LET MINERS COME IN FIRST PLACE!

GO FOR GOOD GOLD
MINERS SUPPORTED BY SOLIDARIDAD ARE MOVING TOWARDS GOOD GOLD

GOLD {it; o}

1. Precious metal, reddish-yellow in colour:
   *Black gold* - coal or oil;
   *not all that glitters is* - not everything that appears to be precious really is
2. Something made of gold: *Olympic gold* - gold medal.
3. Atomic number: 79.

5.200
How we see gold
We associate gold with winning, success, happiness and prosperity. In society, fashion and sports. From Lima to Paris and from Accra to Hollywood gold symbolises luxury and wealth. It signifies glitter and glamour.

This view of gold, however, stands in sharp contrast to how gold is extracted. Gold mining is notorious because of the poor living and working conditions and the environmental pollution it causes.

The harsh reality
Gold is mined in over 70 countries. Over 90% of gold miners work in terrible circumstances. Many people believe slavery in gold mines is gradually disappearing. Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. The gold sector is one of the most dangerous sectors that still uses forced labour. Men, women and children often work in poor and remote areas, and have no other way to make ends meet. They are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Working in a mine is often very unsafe and physically demanding. Mine shafts collapse, there is no safety equipment and people work with toxic mercury without protection. They do extremely heavy work for minimal payment, which is hardly enough to cover basic living expenses. This is the harsh reality for millions worldwide.

We find it unacceptable that the highest award for one person comes at such a high price for another.

Damage to people and the environment
Extracting gold dust from gravel involves working with toxic mercury and cyanide. Often, miners don’t know how to handle toxic substances responsibly. They endanger their own health as well as that of their families and put local communities at risk. The environment is also irreversibly affected.

We can - and should - do better!

Our work
Solidaridad’s local partners now train mining communities in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Peru and Tanzania to meet the standards of certified gold.

Several small-scale miners have been certified. They extract gold in a safer, cleaner way and receive fair compensation for their work. This gives them an opportunity to create a better life for themselves and for their families.

Our message
We want everyone to know that things could be different. We want people to believe that something needs to be done and act accordingly, so that there will be no alternative but to improve. Until that time, we call on everyone: businesses, consumers, and governments to take a stand.

Go for GOOD GOLD!

Gonzalo la Cruz
Directeur Solidaridad Andes

From the Nobel Prize to Olympic medals. Around the world gold in its purest form symbolises our highest possible achievements. Gold is the greatest conceivable reward for creative, artistic, intellectual and athletic performance.
HEIN VERGEER (55)
WON GOLD AS
ICE SKATER

UNKNOWN
WON GOLD AS
MINER
Winning a gold medal was important to me because...
"Ultimately, it largely defines the path that you will follow later in life. Ice skating is very popular in the Netherlands and the audience fully supported me; that kept my career going. After the European Championships in Sweden sports journalist Mart Smeets asked what kind of career I wanted after skating. I knew I wanted to do something in the area of marketing and public relations. I wanted to build my career in society through sport. If you’re a known athlete, opportunities will find you, in a very positive way."

"Think about what you buy. If there is greater awareness, there will be even greater changes"

My greatest gold medal I won in...
"1986. This was in Inzell, Germany, under a clear blue sky. There were 6,000 people watching, quite a large number at the time. Many of them were Dutch. The tension was electric. I lost the 500 and 1500 metre races to my big rival Oleg Bogiev, but on the 5000 metres, I blew him to smithereens. Actually, I have no idea where that medal is now. I haven’t seen my medals in years. I know that former champion Ard Schenk sold his. He’s using the money to tour America. I think that for every athlete, the symbolic value of the medal is far greater than the object itself. Until you realize that someone else has worked very hard so that you can hold it, that is."

If I had a say in the gold industry, I would...
"Try to ensure that all gold mines are certified, so the people responsible for mining gold would have to comply with rules and regulations. Look at the Max Havelaar fair trade coffee brand. It is wonderful that the people at the source, who work so hard, are adequately rewarded, and that this can be structured. Of course, I realize that’s easier said than done."

