

Sexual Exploitation and Discrimination in Artisanal Mining Towns in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

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Artisanal Mining in Eastern DRC



- Between 400,000 – 550,000 persons directly engaged in ASM activities
- 800 mine sites (most unregistered)
- 85 trading centres
- Gold, cassiterite, columbo-tantalite, wolframite, precious gemstones
- Single narrative of “conflict and mining”

Understanding Roles & Rights

- Dearth of research specifically into the gender dimensions of artisanal and small scale mining (ASM) as a means to economic security for both men and women.
- Insufficient analysis of the real and potential threats to women's human rights in the artisanal mining sector in DRC.
- Once these threats are identified, partners can be engaged to assure the rights of vulnerable groups
- Incorporate findings into PROMINES activities of World Bank



Study Overview

- Qualitative phase:
 - (i) Identify the key gender dimensions of ASM in the Kivus,
 - (ii) Identify methodologies of resilience or positive coping in communities;
 - (iii) Inform interventions to improve human protection in the Kivus
- Quantitative phase:
 - Surveyed 998 adults living in ASM settlements in South Kivu province
 - Utilized Kobo Toolbox for digital data collection
 - Data collection was done by Congolese researchers in French or Swahili
 - Sampling proportional to size of mine
 - 35% of sample women

Rights-based approach

Used a right-based approach to structure both qualitative and quantitative research questions:

Human Right and Gender Issue	CEDAW Provision
Gender Based Violence	General Recommendation No.19 by CEDAW committee, specially comments on GBV
Discrimination	Art 11. Discrimination in the field of employment: i.e. opportunities, equal remuneration, treatment etc)
Right to health	Art 11 (f) and (Right protection of health and safety in working conditions,) Art 12 & 14.2(b) Access to healthcare i.e. available, affordable, full information)
Access to justice/ Remedies and accountability	Mechanisms/institutions that effectively address the nature of the harm caused by discrimination in the field of economic, social and cultural rights. Institutions include courts and tribunals, administrative authorities, national human rights institutions and/or ombudspersons, which should be accessible.
Right to participation.	Art 7.b&c Art 14.2(a) and (e) (Right to meaningful participation in formulation of policies), 14.2 (e) Right to organize self-help groups and Cooperatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities in all community activities.

Gendered Roles

- Sharply gendered patterns of employment in mining towns
- Notably, no women reported being comptoirs or *chefs d'equipe* -relatively privileged jobs
- Instead women relegated to poorest paying, most difficult and least desirable jobs



Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

- One- fifth of all women (20.1%) percent) identified as sex workers, whereas only 1.3% percent of men did
- Of these women, more than 1 in 3 stated they didn't intend to enter sex work, but were forced to because of poverty
- Sex workers had 10- times- greater odds of being harassed by men than other women

Correlates of Sex Work - Logistic Regression

- Logistic regression to look at adjusted odds ratios
- Significant correlates of sex work were:
 - Lower age
 - Increasing number of children
 - Being widowed or divorced,
 - Being a migrant to a mining town,
 - Having experienced a dispute in the past year
 - Sleeping at a mining site rather than in a near-by town were all correlates of sex work.

Summary of Findings

- Women are vital actors in mining communities and filled many roles, but also among the most vulnerable to sexual and economic predation.
- Rape described as commonplace in mining towns.
- Many women engage in transactional sex out of desperation.
- Sex workers were often migratory and without social or financial support

Recommendations

- Address corruption and fraud in the mining sector resulting from increasing efforts at government regulation of this industry;
- Promote women's access to equitable and non-exploitative employment;
- Provide technical assistance in the modernization of ASM;
- Engage in education around mining code and rights;
- Strengthen the capacity of local associations to advocate for their own rights;
- Promote grass-roots inclusive economic cooperatives;



Logistic Regression Results

Characteristic	Sex Work			
	Unadjusted Odds Ratio ^a (95% CI)	P-Value	Adjusted Odd Ratio ^b (95% CI)	P-Value
Age	0.94	<0.001**	0.92	<0.001**
Education				
No education	1.0		1.0	
Primary	0.37	0.06	0.43	0.15
Secondary	0.19	0.11	0.16	0.09
Children	0.95	0.16	1.2	<0.05*
Marital status				
Married	1.0		1.0	
Single	4.2	<0.001**	2.0	0.17
Widowed	6.5	<0.001**	6.7	0.005*
Divorced	19.2	<0.001**	11.2	<0.001**
Number mines worked at previously	0.74	0.002	0.91	0.42
Migrant into mining town	3.2	<0.001	3.2	0.001**
Experienced dispute in past year	2.2	0.001	3.1	0.002*
Sleep at mine versus in nearest town	9.7	<0.001	9.6	<0.001**

CI: confidence interval