- ▶ Reached out to other organizations such as the NGO Self-help and explored mobile banking and digital platforms to facilitate transactions and improve financial transparency.
- ▶ Conducted 10 geo-feasibility studies in 10 ASGM sites with the aim to produce summary reports and then provided to mining cooperatives to assist with leveraging financing.



### Formalization

- ▶ Engaged 13 ASGM communities, formed 18 new cooperatives, and strengthened 16 existing ones.
- ▶ Developed a due diligence tool in the context of ASGM formalization and responsible mining, not just a procedural step but as a strategic safeguard that ensures alignment, accountability, and long-term impact
- ▶ Established the ASGM Technical Committee as a central mechanism for stakeholder engagement and functions as a technical working group to review legal, policy, and institutional frameworks governing the ASGM sector. The committee, chaired by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Development, comprises key institutions, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Green Economy and Environment, Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA), University of Zambia, Publish What You Pay (PWYP), Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines Investment Holdings (ZCCM-IH), Association of Zambia Women in Mining, and the Federation of Small-Scale Miners Association of Zambia.
- ▶ Procured a legal consultant to review the existing ASGM sector related legal, institutional and policy reforms; this consultant reports and consults periodically with the members of the ASGM technical committee
- ▶ Participated in the 2025 Copperbelt Agriculture, Mining, Industrial and Networking Enterprise Exhibition (CAMINEX). This national event brought together key players from across Zambia's mining and industrial landscape, offering a strategic platform for dialogue, visibility, and collaboration.

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## Access to Formal Markets

- ▶ Engaged with Zambia Cooper Consolidated Mining Investments Holdings (ZCCM-IH), the government's strategic purpose mining investment vehicle, to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to support artisanal miners through several initiatives:
- ▶ Direct Gold Purchasing: ZCCM-IH committed to buying gold directly from miners operating within the planetGOLD framework, ensuring fair pricing and traceability.
- ▶ Capital Support: Provision of financial resources to cooperatives for scaling operations and improving productivity.
- ▶ Machinery and Equipment: Supply of modern, mercury-free equipment to enhance safety and efficiency in gold processing.
- ▶ Compliance Assurance: All support is contingent upon miners adhering to global ESG protocols and responsible sourcing of gold provisions.



## Awareness Raising

- ▶ Launched a high-level inception workshop in Lusaka reaching 57 participants from government institutions, civil society organizations, media outlets, academic institutions, and private sector actors.
- ▶ Conducted community engagement and awareness activities in 16 ASGM communities across five provinces, reaching a total of over 4,600 miners (Lusaka Province: 1,330; Eastern Province: 1,222; Central Province: 757; Northern Province: 1,334; North-Western Province: 56). Analytics from communication platforms indicate growing engagement, with rising follower counts, shares, and comments reflecting strong interest in the project's mission and progress.
- ▶ Conducted an awareness-raising campaign in Nyanja at a Labour Day event attended by over 300 people. A drama troupe delivered the performance focused on clean, safe, and responsible mining for a sustainable environment and improved livelihoods.
- ▶ Built social media campaigns around real-life success stories highlighting miners transitioning to mercury-free practices, women taking leadership roles in cooperatives and gaining access to mineral rich mining zones, communities engaging with formal gold markets, local leaders supporting formalization, clean and safe mining processes, and more. To ensure accessibility and cultural relevance, the stories were translated into local languages, including Bemba, Nyanja, Nsenga, and Soli.
- ▶ Executed a media visit for 7 prominent media houses (7 female, 3 male journalists) that provided firsthand exposure to ASGM conditions and miner livelihoods.
- ▶ Supported 7 ASGM youths from Rufunsa District to participate in Youth Day commemorations, wearing full protective gear to demonstrate appropriate mining attire. The group, comprising 3 females and 4 males, addressed the gathering of over 2,000 people on the dangers associated with mercury use.
- ▶ Presented at the geo-environmental symposium ensuring environmental and social governance (ESG) in ASGM with a focus on women, particularly in Chisamba district, where there is a high participation of women ASGM. The project proposed solutions that can be implemented to ensure ESG in the mining site.
- ▶ Developed and disseminated the first stakeholder email newsletter distributed to 108 stakeholders in government, civil society, academia, and the public sector.
- ▶ Organized meetings of the project's steering committee and operational advisory committee composed of a cross-section of influential institutions.



