

# MINING'S FOOTPRINT:

COMMUNITY NARRATIVES ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
SOCIAL CHANGES IN KACHIN, KARENNI, AND  
SAGAING, MYANMAR



Myanmar Mining Watch Network (MMWN)  
July 2023 - April 2024

## I. MYANMAR MINING WATCH NETWORK (MMWN)

Myanmar Mining Watch Network (MMWN) is a social network which was established in 2016 at Myitkyina Kachin State. It was formed 11 organizations with the purpose of doing a mining advocacy campaign and creating a platform for learning and sharing resource for ethnicities in Myanmar. Currently, it is an organization composed of 13 network members.

## II. Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the organizations and individuals who supported this endeavor financially and collaborated in the data collection process. Your contributions have been crucial in bringing this critical issue to light and advocating for the protection of Myanmar's environment and the rights of its people.

## III. Introduction

The Myanmar Mining Watch Network (MMWN) has been at the forefront of monitoring the adverse effects of mining activities on the environment, social well-being, ecosystems, and human rights in Myanmar, particularly in Kachin State, Kayah State (Karenni State), and the Sagaing Division. Since the coup on February 1, 2021, mining activities have expanded rapidly in ethnic regions, exacerbating the already precarious situation. In response, MMWN and its network members launched an extensive data collection initiative from July 2023 to April 2024 to document the impacts of these activities. Our efforts in Kachin State focused on the Hugawng Valley and Hpakant Township, in the Sagaing Division on Homalin Township, and in Kayah State on the Mawchi mining area. This data collection endeavor was made possible through the collaboration of MMWN network members, relevant stakeholders, and miners who provided invaluable information and insights.

The findings from our data collection indicate that, post-coup, mining operations have proceeded without the necessary environmental and social impact assessments. This unregulated expansion has led to significant social and environmental consequences and severe human rights violations. Indigenous lands and rights are under constant threat, highlighting the urgent need for systematic and sustainable mining practices. In this report, MMWN presents detailed recommendations for various stakeholders, including ethnic resistance groups, business investors, civil society organizations, and other relevant entities. Our recommendations aim to mitigate and resolve the negative impacts of mining activities, transforming them into positive outcomes while enhancing public participation in decision-making processes.

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**Report on Health and Environmental Concerns from Jade Mining in Hpakant, Kachin State**

*Figure 1 Excavation with heavy machines, such as excavators and trucks.*

## 1. Health Impacts

### 1.1 . Heat-Related Illnesses

The health of local communities and miners has been severely compromised due to jade mining activities and changing climate conditions. Rising temperatures have reduced miners' working hours from eight to five per day, leading to numerous health issues, including heat strokes, nosebleeds, high blood pressure, and fainting spells among older workers.

A local jade miner described the harsh conditions: "When it rains, it rains a lot, and when it is hot, it is really hot. We can't work under the sun at noon. Sometimes, there is hailstorm, and it damages all the crops. We lose money from this disaster."

## Seasonal Illnesses

During the rainy season, the community experiences a surge in flu cases. The remote location of hospitals exacerbates the situation, as villagers must travel long distances to seek medical care, leading to tragic outcomes, with some individuals passing away en route to the hospital.

## 2.Environmental Degradation

### 2.1. Deforestation and Wildlife Extinction

Jade mining has led to severe environmental degradation, including deforestation and wildlife extinction. The landscape, once rich with trees and wildlife, has been transformed into barren wastelands. A local resident lamented: "Animals have gone extinct. I think only pet dogs have remained. There are no more tree, plants, and bushes. Animals which depend on these trees no longer exist. We don't hear birds singing anymore. Wild animals have already gone extinct."



Figure 2 A picture of a company site in a mining area.

### 3. Water Pollution and Scarcity

Mining activities have polluted water sources, turning clear streams into murky, coffee-colored water. This pollution has made it difficult for villagers to access clean drinking water, forcing those who cannot afford to buy water to travel long distances to collect it. The destruction of the natural landscape has also led to water scarcity, particularly during the summer when wells dry up.

**A resident highlighted the situation:**

"The village's water scarcity, exacerbated by reckless land excavation by companies, has led to the transformation of once fertile lands into vast, stagnant ponds. This ecological degradation not only deprives villagers of essential water resources but also poses a grave risk of flooding, threatening lives and livelihoods."



Figure 3 Water tank for distribution to households.

## 4. Women and Water Scarcity

### 4.1 Burden on Women

The scarcity of clean water has disproportionately impacted women, who bear the primary responsibility for water collection in many households. Women often have to walk long distances to fetch water, which is time-consuming and physically demanding. This added burden exacerbates their daily struggles, affecting their health and limiting their time for other essential activities.

