

Implemented by:



The Asia Foundation

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PROJECT

FACTS

Project name:

Engaging Stakeholders in Environmental Conservation Phase II (ESEC II)

Duration:

July 2013 – December 2016

Budget:

CHF 3,800,000
SDC contribution: CHF 3,325,000

Geographical coverage:

50 soums (counties) in 18 aimags (provinces) across the country

Target group:

Artisanal and small-scale miners

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is a poverty-driven activity that significantly contributes to rural job creation, income-generation and poverty reduction. However, ASM's contribution to sustainable local development is limited by its past and present mining practices which have led to extensive environmental degradation. The second phase of the Engaging Stakeholders in Environmental Conservation Project (ESEC II) – an initiative of The Asia Foundation (TAF) - is aimed at enhancing ASM's contribution to local development by making it an environmentally responsible activity benefiting 230,000 rural citizens with a healthier and improved environment.



Land degraded by artisanal and small-scale mining, Uyanga soum, Uvurkhangai aimag

BACKGROUND

Artisanal and small-scale mining is a form of subsistence mining providing direct or indirect livelihoods for thousands of people in response to persistent and widespread poverty. There have been considerable economic and social benefits generated by ASM, but there have also been significant environmental costs. From the beginning, artisanal miners were marginalised from society for their destructive behaviours toward the environment. This prevented them from achieving their full economic potential and from developing sustainable environmental practices. However, Mongolia's artisanal miners are gradually becoming more formalised and are being recognised as contributors to the economy due to their demonstrated readiness to change their practices and to organise themselves into self-governing institutions for greater responsibility and economic opportunities.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has partnered with The Asia Foundation for the implementation of the first phase of ESEC (ESEC I) through its Sustainable

Artisanal Mining (SAM) Project. Among its key interventions, ESEC I used a multi-stakeholder approach to address environmental issues in the ASM sector while incorporating the varying interests of all stakeholders. For this, two activities that directly benefited artisanal miners were implemented: a land-reclamation project and an income-diversification project for single mothers working as artisanal miners. SDC has committed to continued support to addressing environmental rehabilitation in ASM by contributing to ESEC II.

ESEC II addresses the environmental challenges of ASM by mitigating the negative environmental impacts of past and present mining practices. The Project complements SDC's SAM Project by introducing responsible and sustainable ASM rehabilitation approaches that are economically affordable, socially acceptable, and ecologically viable for ASM communities. These "frugal rehabilitation" approaches will be piloted in hard and alluvial gold and fluorspar ASM operations.

SDC's Strategic Goal:

To contribute to equitable and sustainable social and economic development in Mongolia.

PROJECT GOAL

ESEC II aims to enhance the contribution of Mongolia's artisanal mining sector to sustainable local development, including the realization of the right to a healthy environment and the right to decent work.

EXPECTED RESULTS

To achieve the goal, ESEC II has the following three objectives that will be pursued in the coming three years:

1. The authorities endorse sustainable green ASM rehabilitation approaches. Demonstrations of green ASM rehabilitation approaches will be developed in consultation with the relevant authorities. ASM rehabilitation approaches will be informed by best practices and developed to be applied within Mongolia's diverse environmental context.
2. Local partners agree on co-financed soum-level ASM environmental action plans. The protection of rights and the fulfilment of duties will be best achieved through dialogue and participatory decision-making by local stakeholders, seeking consensus through local multi-stakeholder councils (LMCs).
3. Local partners jointly implement and finance agreed soum-level ASM environmental action plans. The project will facilitate the implementation of action plans with stakeholders to help artisanal miners comply with environmental regulations and, through their inclusion and active participation in LMCs, secure both environmental and social licenses to operate.

RESULTS TO DATE

As of 2013, the project has facilitated the establishment of 31 Local Multi-stakeholder Councils (LMCs) consisting of local governments, large and small-scale mining representatives, civil society and local communities. Through the LMCs, stakeholders are able to make informed decisions and strive for positive social, economic, and environmental change at the local level. As a result, 17 LMCs have had soum environmental action plans approved by their Citizens' Representative Khural (or Council), while eight have drafted plans that are awaiting approval.



Members of ASM NGO, Shariin-Gol soum, Darkhan-Uul aimag



Members of ASM NGO, Airag soum, Dornogobi aimag

Mrs. Lhagvaa, the Head of the Eh Oron Hamtyn Huch ASM NGO

"We, the artisanal miners, should realize the importance of environmental responsibility. First of all, this is a way to decrease the prejudice towards us. Secondly, we should never forget that this is not the land we inherited from our ancestors, but the land we borrowed from our children."

Key partners:

- Ministry of Mining;
- Mineral Resource Authority of Mongolia;
- Ministry of Environment and Green Development;
- General Agency for Specialised Inspection;
- Small-scale miners' partnerships and NGOs;
- Local governments

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