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## Gender Equity

- ▶ Designed outreach programs to engage women separately from men, acknowledging cultural dynamics and creating safe spaces where women can freely express their views, share experiences, and articulate their needs without inhibition.
- ▶ Encouraged Chiefs at 16 partnering ASGM sites to: (1) support women-led cooperatives by granting consent for land access and endorsing cooperative formation for women; (2) facilitate licensing for women miners by working with the government to promote issuance of artisanal mining licenses to women-led groups, enabling them to operate legally and benefit from formal sector protections; (3) promote access to high-grade ore sites, to allocate mining areas with viable ore grades to women's cooperatives, ensuring that their operations are economically sustainable and competitive.
- ▶ Advocated for childcare facilities at mining sites to dignify mining for women and encourage participation.
- ▶ Observed a five percent rise in women's participation in ASGM activities after sensitization campaigns and targeted outreach, signaling a shift in community perceptions, institutional support, and the empowerment of women as active contributors to the mining economy.
- ▶ Supported nine ASGM women from a women's cooperative in Rufunsa District to showcase mining practices at a Youth Day event while narrating in the local language to an audience of over 1,000 people.
- ▶ Supported six members of the Association for Zambian Women in Mining (AZWIM) to participate in project awareness campaign.
- ▶ Encouraged female participation and stakeholder nominations of women to ensure balanced representation in all project engagements.



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# Zimbabwe

The planetGOLD project in Zimbabwe was approved for implementation in December 2023.

Implementing Agency:



Executing Agency:



## KEY FIGURES

### MINERS SUPPORTED



Number of miners directly supported in their formalization process:

# 54

27 27

The project engaged miners in site profiling and strategy meetings to gather their views and experiences with formalization processes and to establish a value proposition for legal and policy reforms.

## JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES



### Technical Solutions

- ▶ Undertook baseline research on mercury-free processing technologies, including those from Zimbabwe's National Metallurgical Laboratory and other planetGOLD countries' innovations.
- ▶ Incorporated the digital application BLOOM to assess site ore types, processing practices, and environmental health risks, generating granular data to use in matching district-specific ore characteristics with appropriate mercury-free processing alternatives.



### Access to Finance

- ▶ Assessed gaps in access to finance among ASGM groups across seven districts including Bubi, Gwanda, Insiza, Esigodini, Zvishavane, Mberengwa, Shurugwi, and Kadoma, and gender-specific barriers miners faced in engaging with financial systems.



### Formalization

- ▶ Conducted local community meetings across ASGM sites in Esigodini and Filabusi districts and organized radio programs to capture insights directly from artisanal miners and community stakeholders on their views on the formalization process, support mechanisms available, and on legal and policy reforms related to formalization.
- ▶ Hosted a flagship national stakeholders consultative dialogue on the ASGM Strategy for Zimbabwe which offered a participatory platform for policymakers, government agencies, the Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF), civil society, and project beneficiaries to comment and shape the strategy's policy framework.



### Awareness Raising

- ▶ Implemented a multifaceted awareness-raising approach, combining traditional media, social media, and community engagement. The project's efforts produced 1 op-ed promoting inclusive development and sustainable ASGM practices and garnered 19 media mentions across print and digital publications.

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# Zimbabwe

- ▶ Promoted project updates, educational content, and artisanal and small-scale miners stories on social media platforms achieving 35,617 views on Facebook and engaging a cumulative audience of 661 accounts on Facebook and X.
- ▶ Distributed information, education and communication materials including factsheets, shirts, and branded Personal Protective Equipment to miners.
- ▶ Produced and disseminated 3 radio broadcasts engaging miners on formalization in Harare, Gweru and Bulawayo, reaching an estimated 25.8% of listeners.
- ▶ Participated in National World Environment Day commemorations and the regional Mining Indaba in Cape Town whereby the project gathered insights from broad sector actor actors, as well as artisanal miners, ensuring that interventions on formalization and safer mining practices were grounded in the realities of mining operations.



