

## LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE MINING

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PRODUCT



# **LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE MINING**

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## CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>ABOUT THE GOLDEN PROGRAMME</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>HOW PARTNERSHIPS WERE FRAMED FOR THE PROGRAMME</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>CONSORTIUM PARTNERS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>MESSAGES FROM CONSORTIUM PARTNERS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS OUTSIDE THE CONSORTIUM</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>SUCCESSES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>IMPACT STORIES FROM BENEFICIARIES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>LESSONS LEARNED</b>	<b>14</b>





# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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Fostering partnerships and maximizing their value is an essential model in development work. The core of a good partnership is its ability to bring together diverse resources in ways that create more impact, greater sustainability and increase value for beneficiaries of any development intervention.

The Sustainable Development Goal 17 reiterates the potential of private, public and civil society partnerships to drive mobilization and sharing of knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, particularly in developing countries.

Solidaridad recognizes the importance of strategic partnerships and encourages collaborations in its work to push transformational and systemic change for sustainable development. This was evident with the five-year Golden Line programme, which was implemented in partnership with Simavi and Healthy Entrepreneurs in selected mining communities across Ghana and Tanzania.

This publication shares insights on the programme partnerships and how this contributed to key results; as well as some core lessons learned from the implementation.

## **1.1 About the Golden Line Programme**

With funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the programme was initiated in 2016 to address women's socio-economic and health challenges in and around artisanal and small-scale gold mines in Ghana and Tanzania.

In Ghana, the programme was implemented across 45 mining communities and 15 mines in the Western, Western North and Ashanti regions. The programme focused on three main components - mining, advocacy and community - to deliver interventions that:

- Improve the working conditions of women within gold mines
- Promote responsible mining practices and compliance with international standards
- Increase the knowledge of mining communities in sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Facilitate the creation of an environment in which communities, health workers and authorities recognize women's health rights.



A large group of approximately 30 diverse professionals, including men and women of various ages, are posed for a group photograph in a modern building. They are arranged in several rows, with some standing and others slightly crouched in the front. The individuals are dressed in a mix of business casual and professional attire, including blouses, shirts, jackets, and patterned dresses. The background features a light-colored wall and a balcony with a metal railing and some potted plants. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

## **2.0 HOW PARTNERSHIPS WERE FRAMED FOR THE GOLDEN LINE PROGRAMME**

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Partnership was at the core of the programme's life cycle. A consortium approach, which allows stakeholders to leverage their combined resources and expertise for greater economies of scale was adopted to achieve the maximum impact of project interventions.

## 2.1 Consortium Partners

The three consortium partners (Simavi, Solidaridad and Healthy Entrepreneurs) of the Golden Line programme brought a unique set of expertise, networks and methodologies to ensure effective programme implementation.



Simavi was the lead consortium partner based in the Netherlands. The programme harnessed their expertise in social accountability, women's rights and gender equality, to empower female beneficiaries while creating a supportive environment for women to claim their rights.

Simavi engaged two local partners, Hope for Future Generations and Presbyterian Relief Services and Development, to implement the programme in Ghana.

At the community level, Simavi introduced the Economic and Social Empowerment (EA\$E) module, which was an integrated programme framework that consisted of:

- Village Savings and Loans Associations for adult women
- Gender Discussion Group Series for EA\$E female members and their spouses
- Business Skills Training for EA\$E members
- Strengthening women-friendly sexual and reproductive health services by engaging local health service providers and training their staff.
- Additionally, a platform called Engaging Men in Accountable Practice (EMAP) was created to enable male beneficiaries of the Golden Line programme to reflect on their attitudes and beliefs about gender, power, and violence.

### Solidaridad

With years of experience in working to promote responsible mining practices within artisanal and small-scale mines (ASMs), Solidaridad's expertise and existing connections with ASMs, gold markets, international buyers, and policy and agenda setting bodies, were maximized to enhance the impact of the mining component of the programme.