WHAT DOES HEIN KNOW ABOUT GOOD GOLD?

Did you know of the abuse related to gold mining?
“Yes. The excellent film Blood Diamond, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, opened my eyes. It’s about diamonds, but it could also be about gold. The film shows slave labour, people held in captivity, child soldiers being employed. Very confronting.”

Did you have mixed feelings when you received a gold medal?
“No. At that time I honestly didn’t know about any of this.”

What could change?
“If we are willing to pay more for gold, we might be able to exercise more control and thereby ensure it is produced in a good way. Actually, we should invest in regulating gold mining.”

Why did you get involved in this project?
“I want my voice to be heard. I want to focus on the problem and point out the abuse. Let’s think about how we can change this together. I study the circumstances and discuss them with my children. We should all learn more about this subject. Many people simply like gold, and never give it a second thought. But there is much more to it.”

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Gold achievements

World all-round 1985 and 1986
European all-round 1985 and 1986
NK Sprint 1984 and 1985
NK all-round 1986 and 1987

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GERARD KEMKERS (47)
WON GOLD AS ICE SKATING COACH

UNKNOWN
WON GOLD AS MINER
Winning gold medals was important to me because...

“Skaters often have blind faith in their coach. You are such an important part of their road to gold. So when all the work we’ve put in really shines through during those 4 to 12 minutes on the rink, we can pull out the big cheers! I might only briefly express my joy, but inside I’m totally thrilled. The emotional outpouring is huge.”

To win gold, good guidance is...

“Essential. In sports, there are always people who will at some point think: “I can do it all on my own.” But that’s impossible! You always need someone who has a kind of bird’s eye view, who helps you improve your knowledge and technique. That is also true of gold mining. When I hear mining often happens at the expense of the people who actually do the work, I know there is still a huge task ahead for the operators to change. Mining is not unlike sports. Physically, miners work under the most difficult conditions, but I think it also requires a great deal mentally. They must descend into the mines, under stress and tension, work under extreme conditions and ultimately achieve good results. A process like that requires good guidance. There is, I think, still a great deal to be improved in uncertified mines.”

Top performance can only be realised if...

“You get enough rest. The work-to-rest ratio is a huge research topic in sports. In my 25-year career, there’s been a clear shift towards getting enough downtime. Like athletes, miners have to deal with significant physical and mental pressure. If you do this kind of work for longer than two or three years, you will have to dose your energy, so you can put in the amount of effort needed to deliver in a short time. I hear of miners sometimes work longer than 80 hours at a stretch I know that can’t last. To achieve top performance, you need to get plenty of rest.”

Gerard Kemkers is one of the Netherlands’ most successful ice skating coaches. He has now retired as a coach, but in his long career, he helped his prodigies bring in a lot of gold. “If you want top performance, support and guidance are essential. This applies to elite athletes, but also to miners.”

Gerard Kemkers

“YOU ALWAYS NEED SOMEONE WITH A BIRD’S-EYE VIEW”

13 INTERVIEW

WHAT DOES GERARD KNOW ABOUT GOOD GOLD?

Did you know of the abuses surrounding gold mining?

“No, I never really thought about it. This project has really got me thinking. I never realised how gold miners are exploited and how nature is affected. Or the fact that you now can choose Good Gold, from certified mines, from which gold is extracted in a fair way.”

What do you think of the abuses?

“I am truly shocked. This shouldn’t be happening in our time! Everyone has the right to lead a healthy life. I think that only a few people are aware that miners work under appalling conditions to dig for gold, so we can hang it around our necks in the form of a medal or jewellery.”

Why did you get involved in this project?

“Now that I know about Good Gold, I think it’s wonderful that we’re making a political statement in the world of sports. I think choosing Good Gold is a clear and concise message, which I am glad to support.”
Over 25 million miners worldwide are trapped in a vicious circle of poverty. These workers mine nearly 90% of all the gold in the world.