#### **A local woman shared her challenges:**

"We have to travel long distances to fetch water because our wells have dried up. This takes up a lot of our time and energy. Sometimes, we have to make multiple trips just to get enough water for cooking and cleaning. It's exhausting and takes away from time we could spend on other important tasks."



Figure 4 Drinking water pond turning yellow.

## 5. Socio-Economic Challenges

### 5.1 Inequitable Distribution of Mining Opportunities

#### **Inequitable Distribution of Mining Opportunities**

A local miner expressed frustration: "We got no support from anyone. We have to help ourselves. Now, the KIA has shared people 100 ft of mining pits. Some people got it, and some did not get it. People who are close to Slang Kaba (officer) got the pits otherwise, it is not easy to get that share."

### 5.2 Forced Land Sales and Economic Displacement

A villager shared their experience: "It is not easy to relocate our houses. We have to demolish our house. With compensation they paid, it is not enough to buy land and build a new house. After we demolished our house, we have to buy land in the tailings area and build house with material from our old house. We have to sell our land. If we don't, they will demolish our house to start mining anyway."

## 6. Impact on Livelihoods

The expansion of jade mining has disrupted local livelihoods, with villagers forced to abandon traditional farming due to the loss of fertile land. Instead, many have turned to jade mining, often under dangerous conditions.

A local resident noted: "In the whole village, there is only one clinic with limited medicine. We go to this clinic for treatment. It is far to go to the town. As our place is a gold mining area, we search for jade and gemstone mining. Sometimes, we work as carpenters as we cannot find jade all the time. We have to take casual jobs."



## 7. Safety Concerns

### 7.1. Landslides and Pit Collapses

Safety in jade mining areas is a critical issue, with frequent landslides and mining pit collapses causing numerous fatalities. In 2023, a landslide at the Ma Na gold mining site killed six people, highlighting the ongoing risks faced by miners.

**A local resident emphasized the dangers:**

"Regarding the safety of villagers and children, the whole village is concerned about the old mining pits which children can fall into during their bathing time. Many children died from falling, and hundreds of people died when the pit broke."



*Figure 5 Mining excavation sites are encroaching upon residential areas, increasing health and safety risks for local communities.*

The death toll at the jade mine collapse in Hpakant, Kachin State, has risen to 104. This tragic incident highlights the ongoing dangers associated with jade mining in the region, which is notorious for its hazardous conditions and frequent landslides ([The Irrawaddy](#)).

The jade mining industry in Myanmar has been fraught with dangerous conditions, leading to frequent landslides and significant loss of life. From January 2015 to July 2018, reported fatalities from landslides and mining accidents amounted to at least 245 deaths, with the actual number likely much higher. A notable incident in November 2015 at Kan Hkar village resulted in at least 113 confirmed deaths, with another 100 workers missing and presumed dead ([Open Jade Data](#)).



Figure 6 Prospectors searching for jade using a hydraulic water pump and excavators in the mining area.

## 8. Road Hazards

The poor condition of village roads, exacerbated by heavy mining equipment, poses additional safety risks. Dust from the roads contributes to respiratory illnesses, and accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians are common.

**A resident described the situation:**

"The road condition is terrible. It is not safe for women, especially pregnant women. Last year, Daw Aye Mar got her pregnancy aborted due to this poor road condition. It is also a problem for children who go to school by this road."



Figure 7 A picture showing how a village road was damaged and destroyed due to jade mining operations.



Figure 8 A picture showing how a village road was damaged and destroyed due to jade mining operations.



Figure 9 A picture showing how a village road was damaged and destroyed due to jade mining operations.

## 9. Burmese Military Use of Human Shields

The presence of the Burmese military in Hpakant has exacerbated the safety concerns for local villagers. In recent incidents, the military has used local residents as human shields to protect themselves from KIA attacks. This practice puts the lives of innocent civilians at great risk and adds to the already tense and dangerous situation in the region.

### A resident recounted a recent event:

"Sometimes when Burmese troops came to this village, they accuse Kachin people of being PDF (People Defense Force) and arrested them. They took these villagers as human shields to protect themselves from KIA shooting. This happened three months ago. Since the company has paid the Burmese military, they get permission to do mining here."