Under the Golden Line programme, Solidaridad's work focused on:

- Supporting small-scale miners to adopt better environmental, social and governance practices in line with Fairmined Standards and the Code of Risk Mitigation for Artisanal small-scale miners in Formal Trade (CRAFT).
- Improving the working conditions and opportunities for female miners
- Raising awareness of gender inequality and training women miners to voice their needs and take up better jobs.



### Healthy Entrepreneurs

Healthy Entrepreneurs provided tangible income-generating opportunities by supporting women through training, as well as cash and in-kind loans to set up their own small-scale health businesses to become Community Healthy Entrepreneurs.

By this, the programme improved the economic position of women living in and around mining communities while enhancing their access to affordable, reliable and quality health products and information.



## 2.2 Steps for Effective Partnership

Once these partners were identified, the following steps were undertaken to chart the pathway for effective partnerships for programme success before and during ground implementation.

### STEP 01 Development of a Partnership Agreement

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The effectiveness of a partnership depends on how the organizations in question engage from the outset. From the get-go, Solidaridad, Simavi and Healthy Entrepreneurs understood partnerships were more than dialogues until those involved have made a tangible commitment. A documented partnership agreement was, therefore, signed by the three consortium members.

The agreement specified, among other things:

- How each of the parties will contribute to the consortium's activities
- How decisions are made
- How costs and risks are shared among the parties
- How the fulfilment of obligations towards the donor is ensured.

### STEP 02 Institution of Structures for Governance and Accountability

02

Following the partnership agreement, a programme governance document was developed. It detailed the governance and operational structures and spelt out well-defined roles of all committees and positions set up to support the smooth implementation of the programme. These included the Steering Committee, Consortium Coordinator, National Programme Coordinator, and Consortium Programme Team.

A Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed (RACI) matrix was adopted to ensure overall accountability for programme implementation, reporting, development and approval of guidelines, procedures and protocols, as well as the recruitment and appraisal of national programme coordinators.

### STEP 03 Working in Synergy

03

Having identified a huge potential for synergy, the three consortium partners developed a plan of action to ensure that activities are implemented together, where practical, and support each other in strengthening the outcomes for beneficiaries. The following actions were taken to facilitate working in synergy under the Golden Line programme:

#### **Development of Advocacy and Communication Strategies**

The success of collaborative partnerships largely depends on communication and the existence of strong feedback loops. Effective communication at all levels amongst partners and within partner organizations, such as sharing and accessing all knowledge and information, is essential. Thus, advocacy and communication strategies, linked to the overall strategic plan of the programme, were collectively prepared by the three consortium members. From these, regular action plans were derived for the implementation of programme activities. This also promoted consistency regarding messages disseminated to project beneficiaries and the media.

#### **Working Simultaneously During Ground Implementation**

As part of the efforts to promote the joint organization and implementation of activities on the field, a centralized consortium office was set up in a project community in the Western region of Ghana for field officers from all three organizations.

Additionally, joint training workshops such as the gender discussion series, Engaging Men in Accountable Practice (EMAP), and radio shows were organized. Solidaridad's adoption of the EA\$E module from Simavi and its provision of training to Healthy Entrepreneurs and Community Ambassadors on responsible mining practices demonstrated the commitment of consortium partners to work in synergy. This approach was cost-effective, reduced workload for programme staff and enhanced learning and exchange of knowledge for greater results.

Also, joint monitoring visits were undertaken by the three partners. Such visits garnered support from beneficiary mining communities and provided an opportunity for them to directly raise their needs and concerns with programme implementers.



