

KENYA



Monitoring Checklist for Tailings Storage Facilities, Lined Ponds, Processing Ponds in Kenya's Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mines (ASGM)

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THE CHANGE PROJECT

The project's fundamental purpose is to provide a checklist for tailings storage facilities, treatment ponds, water tanks, and lined ponds to help mine and environmental inspectors accomplish their compliance tasks. The steps taken toward achieving this goal included visiting artisanal and small-scale gold miners' processing facilities to determine the chemicals they use in their processes, as well as collecting waste samples for chemical analysis to assess the cyanide level and other compounds. In addition, the crew went to the locations to inspect the waste storage facilities and the chemicals in use. The project is crucial to the regulatory bodies since presently, there is no checklist to guide monitoring inspections and compliance activities involving tailing waste disposal and other chemicals utilized in the gold leaching process. The project represents a milestone in that it streamlines the work of inspectors while carrying out compliance with the Mining Act 2016 and the EMCA 1999, ensuring the effectiveness of inspections.



Gold processing at small-scale gold mining in Kenya.



SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Mine waste from gold leaching operations adds significantly to environmental degradation, as it has been found to pollute water and kill animals due to the hazardous chemicals employed by artisanal miners. The project is thus aimed at enforcing compliance by ensuring that the tailings storage facility, lined ponds, processing ponds, and water tanks are designed to the suitable and suggested standards. We foresee a tangible shift in our organization's working methods as we improve inspection quality and assist proponents in constructing, managing, and monitoring TSFs, line ponds, water tanks, and processing ponds. We anticipate more efficient and effective mine water and waste management, which will result in improved regulatory compliance, less environmental impact, and, ultimately, healthier ecosystems.



Inspectors and miners at gold processing pond, Kenya.



RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout the project, team members trained inspectors from both agencies on the importance and relevance of the checklist, which has been reported to have the potential to improve inspection quality. Furthermore, artisanal mining groups have benefited tremendously because the project is oriented toward aiding them on the way to full compliance. Furthermore, the people have been educated on the importance of the project in protecting the environment and guaranteeing that water contamination caused by gold leaching activities is eliminated.

The initiative produced a checklist that is crucial for mine and environmental inspectors as they carry out their compliance tasks. This is a crucial guide that will improve inspection quality and provide inspectors with a common checklist for easy reference and accountability. The checklist has been delivered to the management of both SDM and NEMA for final approval and any further revisions before being officially launched for usage by mine and environmental inspectors.



Artisanal and small-scale miners will be regularly engaged and taught on the importance of the checklist. SDM and NEMA have traditionally collaborated extensively with other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and business groups to advocate for the reform of the mining industry. SDM and NEMA have implemented essential stakeholder engagement processes to identify affected and critical stakeholders and give their perspectives on the project. The technical directorate has shared the project checklist with important stakeholders such as MESK, Kenya Chambers of Mines, and the Artisanal Miners Association for feedback. The project team will continuously advocate for policy enhancements and for technical personnel to contribute with feedback on areas for improvement.