## Gender Equity

- ▶ Spearheaded a high-level working session in Harare on Gender and Child Labour in ASGM as part of International Women’s Day commemorations. The session was attended by 24 sector stakeholders (9 men, 15 women) including miners, representatives of government agencies and the media. The session mapped out specific awareness-raising approaches recommending community radio campaigns, stakeholder workshops, and social media engagement.
- ▶ Gathered critical baseline data on gender and child labor matters by way of initial site profiling across seven districts including Bubi, Gwanda, Insiza, Esigodini, Zvishavane, Mberengwa, Shurugwi, and Kadoma.



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# PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

This section provides brief background information about country projects currently under development.

[Senegal](#)



# Senegal



The planetGOLD Senegal project is in the preparation phase.

Implementing Agency:



## BACKGROUND

- ▶ An estimated 31,300 people work in the ASGM sector in Senegal, according to the country's National Action Plan on ASGM.
- ▶ Kédougou region represents 77% of Senegal's artisanal gold production, with an estimated 3 tonnes of annual gold production and an estimated 4 tonnes of mercury used per year in processing artisanal gold.
- ▶ The Tambacounda region represents 23% percent of Senegalese ASGM production, with an estimated annual gold production of 1 tonne and an estimated 1.3 tonnes of mercury use per year.
- ▶ The average ratio of mercury use per gram of gold extracted in Senegal is 1.37.
- ▶ By the third year of the project, it aims to reduce mercury use at its targeted mine sites by 50%, and to completely eliminate mercury use at these sites by the time the project closes.

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Photo: planetGOLD Côte d'Ivoire

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*Photo: planetGOLD Ecuador*

# GLOBAL PROJECT SUMMARY

The planetGOLD global project supports collaboration across the programme, encourages knowledge exchange with stakeholders working to improve the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector, and shares results and lessons learned from all projects in the programme.

Key components of the planetGOLD global project:



**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**  
disseminate relevant programme information and resources on the ASGM sector to the global community of practice



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



**COMMUNICATIONS**  
share information, key messages, challenges, and successes with the goal of increasing support for a responsibly managed ASGM sector

The planetGOLD global project supports collaboration across the programme, encourages knowledge exchange with stakeholders working to improve the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector, and shares results and lessons learned from all projects in the programme.

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, a key activity of the global project was the production of a [Cross-Programmatic Assessment of the planetGOLD Programme](#), offering a comprehensive review of what strategies were taken up in nine countries that were among the first to join the programme.

This report along with new case studies on project [formalization](#) and [communication](#) activities, and a [complementary report](#) assessing the global project’s activities, provide deep observations, takeaways, and recommendations that current and future initiatives on artisanal and small-scale gold mining can learn from.

The project also continued its work promoting financing and investment in the ASGM sector, finalizing new synthesis documents, organizing trainings, and spearheading media and communication initiatives.



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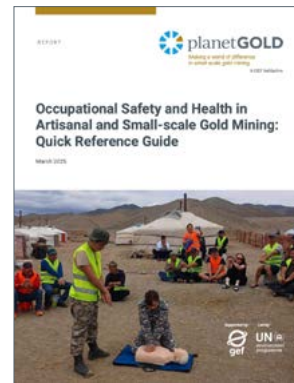
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# JULY 2024 – JUNE 2025 KEY ACTIVITIES

## Developing and sharing knowledge

- ▶ Published a set of products on Occupational Safety and Health in ASGM: [“Literature Review of OSH in the ASGM Sector,”](#) [“Occupational Safety and Health in ASGM: Quick Reference Guide,”](#) [“Overview of OSH Training Materials in the ASM Sector,”](#) and [“Occupational Safety and Health in Practice.”](#)
- ▶ Facilitated a set of trainings on [Jurisdictional and Landscape Approaches](#) for the ASGM sector, with a dedicated webpage available for all trainings and additional resources.
- ▶ Attended the Mining in Motion Summit in Accra, Ghana connecting with stakeholders interested in ASGM improvement in the West Africa region. Staff also attended a meeting held adjacent to Mining in Motion, hosted by the World Bank on their multi-stakeholder partnership for responsible small-scale mining.
- ▶ Hosted virtual Programme Advisory Group meetings, bimonthly calls among country project managers and project staff, and regional meetings with Latin and Central America and Francophone West African country projects.



