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mines-compensation-struggle-ghana)

Last update:  
2015-08-26

## Chirano Gold Mines compensation struggle, Ghana



(https://file.ejatlas.org/img/Conflict/c

### ▼ Description:

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Chirano Gold Mine is a combined underground and open pit gold mine in the Western Region of Ghana, owned by Red Back Mining up to 2010, when it was taken over by the Toronto based Kinross Gold (at 90%) and the Government of Ghana (10%). Over the past three decades the mining sector in Ghana rebounded, mainly on the back of gold production, thanks to the introduction of a new regime heavily influenced by the World Bank and IMF in mid-1980s. Gold production accounts for more than 90 per cent of the total value of mineral output as well as mineral revenues to the government.

Since the inception of the Chirano project, one point of conflict is a long-running compensation dispute between the company and farmers dating back to 2004. A group called Concerned Citizens of Sefwi said compensation was paid to some farmers between 2004-2006 based on GH2.5 per matured cocoa tree, but farmers later learnt that the government approved crop compensation rate was GHC5.22 per matured cocoa tree. Court action followed and attempts to settle the matter out of court. In May 2012, the Land Valuation Division of Ghanas government wrote to Chirano Gold Mines to effect payment of compensation; as this was not happening, in October 2012 the farmers threatened to take back their land [4].

Not compensating farmers for their acquired land is blatantly an upfront violation to the Constitution of Ghana as well as to the Minerals and Mining Law, both of which require that if someone’s surface rights are to be disturbed by mining activities, this person is entitled to “prompt payment of fair and adequate compensation”. In 2013, the farmers took the matter back to court and in early 2015, the farmers who initially took the compensation were paid the difference with some interest. The rest are still waiting.

Often, protests by the farmers are met with violence and repression; claims of human rights abuses by police forces, destruction of crops and water pollution have in fact also been made, as stated by a report by FIAN International [1].

However, lack of justice and environmental problems are not confined to the Chirano Gold Mine. Ghana's policy of attracting foreign direct investment to its mining sector (inflows of USD770 million in 2010) has attracted a number of multi-national companies. In 2008, the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) said a total of 82 rivers and streams in five mining communities had either been polluted, destroyed, diverted or dried- up due to activities of mining firms[3]. As a colleague at the Rainforest Movement says, "Another important aspect is the difficulty in finding reliable alternative economic activities to engage, once farming ceases to pave the way for mining activities. With current mining activities being capital intensive, job opportunities for local people who lose their farmlands are limited. A visit to mining towns throughout the country reveal the poor nature of infrastructure and social amenities, especially for the locals, as mining workers enjoy relatively better infrastructure and amenities. In a way, an island of wealth is created in an ocean of misery and poverty."

Even when companies adopt “corporate social responsibility” guidelines, they have marginally improved the lot of project affected communities. And this is the deal mining communities got from Ghana’s mining regime [5].

*(See less)*

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**Country:**Ghana (/country/ghana)

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**State or province:**Western Region

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**Location of conflict:**Bibiani/Anhwiaso/Bekwai District

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**Accuracy of location**

HIGH (Local level)

**▼ Source of Conflict**

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**Type of conflict: 1st level:**Mineral Ores and Building Materials Extraction

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**Type of conflict: 2nd level :**Mineral ore exploration  
Land acquisition conflicts

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**Specific commodities:**Land (/commodity/land)  
Gold (/commodity/gold)**▼ Project Details and Actors**

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**Project details:**

The mine, which has a life expectancy of 10 years, produced 261,846 ounces of gold in 2011 at a cost of sale price of US\$693. This was up 172,626 ounces from 2010. It realised an average gold price of \$1,502 per ounce [4], giving an operating profit of over USD200million.

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**Project area:**

1000

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375.4 million (final development capital 2005)  
**Level of Investment:**  
**Type of population:**  
Urban  
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## Start of the conflict:

2004

## Company names or state enterprises:

Kinross Gold (/company/kinross-gold) from Canada (/country-of-company/canada)  
 Red Back Mining (/company/red-back-mining) from Canada (/country-of-company/canada)  
 Chirano Gold Mines Ltd. (/company/chirano-gold-mines-ltd) from Ghana (/country-of-company/ghana)

## Relevant government actors:

Department of Lands and Natural Resource, Land Valuation Division, Department of Finance and Economic Planning, Department of Environment, Science and Technology

## International and Finance Institutions

The World Bank (WB) (/institution/world-bank) from United States of America (/country-of-institution/united-states-of-america)

## Environmental justice organizations (and other supporters) and their websites, if available:

Concerned Citizens of Sefwi, National Coalition on Mining, Centre for Public Interest Law

### ▼ Conflict and Mobilization

#### Intensity

LOW (some local organising)

#### Reaction stage

Mobilization for reparations once impacts have been felt

## Groups mobilizing:

Farmers  
 International ejos  
 Neighbours/citizens/communities

## Forms of mobilization:

Land occupation

Lawsuits, court cases, judicial activism  
 Media based activism, alternative media  
 Public campaigns

