



## Second phase of planetGOLD doubles countries addressing mercury in ASGM

**Programme expansion will launch new jurisdictional approaches to formalizing the sector**

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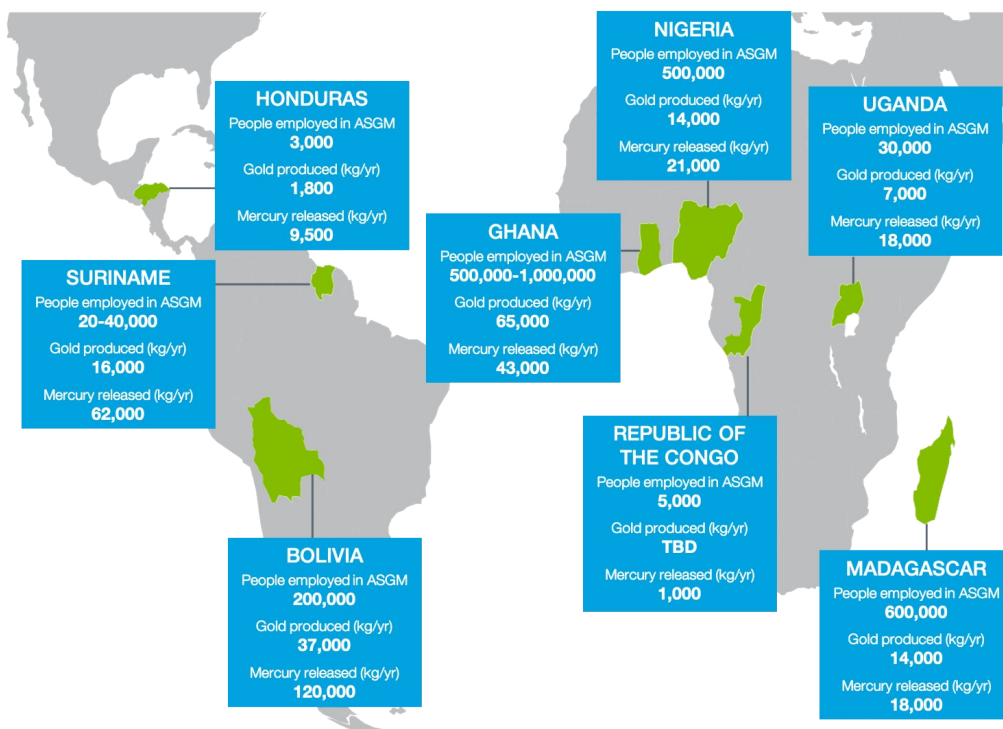


Courtney McGeachy  
Director, GOLD+ Program, GEF Project Agency, Conservation International

As an implementing agency for the GEF-funded planetGOLD programme, Conservation International has been proud to help deliver this innovative global initiative that supports countries in addressing mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM). Now, we are excited to take on a new role by leading an **expansion of planetGOLD**, which will broaden efforts by adding eight additional countries to the programme: Bolivia, Ghana, Honduras, Madagascar, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Suriname, and Uganda.

This second phase will continue to promote existing core planetGOLD activities and strategies—working to **close the financing gap**, connecting mining communities with **mercury-free technology** and formal markets, and **raising awareness**—while placing special emphasis on promoting holistic, multisectoral, and integrated approaches to **formalization**.

“As the major source of mercury, ASGM is a high priority and GEF is happy to support this second phase of planetGOLD with the addition of eight new countries,” says Anil Sookdeo, Coordinator of the GEF’s chemicals and waste team. “This programme will bring thousands of miners into the formal economy and mobilize the sustainable financing that they need to succeed.”



*\*See data source info below*

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The ASGM sector is the world's largest source of global mercury pollution, according to the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) [Global Mercury Assessment](#), accounting for around one-third of total annual anthropogenic mercury air emissions. This sector provides employment for 10-20 million miners in over 80 countries and produces roughly 20% of the world's gold. While millions of livelihoods rely on this industry, the inadvertent effects of gold extraction threaten the global environment and the well-being of societies around the world.