Miners
The miners’ situation is distressing. They usually work in terrible conditions. Mine shafts collapse, there are no security measures and they work with unprotected toxins. Due to poverty, many have no choice but to work illegally. As a result, they have no rights and work long hours for a pittance they can hardly live on.

Mine operators
Mine operators are also struggling. Most receive a fair price for their gold, but because they do not have direct access to the market, traffickers exploit them. Even if they are willing to improve the circumstances surrounding gold mining, they receive little support from governments or aid organizations.

Communities around mines
Harrowing circumstances have disrupted entire communities. The fundamental human rights of more than one hundred million people are being violated. They have no access to education, health care or equal rights. Slave labour and child labour are commonplace. Countless families are caught in a cycle of poverty from which they cannot break free themselves.

Nature
Rainforests are being destroyed and the native vegetation is wiped out to make way for mining. Toxic chemicals used for rinsing harm the environment, which will need thousands of years to recover. This is how farmland becomes ruined for decades. The future of many generations is at stake.

Gold. Many associate it with profit, wealth and success. But did you know that for many people mining for gold means the exact opposite? Miners work under appalling conditions and Solidaridad is doing something about that. The result: there is now a global standard for Good Gold.

The Problem

Towards Good Gold

Goldsmiths and jewellers who work with Good Gold can be identified by the Fairtrade or Fairmined label on their website or store front. Do you want to be sure the gold you buy is Good Gold? Check for either of these labels.

How to recognize Good Gold?

Are you in?

In order to further improve the circumstances surrounding gold mining, we need the support of everyone in the production chain. Not only mining communities, miners, goldsmiths and jewellers, but the consumer, too.

Choose Good Gold!
Visit solidaridad.nl/goud

Solidaridad’s Work

Choose Good Gold! Visit solidaridad.nl/goud
Ghana, Kenya, Peru: gold mining has the most significant impact on growth and wealth creation in developing countries. Mining creates jobs, both directly and indirectly, and can help fund health and education. When gold mines are properly managed and operations are transparent, gold mining may result in sustainable economic and social development. That’s what we believe in and that’s what we’re working for at Solidaridad.

Our gold mission
We want gold to be extracted in a safe, clean and fair manner. Fortunately, there are now global standards for fair gold mining: the Fairtrade and Fairmined standards. We support miners in shifting towards these sustainable forms of gold production. Solidaridad wants to help miners improve their income by promoting efficient and sustainable production and trading in sustainable gold.

In practice
To help miners in their transition to a sustainable form of gold mining, we provide various kinds of training. We provide knowledge so miners can better ensure security in their mines. To prevent exploitation, we put the mine operators in touch with reliable traders, so a fair price is paid for their gold and they can invest in a better future. We partner with jewellery brands, jewellers and goldsmiths who use Good Gold in their designs.

NUMBERS DON’T LIE
Since the launch of the Fairtrade and Fairmined standard, a total of five certified mining organizations employing 1,000 miners have been certified. Four hundred goldsmiths and jewellers in Europe and America are affiliated with the standard, and buy certified gold.

AREAS HELPED
The Solidaridad gold programme consists of activities involving mining communities in South America and Africa. Thanks to additional support from the Dutch Postcode Lottery, the Good Gold programme has been extended to Ghana.

THE SOLUTION
Amalgam, a mixture of mercury and gold.

OBED KUDI
How long have you been working in the mines?
12 years.

What do you do?
“Miner (digging for ore below the surface).”

Why do you do this work?
“To support my family.”

What is the hardest part of your job?
“Moving the ore underground.”

What is the best thing about your job?
“Teaching new miners how to work safely underground.”

Have you noticed improvements in working conditions?
“Yes, there have been many improvements in our working conditions. The mine shafts, for example, are now reinforced and we are given protective clothing that reduces the risk of injury.”

