

Artisanal mining

Our policies

Artisanal and small scale mining (ASM) is a complex and widespread challenge facing the entire gold mining industry. It is estimated that ASM provides livelihoods for as many as 100 million people worldwide. However, it is unregulated and associated with negative health, safety, human rights and environmental impacts for local communities, including child labour and water and land contamination from dangerous reagents such as cyanide and mercury in local rivers and ground water.

Illegal ASM was present on three of our mine complexes in 2017: the Loulo- Goukoto complex in Mali, the Tongon mine in Côte d'Ivoire and our Kibali mine in the DRC.

As recommended by both IFC guidelines and International Council on Mining and Metals guidance, Randgold's approach to illegal ASM within our permits and host communities is one of no conflicts and no invasions. Instead, we seek to work in partnership with host communities, NGOs and host governments to develop mutually beneficial long term strategies to reduce or eliminate ASM. A key tenet of our approach is to offer alternative livelihoods to ASM participants either on our mines or in new economic activities such as agriculture.

Our performance

We continue to have significant ASM communities at both our Loulo-Goukoto complex and our Kibali mine. The ASM presence at Tongon is small and dispersing, but there are significant ASM communities in the surrounding areas.

At Kibali the ASM corridor - an identified area of land where the ASM community is allowed to operate adjacent to our permit - established in 2016 with the help of the Congolese government and NGO PAX, continued to work effectively and we are working with local youth associations to maintain good relations. However, while this approach is working well with the ASM community in Watsa where the corridor is situated, tensions increased with an alternative ASM community located in Faradje in 2017. At one point during the year, artisanal miners from Faradje blocked a road and clashed with the police. We are continuing to work with all partners including the provincial government and GIZ to consider the best solutions for the Faradje ASM community.

At Loulo-Goukoto in 2017, we identified some land within our permit for the creation of ASM corridors that might house the significant ASM community adjacent to the Goukoto haul road. We are currently awaiting further assistance from the Malian government so it can be transferred to the ASM community.

Our group community and environmental officer, Hilaire Diarra, regularly engages the Malian government on the issue of ASM and is chairman of the Mali mining industry committee on artisanal mining which brings together representatives from other Mali based mining companies to share experiences and to implement the Malian government's action plan to combat illegal mining.