

Impact of Artisanal Gold Mining on the Populations of Upper Guinea, Administrative Region of Kankan

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ABSTRACT

The Siguiiri Basin is a rich gold-bearing zone located in the North-East of Guinea where industrial and artisanal mining activities play an important role in the socio-economic development of Guinea in general and of the administrative region of Kankan in particular. The contribution to local, regional administrations, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or other organizations in their area of activity amounted to more than 44 billion GNF in 2018 by the two mining companies in operation: The Guinea Gold Company (SAG) and the Dinguiraye Mining Company (SMD). Gold panning is an activity that provides foreign currency to the population of Upper Guinea in the prefectures of Kankan, Kouroussa, Siguiiri, Mandiana and Dinguiraye. The living environment of the inhabitants is improving in the region due to income from artisanal gold mining activities. Basic infrastructures are visible everywhere in the region (post and health center, school, mosque, residential houses, etc.). Despite the financial contributions, materials and equipment acquired through gold panning activities, this practice causes serious problems: (i) social impacts (delinquency, consumption of narcotics, depravity of morals and cultures, school drop-out of children, abandonment of agricultural crops - pastoral, inter-community and border conflicts with neighboring countries); (ii) environmental impacts (degradation of arable land, pollution and drying up of water resources, disappearance of flora and fauna, rainfall deficit, global warming, landslides, etc.) and (iii) health impacts (epidemiological and sexually transmitted diseases, accidents at work, etc.). The objective of this impact study of artisanal gold mining by the uncontrolled traditional method is to mitigate the perceptible harmful consequences and optimize good practices beneficial to all. To achieve the targeted objectives, the method of sensitizing the generally illiterate population was used; the recommendations to the authorities concerned have been formulated for the respect and the application of the regulatory texts in force for a responsible mining activity and sustainable development.

Keywords: Siguiiri Basin, Gold panning, Mines and Society, Mining Code