The second phase of planetGOLD will focus on bringing new approaches to formalize the ASGM sector by piloting [jurisdictional approaches to sustainability](#) that focus on areas defined by local and regional administrative boundaries and that reconcile social, economic, and environmental objectives through participation across stakeholders and sectors and with government involvement.

"As the lead agency for the second phase of planetGOLD, Conservation International is excited to pilot jurisdictional and landscape approaches as an innovative way to approach ASGM formalization," says Miguel Morales, Senior Vice-President, CI-GEF/GCF Agencies. "Conservation International has successfully used jurisdictional and landscape approaches to achieve sustainability commitments in several other supply chains including palm oil, coffee and fish. Not only will this approach improve ASGM formalization, but it will also produce mechanisms better suited to address off-site issues like watershed health, biodiversity conservation, and deforestation."

Jurisdictional approaches will explore sub-national level collaboration to find solutions to issues around illicit mercury trade, harmonization of fiscal regimes and policy frameworks, accounting for climate change in ASGM, setting policy targets for mercury reduction, and supporting transparent sourcing of gold that meets criteria for responsible practices and good governance. Through this jurisdictional approach, priorities and initiatives will be identified with potential to provide leverage through collaboration and common objectives, thus institutionalizing the interventions at both the sub-national and national levels.

"With this innovative approach to formalization the planetGOLD programme will be able to fully support participating countries in their efforts to reduce mercury emissions and ensure the sector provides employment to rural communities without adding to the environmental burden," says Ludovic Bernaudat, programme manager for the initial phase of planetGOLD and Senior Task Manager for UNEP's Chemicals and Waste branch.

Other integral parts of the programme will continue to be introduced and emphasized in these countries, including access to finance and formal markets, mercury-free technology transfer, capacity

building, maximizing the impact of communications at the local miner level, and knowledge sharing across the global ASGM sector. New and innovative approaches such as online education opportunities and digital marketing will be used to complement more traditional participatory workshops and training models.

Set to commence in late 2021, the GEF-funded programme Global Opportunities for Long-Term Development of Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sector – Plus will be co-implemented by Conservation International, UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in collaboration with a range of other partners.

To follow updates on this expansion of planetGOLD, visit the [planetGOLD phase 2 webpage](#).

\*Data sources for the graphic include: Country ASGM National Action Plans, UNEP Global Mercury Assessment 2018, FERENPROMIN, Nigeria Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, World Gold Council, Ghana Minerals Commission

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**News** 23 February 2021

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In the Ananea district in Peru's snow-capped mountains, artisanal & small-scale gold mining is the largest source of local work. Get a glimpse of the mercury-free equipment the planetGOLD Peru team & their partner the GIRH-TDPS project tested there to show a path to more responsible ASGM sector.



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## Strengthening Local Government in Mongolia via the Minamata Convention on Mercury

As the planetGOLD Mongolia project works towards formalizing the sector, and reducing the clandestine use of toxic chemicals in ASGM, focus has been placed on strengthening local government's comprehension of the implications and benefits of the Minamata Convention and thus incentivizing its implementation using the NAP as a guide. To begin this, two training sessions on the 'Minamata Convention on Mercury and ASGM' were organized in two provinces.



**Voices** 17 March 2021

## Recognizing Women's Contributions and Challenges in Philippine Small-Scale Mining

Women make up 10-30% of the workforce at ASGM sites in the Philippines, according to mining association leaders and other local stakeholders. The planetGOLD Philippines project looks at the roles women play, their income opportunities, exposure to mercury, and initiatives to promote gender equality in the sector.



**Voices** 13 January 2021

## The Sustainable Development Goals Through the Lens of Responsible Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining

We often say that responsible artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) is a tool for sustainable development. What do we mean by that? This article examines key opportunities for responsible ASGM to contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and to the 2030 Agenda.