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Ghaghoo mine diamond extraction in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Botswana



(https://file.ejatlas.org/img/Conflict/diamond-extraction-in-the-central-kalahari-game-reserve-botswana/gh)

After years of bushmen's struggle to defend the access to their territory, an open diamond pit opened in 2014, threatening their traditional livelihoods.

▼ Description

The Botswanan Government granted concessions for mineral exploration to diamond companies over an area encompassing the entire ancestral territories of the Gana and Gwi Bushmen, living in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The majority of the Bushmen were forced to re-locate, and denounced the threats, persecution and torture they suffered. The bushmens main borehole was cut off so as to forcibly evict them. Despite a ruling by the Botswanan high court in 2006 that the eviction was unlawful, the borehole remained closed and the judge dismissed their case to access water inside the reserve in 2010. Finally in January 2011 Botswanas Court of Appeal overturned the decision and condemned the governments degrading treatment of the Bushmen. The diamond project, valued at 3.3 billion dollars, remained on hold until 2014. In September 2014, opened the Ghaghoo diamond mine.

▼ Basic Data

Name

Ghaghoo mine diamond extraction in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Botswana

Country

Botswana (/country/botswana)

Province

Ghanzi

Accuracy of Location

HIGH local level

▼ Source of Conflict

Type of Conflict (1st level)

Mineral Ores and Building Materials Extraction

Type of Conflict (2nd level)

Mineral ore exploration
Mineral processing

Specific Commodities

Land (/commodity/land)
Diamonds (/commodity/diamonds)

▼ Project Details and Actors

Project Details

Diamonds deposits are valued at 3.3 billion USD. Ghaghoo mine is owned by Gem Diamonds. Opened, in 2014, its worth is estimated to \$4.9 billion.

Level of Investment (in USD)

2000000

Type of Population

Semi-urban

Start Date

1986

Company Names or State Enterprises

BHP Billiton (BHP) (/company/bhp-billiton) from Australia (/country-of-company/australia)
Debswana (/company/debswana) from Botswana (/country-of-company/botswana)
De Beers (/company/de-beers) from South Africa (/country-of-company/south-africa) - based in Luxembourg
Motapa Diamonds (/company/motapa-diamonds) from Canada (/country-of-company/canada)
Gem Diamonds (/company/gem-diamonds)
Petra Diamonds (/company/petra-diamonds) - based in Jersey
Coal and Gas Corp (/company/coal-and-gas-corp)
Tlou Energy (/company/tlou-energy) from Australia (/country-of-company/australia)

Relevant government actors

Government of Botswana.

International and Financial Institutions

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

Environmental justice organisations and other supporters

First People of the Kalahari - Botswana, Survival International NGO - Italy

▼ The Conflict and the Mobilization

Intensity of Conflict (at highest level)

HIGH (widespread, mass mobilization, violence, arrests, etc...)

When did the mobilization begin

In REACTION to the implementation (during construction or operation)

Groups Mobilizing

Indigenous groups or traditional communities
Informal workers
International ejos
Local ejos
Neighbours/citizens/communities
Social movements
Ethnically/racially discriminated groups

Forms of Mobilization

Involvement of national and international NGOs
Lawsuits, court cases, judicial activism
Street protest/marches

▼ Impacts

Environmental Impacts

Visible: Loss of landscape/aesthetic degradation, Deforestation and loss of vegetation cover

Potential: Air pollution, Biodiversity loss (wildlife, agro-diversity), Desertification/Drought, Food insecurity (crop damage), Soil contamination, Soil erosion, Waste overflow, Surface water pollution / Decreasing water (physico-chemical, biological) quality, Groundwater pollution or depletion, Mine tailing spills

Health Impacts

Visible: Malnutrition, Violence related health impacts (homicides, rape, etc..)

Potential: Exposure to unknown or uncertain complex risks (radiation, etc...), Mental problems including stress, depression and suicide, Infectious diseases, Deaths

Socio-economic Impacts

Visible: Displacement, Lack of work security, labour absenteeism, firings, unemployment, Loss of livelihood, Loss of traditional knowledge/practices/cultures, Militarization and increased police presence, Violations of human rights, Land dispossession, Loss of landscape/sense of place
Potential: Increase in Corruption/Co-optation of different actors, Increase in violence and crime, Social problems (alcoholism, prostitution, etc..), Specific impacts on women

▼ Outcome

Project Status

In operation

Pathways for conflict outcome / response

Court decision (victory for environmental justice)

In spite of favourable court decision for the local inhabitants, a diamond open pit is in activity since 2014 .

Development of Alternatives

They wanted access to water and the right to hunt and freely gather fruits in the reserve as they did before the mine activity.

Do you consider this as a success?

Not Sure

Why? Explain briefly.

The High Court of Botswana ruled that the displacement of the Bushmen is unlawful and unconstitutional and accorded them full rights to re-enter and live in their territory. In 2011, they won the right to access the borehole. But in 2014 a diamond mine was inaugurated in the CKG Reserve while in the beginning of 2015 the government granted licenses for gas explorations.

▼ Sources and Materials

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Timeline leading to the opening of the Ghaghoo mine in 2014, Survival

[click to view] (<http://assets.survivalinternational.org/documents/1272/diamonds-timeline.pdf>)

Links

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[click to view] (<http://www.unimondo.org/Notizie/Botswana-la-lotta-dei-Boscimani-e-il-muro-di-ferro-61595>)

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Bushmen aren't forever - Botswana : diamonds in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the eviction of Bushmen, Survival International, September 2006

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Botswana government lies exposed as diamond mine opens on Bushman land, Survival, 4/09/2014

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Gem Diamonds official web page: Operations in Botswana

[click to view] (<http://www.gemdiamonds.com/gem/en/operations/botswana/>)

Botswana grants gas exploration rights in Kalahari, 12/02/2015

[click to view] (<http://www.cnbc.com/news/southern-africa/2013/11/21/botswana-grants-gas-exploration-rights-in-kalahari/>)

Other Documents

Ghaghoo mine, close to the CKG Reserve, open since 2014 Survival International

[click to view] (https://file.ejAtlas.org/docs/ghaghoo_mine.jpg)

▼ Meta Information

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▼ Comments

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