## 2.3 Messages from Consortium Partners

“ Working together as consortium members for the implementation of the Golden Line programme made community entry and mobilization easy. It also reduced the cost of training. For instance, we received support from Solidaridad in areas we would have originally hired external resource persons for. We leveraged on their expertise and experience in responsible mining to build the capacity of Community Healthy Entrepreneurs, *says Felix Kortey, project coordinator for Golden Line at Healthy Entrepreneurs, Ghana.* ”

“ The advocacy and lobbying strategies spearheaded by Solidaridad contributed greatly to the overall successes achieved under the programme. Additionally, training sessions organized by Solidaridad benefited our team in the implementation of the component we were responsible for, *says Emmanuel Gyimah, project officer for Golden Line at Presbyterian Relief Services and Development.* ”

“ Our strong collaboration with Solidaridad contributed immensely to achieving our targets for the Golden Line programme. Through the support of Solidaridad, Hope for Future Generations engaged Fidelity Bank to formalise the operations of the Village Savings and Loans Association groups instituted under the programme, *says Rose Baalaboore, project manager for Golden Line at Hope for Future Generations Development.* ”

## 2.4 Fostering Partnerships Outside the Consortium

While the three consortium partners worked in synergy with a focus on the three main components of the programme, fostering collaborations with multiple stakeholders such as government institutions, civil society organizations within the mining sector was key to ensure inclusive programme implementation. Thus, Solidaridad worked with different actors at national, regional, district and community levels. These were:

- The Dutch Embassy in Ghana
- The Ministries of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Local Government and Rural Development
- The regulatory agencies: Minerals Commission, Forestry Commission, Water Resources Commission and Environmental Protection Agency
- Ghana National Association of Small-scale Miners
- Civil society organizations: Women in Mining and Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners Africa Network

Some of the significant outcomes of the programme were founded on these partnerships. For instance, the programme together with the Ghana National Association of Small-scale Miners and Women in Mining advocated for gender-sensitive national artisanal small-scale mining policies. Solidaridad lobbied and made inputs into government-led policies and programmes that were being developed for the sector through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

Through a collaboration with the Minerals Commission's district offices in the Western and Western North regions, small-scale mines and their communities are upholding responsible mining practices and working in line with international best practices.





**3.0 SUCCESSES**

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Through the integration of the expertise of different partners, the Golden Line programme yielded tremendous outcomes particularly towards promoting women's social and economic empowerment. The following are the programme's key achievements after five years of implementation:

## COMPONENT 1: MINING



### Improved Positions for Women in Mines

**15 women from 8 mines** equipped with technical skills in excavator operation, mineral processing and assaying, crusher operation, mine administration, bulldozer operation and health and safety management.

These skills, which are traditionally considered as the forte of men, have afforded female miners better opportunities in mines which have led to an increase in their income.



### Decrease in Accidents and Injuries on Mines

**80% reduction in accidents and injuries** on project mines.

Beneficiary mines have put in place proper Health and Safety Management Systems in line with the Fairmined Standard.



### Responsible Mining Practices

**687 miners, 163 are women**, trained in responsible mining practices.

Mines are now using mercury responsibly, providing first aid, creating healthy and safe conditions at work, and zero tolerance for child labour.

## COMPONENT 2: ADVOCACY



### Effective National Lobby for Gender-sensitive ASM Policies

**5 multi-stakeholder** events organized on gender inclusion in artisanal and small-scale mining.

**12 events** convened to lobby and advocate for gender-sensitive mining policies in the sector.

These led to the implementation of Ghana's policy framework on ASM including the Multi-sectoral Mining Integrated Project and the Community Mining Programme, all of which captures women's rights and gender equality issues in the mining sector.

## COMPONENT 3: COMMUNITY



### Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

About **73 percent of 2,600 women beneficiaries** are now able to participate in decision making about using contraceptives in their relationships.



### Reduction in Gender-Based Violence

Decrease in the prevalence of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) from anecdotal narrations by beneficiaries.

Increase in awareness of institutions to seek support on GBV-related issues.



### Economic and Social Empowerment (EA\$E) Groups

**Over 100 women** who are part of the EA\$E (VSLA) groups have benefitted from one or multiple share-outs which they have invested in businesses, as well as for supporting the household.