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## Environmental Impacts

**Visible:** Biodiversity loss (wildlife, agro-diversity), Food insecurity (crop damage), Loss of landscape/aesthetic degradation, Deforestation and loss of vegetation cover, Surface water pollution / Decreasing water (physico-chemical, biological) quality

**Potential:** Groundwater pollution or depletion

## Health Impacts

**Potential:** Malnutrition, Infectious diseases

## Other Health impacts

Water contamination-related diseases

## Socio-economical Impacts

**Visible:** Displacement, Lack of work security, labour absenteeism, firings, unemployment, Loss of livelihood, Loss of traditional knowledge/practices/cultures, Land dispossession, Loss of landscape/sense of place, Militarization and increased police presence

### ▼ Outcome

## Project Status

In operation

## Conflict outcome / response:

Compensation

Repression

Under negotiation

Application of existing regulations

Re-occupation of land by farmers

## Development of alternatives:

There have been calls for the development of a small scale artisanal mining sector as a national strategy for addressing rural unemployment[1].

## Do you consider this an environmental justice success? Was environmental justice served?:

No  
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**Briefly explain:**  
According to available information, farmers haven't been compensated yet.

**Sources and Materials**  
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## Related laws and legislations - Juridical texts related to the conflict

Minerals and Mining Act 2006 (Act 703)

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## References to published books, academic articles, movies or published documentaries

[4] Kinross Gold Corporation Annual report (2011). Available at: Accessed 4 January 2013.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/UJlQFC>.)

[1] FIAN International - Human Rights violations in the context of large-scale mining operations

[click to view] ([http://www.rtfn-watch.org/uploads/media/upr\\_report.pdf](http://www.rtfn-watch.org/uploads/media/upr_report.pdf))

To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and Climate Crisis in Africa

By Nnimmo Bassey

The World Bank, Africa Region - Policy Research Working Paper 5730; Political Economy of the Mining Sector in Ghana

[click to view] (<http://www.cmi.no/publications/file/4091-political-economy-of-the-mining-sector-in-ghana.pdf>)

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## Links to general newspaper articles, blogs or other websites

[2] Concerned Citizens of Sefwi. (2012). Protest note for immediate payment of compensation. Available at: Accessed 13 December 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/SUkkPw>.)

Attenkah, Richard (2012). Etwebo community demonstrates against Chirano Gold. Available at: Accessed 4 January 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/UKmfbL>.)

Ghana News Agency (2012). Sefwi farmers threaten to take over Chirano Gold Mines lands in Modern Ghana. Available at: Accessed: 13 December 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/W9WNMq>.)

Mining Watch Canada (2012). Ghanaian Farmers Run Out of Patience with Kinross/Chirano Gold Mines. Available at Accessed: 13 December 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/SUHMAU>.)

[3] Fuseini, Napo Ali and Lee, Justice (2011). Mining Firms Destroy 82 Rivers and Steams.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/pO05WU>.)

[5] World Rainforest Movement - Ghana's Mining Sector Regime: A Bad Deal for Affected Local Communities, Posted on Jul 10, 2015. Included in Bulletin 215

[click to view] (<http://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/section1/ghanas-mining-sector-regime-a-bad-deal-for-affected-local-communities/>)

Modern Ghana (2011). Investment Inflow In Mining Sector Hit \$770million Last Year. Available at: Accessed 4 January 2013.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/uezaq9>.)

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## Related media links to videos, campaigns, social network

Journeyman Pictures (2008). The Curse of Gold - Ghana. Available at: Accessed 4 January 2013.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/PUwMn>.)

Sicotte Levesque, Alexandra (2007). When silence is golden. Available at: Accessed 4 January 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/WkwUbx>.)

Stern, Jeff (2011). Glitter or Gloom?: Mining West Africas Gold Coast. Available at: Accessed 4 January 2012.

[click to view] (<https://bit.ly/VCyXXw>.)

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## Other documents

### **A project affected farmer at the mine site** Source: WRM

[click to view] ([https://file.ejAtlas.org/docs/Chirano\\_Ghana.jpg](https://file.ejAtlas.org/docs/Chirano_Ghana.jpg))

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#### ▼ **Meta information**

##### Contributor:

Patrick Burnett and the EJAtlas editorial team

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##### Last update

26/08/2015

#### ▼ **Comments**

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2 comments • 10 months ago

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Shandong CHTC Helon Co., Ltd., Viscose Factory, ...

1 comment • 2 years ago

Tini Kartini — According to news from CCF-Group (Oct. 2019) CHTC Helon starts to be relocated and will be closed for a longer period

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1 comment • 5 months ago

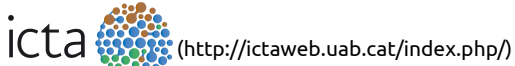
Amit — Stop spreading lies . 5000 trees are planted. Human & church encroachment is more dangerous than MMRC project which will reduce

Lead poisoning by Melody Chemical plant in ...

1 comment • a year ago

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