

Regional Project to Contribute to the Improvement of Mineral Resources Governance in the Great Lakes Region

Key results in 2025

The *Regional Project to Contribute to the Improvement of Mineral Resources Governance in the Great Lakes Region*, implemented by IMPACT within the framework of the European Union's Peace and Security Programme, aims to improve mineral governance in the region while contributing to security, stability, and development.

The project supports the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and its Member States in addressing artisanal mineral flows and harness their potential as drivers for economic and social development, as well as stability and security. This four-year, €7.1 million (\$7.5 million USD) project is funded by the European Union (EU).



31st Meeting of the ICGLR Regional Committee on the Fight Against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, November 2025

2025 Overview

In its second year, the project supported the ICGLR and its Member States to strengthen the implementation of the Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR), advancing regional cooperation on responsible mineral governance. The project supported the validation and approval of the Regional Guidelines for the Formalisation of the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) Sector, strengthened Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) systems through third-party audits, auditor training, and continued development of the ICGLR Regional Database on Mineral Flows.

The project also supported the assessment of the implementation of the RINR six tools, initiated the development of a Compendium on Best Practices in Gold Export Regimes, and continued engagement with Member States and international market actors to strengthen mineral governance across the Great Lakes Region.



Our common commitment is to transform the mineral wealth of the Great Lakes region, a source of conflict, into a foundation of peace and prosperity"

Ambassador João Samuel Caholo,
Former Executive Secretary of the ICGLR

Key Results in 2025



Improve the control of artisanal mineral resources

Regional ASM Formalization Guidelines: The Regional Guidelines for the Formalisation of the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining Sector (Edition II) were validated and approved by ICGLR Member States. The revised guidelines integrate gender and youth dimensions, promote access to finance and encourage local mineral value addition.

Assessment of the RINR Six Tools: The project supported Member States to assess the implementation of the six tools of the Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR). The assessment identified progress and remaining gaps across Member States and recommended the addition of a new tool on mineral value addition, trade facilitation and economic cooperation to support peacebuilding goals.

Regional Committee Engagement: Through Regional Committee meetings and validation workshops, Member States reviewed progress on implementation of the RINR, validated and approved key technical documents, and agreed on recommendations to strengthen mineral governance across the region.



Apply best practices to artisanal gold exports

Compendium on Best Practices in Gold Export Regimes: The project initiated the development of a regional Compendium on Best Practices in Gold Export Regimes. The compendium will provide Member States with practical guidance, actionable recommendations, and case examples to strengthen artisanal gold export regimes while promoting gender equality and youth empowerment in natural resource governance.

International Engagement: The project supported the ICGLR delegation to participate in the 18th OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains, supporting engagement with international stakeholders on responsible mineral sourcing and supply chain transparency.



Adopt improved Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) systems

Audit committee engagement: Through Audit Committee meetings, Member States reviewed and approved third-party audit reports, selected auditors for scheduled audits, accredited additional audit firms, and established a ranking mechanism for future audit firm selection. These actions strengthened implementation of the RCM. The committee also advanced mechanisms to address the DRC's allegations of mineral smuggling into Rwanda.

Third-Party Audits: Six third-party audits were conducted under the ICGLR auditing scheme in Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, strengthening implementation of the Regional Certification Mechanism and responsible mineral supply chains.

Third-Party Auditor Training: Accredited and pre-accredited in-region audit firms received training on third-party audit methodologies, OECD due diligence guidance, analytical fingerprinting, and audit reporting to strengthen the quality and credibility of audits conducted under the ICGLR Regional Certification Mechanism.



9th Ordinary Meeting of Ministers in charge of Mines of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, November 2025



Adopt improved Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) systems

Regional Database Technical Working Group Engagement: Through meetings of the Regional Database Technical Working Group, Member State representatives assessed progress on implementing the Regional Database roadmap, supporting regional goals for traceability and transparency in mineral flows. The Technical Working Group approved the Chain of Custody (CoC) Data Standards, Data Governance and Data Security documents, Gap Analysis Report, and Requirements Specification Document for the ICGLR Data Sharing Solution.

Regional Database on Mineral Flows: The second phase of research on data sharing protocols and standards was completed to support the development of the ICGLR Regional Database on Mineral Flows. The work advances harmonized data sharing, traceability, and interoperability across Member States.

RCM Implementation: Member States continued to strengthen implementation of the RCM through legal reforms, standardized certification procedures, expanded traceability systems, and the issuance of ICGLR certificates. The Republic of Congo made significant progress towards implementation, while Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda continued implementing standardized RCM procedures.



Third-Party Auditor Training held in Mbarara, Uganda, March 2025



The Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) ensures that the supply chain of 3T minerals and gold does not contribute to conflict in the Great Lakes Region. Third-Party Audits (TPA) are a key component of the RCM, making it essential to build the capacity of in-region auditors.

David Sebagala, Senior Inspector of Mines,
Uganda's Ministry of Energy and
Mineral Development and Member of the
Audit Committee

Implementing Partners

The **ICGLR** is an inter-governmental organization of 12 Member States: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia. It was created in response to the recognition that political instability and conflicts in these countries have a considerable regional dimension and require a concerted effort to promote sustainable peace and development. The project strengthens the capacity of the ICGLR's Technical Unit on Natural Resources, which in turn supports the Member States.

www.icglr.org

IMPACT transforms how natural resources are managed in areas where security and human rights are at risk. We investigate and develop approaches for natural resources to improve security, development, and equality. We are an independent non-profit, collaborating with local partners for lasting change. IMPACT is a technical partner to the ICGLR and has provided support since the 2006 signing by Heads of State of the Pact on Security, Stability, and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

www.impacttransform.org

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of IMPACT and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.