## **4.0 IMPACT STORIES** **FROM BENEFICIARIES**

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**Cecilia Bimpong**  
Gyapa, Western region

Before the formation of the Economic and Social Empowerment (EA\$E) women's group in Obeng Mines, where Cecilia works, she admits that the bond and cohesion that existed among women onsite was quite low.

Also, it was almost impossible for her and many other colleagues to boast of any savings accrued from their income until the Golden Line Programme came to their community.

"We received training in leadership skills, financial management and the formation of Village Savings and Loans Associations. As a result, I have set up a Village Savings and Loans Association within the Obeng Mine EA\$E group with support from the Golden Line Programme," says Cecilia.

"The association has given us the opportunity to develop a savings culture and has sought to engender a healthy savings competition amongst the women within the association," she added.

With a weekly savings of 10 Ghana cedis (1.72 dollars), she has raised a substantial amount of money to pump into her food vending business on the mine site.

She indicates that the formation of the group has not only empowered its members economically but served as a platform where they share and learn life experiences, especially with issues affecting women in their community.



**Mary Yankson**  
Bibiani, Western region

For Mary Yankson, being able to work in a safer environment after five years of working in a hazardous one, as a woman miner, has been a game changer.

She says that casualties on the mine site, where she works, has reduced drastically after Solidaridad trained and sensitised them on the dangers of their operation, responsible mercury use, health and safety measures, administering first aid and responsible mining practices.

"There is a perception that the accidents and injuries that occur in artisanal small-scale mining activities are to be expected and unpreventable. Some even believe that fatalities on-site would bode well for gold mines. But thanks to the training Solidaridad offered to us, this perception has changed," says Mary Yankson, a mine worker in the Western region of Ghana.

Aside from educating and sensitizing the miners on safe working practices, Solidaridad also supported beneficiary miners to implement practical measures to improve safety at the mine sites.

Solidaridad provided first aid kits and protective clothing, such as safety glasses, gloves, work boots, helmets and reflective vests, to encourage and increase the use of personal protective equipment by miners. Safety signages have also been installed on the mine sites to help ensure adherence to safe practices.



**Linda Salifu**  
Gyapa, Western region

Until the commencement of the Golden Line programme in Gyapa and other small-scale mining communities, women miners were prevented from working during their monthly periods because it was believed that they would drive the gold away.

"This affected our income immensely," says Linda Salifu, a mine worker.

With the introduction of the Engaging Men in Accountable Practices (EMAP), under the programme, influential men in mining communities, like Gyapa, were sensitized to reflect on their attitudes, social norms, practices and beliefs about gender, power, and violence. This was to prevent discrimination and violence against women. The programme also held Gender Discussion series, training on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality.

"The sensitization has helped in changing the perception that women in their monthly periods drive the gold away. Presently, I am able to go to the mining site without any fear or guilt of being the cause of our inability to find gold in the mines," says Linda.





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## 5.0 LESSONS LEARNED



- The consortium approach and working in synergy brings together complementary expertise to benefit the overall programme. At the activity level, there was collaboration, learning and exchange of knowledge for greater results. For instance, about 84 percent of the advocacy outcomes were as a result of consortium partners continuously working together.
- For development programmes with multiple implementing partners, scheduling and executing activities jointly has proven to be budget-efficient. Additionally, it reduces the workload for programme staff as mobilization takes less effort. This enables programme management to channel more resources, specifically, towards the delivery of interventions.
- Differences in organizational culture amongst the different partners can cause delays in responses and communication if not addressed. This challenge can be mitigated by creating a comprehensive plan of action for communication and advocacy that serves as a roadmap for all partners.
- Under the programme, efforts were made by consortium partners to simultaneously conduct activities in programme districts even though it was challenging due to some sparsely located project sites. This meant field teams had to work separately at these sites due to constraints with distance and time. Thus the efficient use of resources at these sites could not be achieved as compared to districts where project communities for the various partners were relatively close. To effectively maximize the impact of partnerships, future programmes that adopt the consortium approach must make considerations in the distribution of programme sites.



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