

# Environmental and Social Impact Assessment – Mine Expansion Project

**Location:** Cote d'Ivoire  
**Year:** 2012  
**Party:** Private Sector Client

## How will an industrial mine site expansion impact nearby the local economy, including ASGM activity, in Core d'Ivoire?

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### Summary

ASGM has emerged in recent years to become a dominant livelihood in an Ivorian town, leading to significant levels of growth in the population and economy. This study provides a brief historical overview of ASGM activities in the region, details governance structures and supply chains, and begins to assess the economic impact of an industrial mine expansion on the local economy. The aim of the study is to describe the potential impacts of a mining company's proposed expansion, with particular emphasis on the impact of removing artisanal miners from the project's footprint. Additionally, the study provides suggestions as to how the mining company, in cooperation with local and national branches of the government of Côte d'Ivoire, might be able to mitigate such impacts. The study built on prior ASM and Land Studies led by ELL in 2010 as part of a broader Environmental and Social Impact Assessment.

### Methods

Field research, survey of artisanal miners (2,449 interviews, representing between

80% and 85% of artisanal miners working within the project footprint), in-depth literature review

### Existing situation

In 2006, ASGM activity boomed with word of the opening of an industrial mine, inspiring professional ASGM miners and buyers to come to the town in search of work and gold. Professional miners brought with them mechanization and technological advancements to improve the gold capture and significantly professionalized ASGM in the area, such as by using mercury and mechanized washing plants. Four active artisanal mining sites were identified within the expected boundaries of the proposed mine expansion. Based on this study, 2,816 ASGM miners were mining in the immediate area, with many more depending on ASGM to varying degrees for their livelihoods. Annual gold production from these sites is between 325kg and 450kg. If the expansion project proceeds or if the Ivorian government takes an active stance against the largely illegal ASGM activities in the area, the four main sites within the concession will be closed. This will have severe consequences on the livelihoods of miners and non-miners alike.

### Recommendations

The study provided the following recommendations for the mining

firm to consider as it plans the mine expansion and impact mitigation measures:

- Advise the ASGM community on new areas suitable for mining and provide miners with assistance formalizing their activities, for example by setting up cooperatives that can then hold artisanal mining permits legally
- Interact with miners in a transparent and trust inspiring manner
- Clearly warn miners of any decisions taken by the company, and in particular allow them sufficient time to recover their investments
- Establish an ASGM department within the community engagement team that will provide ASGM miners with an avenue to negotiate their point of view with the company and the company will in turn be able to receive grievances and act on them early.
- Support the development of the local agricultural sector, including providing access to technical capacity building, inputs, and training in order for farmers to obtain higher yields, improve quality, and more directly access markets
- Employ ASGM miners and offer training to unskilled workers as part of a community development strategy
- Source from the local economy as much as possible