How long do you plan to continue to do this work?
“As long as I’m strong enough and able to work.”

What do you think happens to ‘your’ gold?
“I hear people use it for wedding rings and other jewellery.”

What would you say to the people or companies that sell or buy gold?
“They should feel special when handling anything made of gold because it requires a huge amount of hard work to get just a single gram of gold above ground.”
INDIVIDUAL MINERS NOW HAVE THE CHANCE TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY.

CERTIFIED MINES WE HAVE HELPED BECOME MORE PRODUCTIVE AND BE SUSTAINABLE.

More than 20 additional mines are moving towards certification with our support. We share knowledge about ways of improving mining, increasing productivity and developing in a sustainable way. By providing technical support, we help mines to produce a larger quantity Good Gold. We have also directly linked five certified mines to reliable buyers. This reduces the risk of exploitation and helps expand the Good Gold market.

5 CERTIFIED MINES WE HAVE HELPED BECOME MORE PRODUCTIVE AND BE SUSTAINABLE.

Healthy communities

By helping mining organizations to adopt formal processes and structures, we work to prevent human rights abuses such as child labour and slave labour. In addition, we support improvements in education and health care in the mining communities.

40,000 MEMBERS OF MINING COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM BETTER CONDITIONS.

Breaking the cycle of poverty

In countries including Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

5,200 THROUGH OUR EFFORTS IN ORGANIZING TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION, MORE THAN 5,000 INDIVIDUAL MINERS ARE NOW EMPLOYED UNDER BETTER CIRCUMSTANCES AND HAVE BETTER CONTRACTS. THEY NOW WORK IN A SAFE AND HEALTHY MANNER AND ARE PAID A FAIR WAGE.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

More productive mines

Solidaridad helps partners formulate and implement sustainability goals. One such company – Gucci – recently placed its first order for Good Gold.

Sustainable development

At more than five hundred outlets worldwide, you can find Good Gold Jewellery at more than 500 outlets worldwide. In the Netherlands, 40 jewellers and goldsmiths buy gold from certified mines.

400 GLOBAL LOCATIONS OFFER GOOD GOLD JEWELLERY.

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EMBRACE THE GOOD GOLD PROJECT

Support the miners with a one-time donation of 15 euros or more and receive The Good Gold bracelet gift.

Jump to: solidaridad.nl/goud

About the bracelet
Bibi van der Velden designed this bracelet especially for the Solidaridad Good Gold campaign. The ring’s robust shape was inspired by gold nuggets, the unformed chunks of gold mined in certain areas. On the ring, you can also find icons that represent freedom, peace, world happiness and love.

What was most memorable about his visits to the gold mines in the Congo?
“First of all, the utterly miserable conditions. Women were doing a lot of heavy labour and children worked underground, instead of attending school. What struck me most of all was the Netherlands’ complacent attitude. We invest considerable effort and money into providing food and helping refugees, but we do not focus on the causes of the problem. How can we prevent this exploitation? Many conflicts in the region are about power over the gold mines.”

And when you suggested creating a label for Good Gold?
“Yes, after my visit, I wrote a message to headquarters about what I had seen, explaining that this must not continue. I suggested we create a label, but was rebuffed. I was told that my job was to report, not to actually do anything. Frustrating. I wanted to address the social problems. This was part of the reason I resigned, why I am working with people in the industry and why have written a book about this subject.”

In politics, very little attention is given to this issue. Why is that?
“Under Liliane Ploumen, Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, a revolution is going on: aid and trade are increasingly intertwined. If we pay a fair price for gold, miners can escape from poverty. I kept repeating this until I received a response from the ministry: come back to the Netherlands, and we’ll do something about it. So that’s what I did. My first question to the minister was: what part can the Netherlands play in making this industry sustainable? A study is currently being carried out. Its results will be discussed during a national roundtable session with the goal of formulating an action plan.”

