

Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining

IN UGANDA

Recommendations to address challenges and increase opportunities for empowerment

FINDING

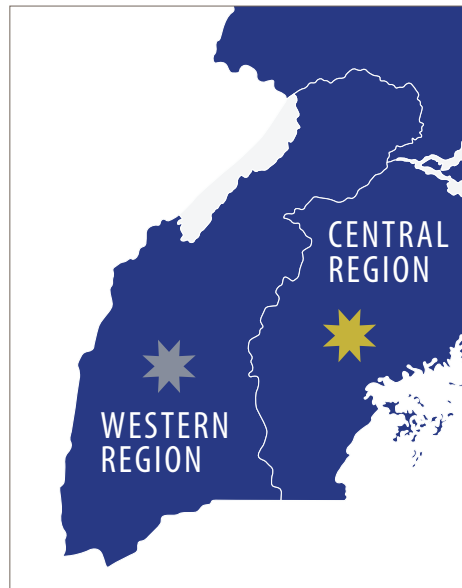
There are many challenges to women's involvement in artisanal mining, but the sector has transformative potential for women miners and their families.

- » Annually, women earn almost half of what men earn at both gold and tin sites, but still earn three times more from mining activities than from other income generating activities.
- » The majority of the women participating in the study—65% working at the gold site and 44% working at the tin site—reported being the major contributors to their household income.

Stopping me from mining is like telling me that my children will not go to school. We left our children home and came to work here; we have been able to construct our family home, bought plots of land and are able to pay school fees for our children and all this money is coming from mining.

– Female gold sand buyer, Central Uganda

UGANDA



LEGEND Mine sites researched



RECOMMENDATION ONE

Establish women-centred mobile mentoring and counselling services to assist women with the acquisition of legal status, the creation of associations, access to technical training, and the removal of other sector-related challenges.

FINDING

Women's effective participation in artisanal mining is constrained by traditional roles, including food production and child care, and lack of technical training.

- » At the tin site, there was a noticeable disparity in annual income between men and women, largely due to the fact that women work fewer months in a year in order to engage in food production during the rainy season.

- » 34% of women surveyed are single or widowed, and the sole contributors to their households.
- » Only 7% of women surveyed were knowledgeable about the mining law, and just 4% had any form of training about mining related issues.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

Provide capacity building and training for women miners to increase technical and legal mining knowledge as well as to identify entrepreneurial opportunities. Additionally, establish child care centres and other services to address challenges women face at mine sites.

FINDING

Over 70% of women artisanal miners have little to no schooling, which limits their ability to engage with new initiatives such as forming associations.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

Encourage and assist women to form associations and/or join existing ones, and provide targeted training to enhance the participation of those with limited to no schooling.

FINDING

Women find it difficult to work in teams that include men, in part because they face discrimination in excavation activities. They also face gender discrimination at mine sites, preventing them from taking on roles that would provide a higher income.

- » About half of the women at the gold site work independent of a team as compared to only 21% of men, making it more difficult to mobilize sufficient capital to invest.
- » At the tin site, the teams' working arrangements translate into an access barrier for many women, with several mixed teams requiring female members to be related or married to a male team member.
- » Few women work in excavation. For example, only 3% of women at the gold site worked as diggers, compared to 44% of men. Amongst all the women surveyed, just these women working in excavation reported high incomes.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

Encourage more women to work in teams, and in excavation activities, and challenge cultural norms that otherwise make it difficult for women to access these more lucrative tasks.

FINDING

Women have very limited access to credit facilities to enable them to scale up their operations or invest in more productive ventures.

- » The transient nature of the mining population may make it difficult to organize credit facilities at the gold site.
- » Barely more than a third of women have access to savings and credit services at the tin site, compared to 67% of their male counterparts.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

Train women on how to mobilize their own savings as individuals or in groups.

- » Access to credit should also be enabled to support women's associations, helping them to grow and eventually evolve into small-scale mining companies.

FINDING

Most artisanal miners—and the women in particular—are dissatisfied with the Association/Investor Company governance arrangements.

- » Study participants characterized these agreements as autocratic and non-responsive to the needs of the mining community.
- » Miners at the tin site identified tools/equipment and assistance in times of accidents as key needs.
- » At the gold site, miners said that infrastructure and safety challenges were their primary issues of concern.

Apart from collecting the taxes from us we do not see any other thing the Association has done.

– Woman in focus group for service providers, gold site

RECOMMENDATION SIX

Provide safety training and accessible equipment and develop formalization and licensing frameworks in an open and consultative process that involves women and men active in ASM sites.

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