## Promoting financing and investment

- ▶ Piloted, finalized, and translated standard training materials to educate miners in Uganda on basic business and financial skills. A dedicated [ASGM financial training curriculum webpage](#) exists for these resources.
- ▶ Supported three additional virtual [“South to South” knowledge exchanges](#) on access to finance issues and produced outreach material aimed at commercial banks, hosted by The Impact Facility. A webpage was created for this work.
- ▶ Distributed a guide to the Sustainable Development Goals and ASGM at investor meetings and produced an informational brochure on ASGM aimed at commercial banks: [Engaging with ASGM: A short guide for commercial banks](#)
- ▶ Attended a side event hosted by IGF and the World Bank at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) meeting in 2025.
- ▶ Commissioned the development and delivery of a set of [planetGOLD Criteria trainings](#) as part of a toolbox to support the teaching capacity of country project managers, as well as developed and piloted an online data collection application to demonstrate conformance with the Criteria.
- ▶ Documented planetGOLD interventions, challenges and lessons learned on formal market engagement, shared takeaways in an [online event](#), and conducted a pilot in Ecuador to test a mobile application to assess the implementation of the planetGOLD Criteria on the ground.



## Communicating and raising awareness

- ▶ Organized a workshop in September 2024 in Paracale, Philippines for 6 journalists to deepen their understanding of the ASGM sector, with visits to mine sites including the Philippines project’s mercury-free processing plant. Multiple media stories resulted from this workshop, published in the [Guardian](#), [Chemical & Engineering News](#), and other outlets.
- ▶ To share learnings from the journalist workshop, the project published a post-workshop toolkit titled [“Going Beyond the Headlines: A Practical Guide to Reporting on ASGM.”](#)
- ▶ Distributed [“Dispatches from the Field,”](#) an ongoing series of videos spotlighting unique stories from planetGOLD projects demonstrating a pathway to cleaner and more efficient artisanal and small-scale gold mining practices.



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▶ Following the June 2024 Global Forum on ASGM event, the team produced and disseminated 4 short video highlights featuring perspectives from leaders, staff and a beneficiary of the programme.

▶ Commemorated International Women’s Day with a [video](#) highlighting programme initiatives to address gender equity issues in the ASGM sector.

▶ Video content published on YouTube garnered 331,794 views, 978,821 impressions, and 5,267 new subscribers.

▶ Disseminated social media content garnering a total of 1,310 new followers and a total of 360,230 impressions across LinkedIn, Facebook and X.

▶ To support and reinforce projects’ communications outreach, convened 4 virtual gatherings with all project communications officers.

▶ Published or provided country projects with publication support for more than 100 blogs and news articles, disseminating this content on the programme’s communication channels.

▶ Showcased project updates and progress through the programme’s quarterly [email newsletter](#) and the [2023-2024 planetGOLD Annual Progress Report](#).



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331,794 video views on YouTube



1,310 new social media followers



2,643 total email subscribers



Photo: Jennifer Willmore Scroggins/planetGOLD Global

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Photo: planetGOLD Uganda

# LOOKING AHEAD

In the next reporting period, the planetGOLD programme will continue building on advances made over the past six years, as the first phase of the programme has now been successfully completed. The 15 country projects that launched during the second phase in 2023 and 2024 will continue to expand their activities and impact on the ground. Looking ahead, the programme will enter its third phase, with 5 new countries joining planetGOLD and significantly broadening its global reach.

Following the successful in-person Global Forum on Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining held in the Philippines in 2024, the programme looks forward to convening its next Global Forum in September 2026 in Panama. This flagship event will bring together a wide range of stakeholders – including miner representatives, government officials, international agencies, policy and technical experts, and private-sector actors – to inform, educate and exchange best practices for improving and professionalizing the ASGM sector. As project teams continue making progress toward making mercury history and promoting more responsible mining, the programme will provide ongoing opportunities to share experiences, results and lessons learned, including both successes and remaining challenges. Maintaining its strong culture of knowledge sharing, the global project will continue to collect, evaluate and disseminate this knowledge across the planetGOLD programme and with the broader international community working to advance responsible, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining worldwide.

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



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Photo: Dawn Po Quimque/planetGOLD Philippines

**FIND MORE AT [planetGOLD.org](http://planetGOLD.org)**



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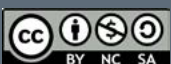
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