## 10. Economic Impacts of Chinese Buyers

### 10.1 Increased Competition and Market Disruption

The influx of Chinese buyers into the Hpakant jade market has significantly altered the local economy. Chinese buyers often pay higher prices than local buyers, leading to increased competition and making it difficult for local jade dealers to sustain their businesses. This shift has disrupted the traditional jade trading market and marginalized local traders.

### A local trader explained the situation:

"Chinese pay more price for jade. Villagers no longer sell to each other. They sell to Chinese. It becomes more difficult for local jade dealers to find jade. It has become difficult for local jade dealers to do business."

### 10.2 Modern Payment Systems and Market Access

Chinese buyers utilize modern payment systems like WeChat Pay, allowing them to conduct transactions quickly and efficiently. This technological advantage enables them to sell jade directly to the Chinese market, further sidelining local traders who rely on traditional cash transactions.

### A resident described the impact:

"The Chinese jade buyers also use WeChat payment system, so they can sell to the China market directly from Hpakant. It's hard to identify legal or illegal jade transactions, complicating efforts to regulate the market."



Figure 10 Following the forced displacement of Sabyit Hku villagers, they are now living in unsafe and precarious housing conditions.

## 11. Social and Economic Inequities

### 11.1 Corruption and Lack of Transparency

The jade mining industry is plagued by corruption and a lack of transparency. Local villagers often do not receive tax receipts and are subject to arbitrary tax increases. Additionally, the compensation for land and damages from mining activities is frequently inadequate. The inconsistency in tax collection and lack of accountability have further eroded trust within the community.

A local miner stated:

"You have to pay taxes whether you sell it in Mandalay or China. There are some people who flee to avoid taxes after they sold their gemstones, especially people from lower Myanmar. They could not come back to Hpakant anymore once they avoid paying taxes. If they come back, they will be sure arrested."



Figure 11 Trash from jade mining operations is disposed of on the mountainside, contributing to severe environmental degradation.



Figure 12 Day by day, the expansion of jade mining operations is causing the mountain landscape to steadily disappear.

## 12. Gender Inequality in Mining and Exploitation

### 12.1 Unsafe Working Conditions

Women working in jade mines and associated industries face unsafe working conditions and are often subjected to exploitation and harassment. The lack of gender-sensitive policies and protections exacerbates these challenges, highlighting the urgent need for reforms to ensure the safety and dignity of women in the mining sector.

#### A resident emphasized the issue:

"The plight of women, vulnerable to exploitation and harassment in gambling dens and jade mines, highlights the urgent need for gender-sensitive policies and robust enforcement of human rights."

## 13. Role of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA)

### 13.1 Mediation and Conflict Resolution

The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) plays a crucial role in mediating disputes and resolving conflicts in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, an area heavily impacted by extensive jade mining activities. Their involvement is multifaceted, addressing various conflict areas through a structured approach. In land conflicts, villagers are forced to sell their land to jade mining companies turn to the KIA for assistance. The KIA assesses the situation, negotiates with both parties, and sets compensation amounts, which range from 300 to 500 lakhs (30 to 50 million kyats). They oversee transactions to ensure compliance with agreed terms and monitor post-sale conditions to ensure villagers receive the promised compensation and support for relocation.

For marital and domestic disputes, villagers report issues to the KIA, which then assesses and mediates the conflicts, providing counseling and facilitating dialogue between parties. They help both sides reach a mutually acceptable agreement and follow up to ensure compliance and offer further assistance if needed. Addressing grievances and injustices, the KIA collects detailed reports from villagers, conducts thorough investigations, documents evidence, and represents villagers in negotiations with companies and authorities, demanding fair compensation and corrective measures for identified issues. The KIA also manages the impact of jade prospecting by assessing safety conditions at mining sites, advocating for comprehensive safety measures, and negotiating fair compensation for victims of mining accidents and their families. They provide support services, including counseling and financial assistance to affected families. In confronting exploitation and violence, particularly against women in gambling dens and jade mines, the KIA establishes reporting channels, investigates incidents, protects vulnerable individuals.

Their conflict resolution mechanism involves a multi-tiered approach. At the local level, conflicts are first brought to the village tract administrator (Ning Htawn), who, with KIA support, attempts to mediate. Unresolved conflicts escalated to the township level (Ginwang Daw) for further mediation by KIA township authorities. Persistent conflicts are taken to the district level (Ginwang), and if still unresolved, are escalated to the KIA headquarters in Laiza (GinJaw) for final resolution. The KIA's structured approach to mediation and conflict resolution is vital for maintaining stability in Hpakant's jade mining communities. By addressing land disputes, personal conflicts, environmental issues, and the protection of vulnerable populations, the KIA strives to balance the interests of villagers with the powerful forces of the jade mining industry.