So in politics, things have been shaken up?
“Certainly. But that is, of course, only part of the solution. Companies throughout the gold production sector should work towards sustainability. In addition, the consumer also plays an important role. What if there is no demand for Good Gold? The chances are that supply will drop and then we’d be back at square one. I think it’s great that this campaign is highlighting the conditions in many gold mines.”

Have you purchased Good Gold yourself?
“Certainly. I gave my wife a Good Gold ring to celebrate our being together for 15 years. I really hope Good Gold becomes the standard. At first, fair trade coffee was considered a bit eccentric, but now it is normal and you can buy it anywhere. It would be great if we also achieve that with gold.”

“I TRULY HOPE GOOD GOLD WILL BECOME THE NEW STANDARD”
ERIK NIEUWENHUYS
Managing Director of Steltman Juwelier. As a licensee, Jeweller Steltman Juwelier has been buying Good Gold since the very beginning of Solidaridad’s programme.

“VISITING THE MINES HAS MADE ME EVEN MORE MOTIVATED”

A visit to the gold mines in Ghana? When Erik Nieuwenhuys received this invitation from Solidaridad, he took it with both hands. “I could see that what we’re doing really makes a difference. This experience has made me even more motivated.”

Were you immediately excited when you received the invitation from Solidaridad?
“Certainly. We were already part of the Good Gold project and I was very enthusiastic about the stories I’d heard from Solidaridad. I was curious whether our efforts actually contributed to improving conditions for both people and the environment. So when I was offered the opportunity to see for myself, I agreed immediately.”

What was most memorable about the visiting the gold mines in Ghana?
“My visit to a non-certified gold mine. It looked like a moonscape. You saw holes everywhere that young boys would crawl into without protective clothing. They were mainly concerned with making their quota. There really was an atmosphere of illegality at the site, its atmosphere was very primitive. When I asked what the miners thought of their employment, they would walk with us until we were out of hearing range of the rest. Then they told us how difficult they found their work, and about the uncertainty and the sometimes unbearable working conditions.”

And circumstances were different in certified mines?
“I was also very curious about that. During my stay in Ghana we visited several mines, both ‘regular’ gold mines as well as mines that were on the road to certification. And the differences were immediately apparent. Workers in the latter mines wore protective clothing and you could see measures had been taken to enhance safety and protect the environment. But you could also notice it in the structure. Everything was organized better, there was better cooperation and classrooms with supervision had been set up for the miners’ children. I have seen we can make a difference. This experience has made me even more motivated.”

More motivated to promote Good Gold?
“Yes, but also to share my experiences with my staff. I have not only seen how the efforts around the mines really make a difference, but I also discovered the enthusiasm of the people at Solidaridad. They really believe in what they’re doing and I could see why. At Steltman Juwelier, we now have a collection which is made of 100% Good Gold. In the future, I would like to expand this. We do need to clarify one thing: in my opinion, there is not a very clear dividing line between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ gold in the Netherlands. A large part of the gold that is sold in the Netherlands is, in fact, recycled gold, so uncertified gold is not necessarily ‘bad’ gold. You just don’t know for sure. With certified gold you do have that certainty: this is honest and fairly mined gold.”

KILOS IS THE WEIGHT OF ALL THE GOLD TAKEN FROM THE EARTH.
That’s equal to the weight of 137,000 Volkswagen Golfs.

165,000,000

137,000
GOLD MEDALS... ARE MADE OF 92.5% SILVER!

An Olympic gold medal contains just 1.5% gold. The largest portion is silver, the rest is lead.
50% OF ALL GOLD IS USED FOR JEWELLERY
Good For Gold!

Top performances are rewarded with gold medals. But do you also know the other side?

Gold mining can do great harm to people and the environment, and miners’ earnings don’t reflect the true value of their gold.

In this booklet, we ask 10 well-known gold medal winners to highlight the unknown gold miners.

Solidaridad

solidaridad.nl/goud