# Gold Mining in Hugawng Valley, Kachin State

## Introduction

Gold mining in Hugawng Valley, Kachin State, has undergone significant transformations over the years, evolving from traditional methods to mechanized techniques that have altered the economic, environmental, and social landscape. This report explores the thematic areas of economic impact, environmental changes, and social dynamics within the gold mining regions of Warazup village, Sar Chying Maw, Lawt Dan Pa, Aung Leng, and others.



Figure 13 They have positioned their excavator at the gold mining site of Aung Leng Maw.

## 1.Economic Impact

In Warazup village, traditional gold mining was prevalent until the late 2000s, when mechanized methods began dominating the industry. This shift has been seen in other areas as well, such as Sar Chying Maw, Lawt Dan Pa, and Aung Leng, where the introduction of large machinery around 2009-2010 marked a significant change. These developments have brought both opportunities and challenges to the local communities.

Economically, mining provides employment opportunities for both locals and migrant workers, but it also displaces traditional agricultural activities, leading to land and resource conflicts. High land prices, driven by the abundance of natural resources, have exacerbated these conflicts.



## 2.Environmental Changes

The environmental impact of mechanized mining has been profound. Deforestation, driven by extensive mining activities, has led to local climate changes, with increased temperatures and altered weather patterns. The biodiversity of the region has suffered greatly, with significant losses in wildlife and fish populations.



Figure 14 A scene of gold extraction at Lawt Dan Pa gold mine.

## Social Dynamics

The social impact of mining has been significant, with frequent clashes between the KIA, Burmese military, and other militia groups causing insecurity for local residents. In areas like the 81 Gold Mining Area, the presence of armed groups and the imposition of taxes, such as 100 lakhs per excavator, have created a complex and often unstable environment.



Figure 15 Gold mining activities in progress at Simsa Maw gold mine.

## 3.Taxation and Armed Group Control

The control exerted by armed groups, particularly the KIA, and the imposition of various taxes have further complicated the situation. Taxes in the region vary, with significant charges on equipment and supplies, and monthly fees for operating in these areas. For example, in Mogaung Chaung, taxes include 3 lakh per vehicle, 5 lakh as a monthly fee, and 100 lakh toll fees for vehicles. Additionally, land prices in these mining areas can range from 25 to 35 lakh kyats per acre.

## Report on Gold Mining Activities and Socioeconomic Impact in Homalin, Sagaing division of Myanmar

### 1. Post-Coup Developments

Since the February 1, 2021, coup, gold mining activities have been significantly affected. In Hkawng Ngawng, Ma Su Hlaing and Ko Myo Kyaw companies are actively operating, partnering with the Shanni armed forces. Fees for gold mining in the area range from 300 to 1,000 lakh kyats depending on land size and machinery. The Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited is also involved in gold mining activities.



Figure 16 A scene of mining processing using a suction dredge, with the material being put into a sluice at Hkawng Ngo village area.



*Figure 17 The camp site of a gold mining company at Hkawng Ngo, serving as the base for operations where miners and staff are stationed while carrying out extensive gold extraction and processing activities in the region.*

## 2.Land Ownership and Taxation

In Laung Hpaung, Oo Dwe Ba and Oo Saw Tun Naing own land with gold deposits and collaborate with the Shanni Armed Force. The Shanni armed group levies taxes ranging from 300 to 1,000 lakh kyats for large operations and 30 lakh kyats for small-scale placer mining. Similarly, in Ting Kung, ponds have been sold to gold mining companies, with owners partnering with the Shanni armed group. The tax for a dredge operation in this village is 30 lakh kyats.



Figure 18 A gold mining operation located in the Tin Kung village area, where extensive mining activities are conducted to extract and process gold from the surrounding land.

### 3.Socioeconomic Impact

#### Education:

- In Thar Yar Gone, only two young people attend school at Tamati Sanpya village due to the lack of local schools.
- In Ting Kung, about 20% of young people aged 14-20 attend school.
- In Manly, political instability has halted education for young people aged 20-25, with 40% working abroad.

#### Employment:

- In Thar Yar Gone, daily workers earn between 50,000 and 100,000 kyats, with young workers attracted to gold mines from other villages.
- In Ting Kung, around 30 youths work locally, the majority engaged in farming or mining. Women work in both mining and gambling sectors, earning above 200,000 kyats monthly.
- In Manly, women earn daily wages of 5,000 kyats in mining, with monthly salaries exceeding 200,000 kyats for some.



Figure 19 gold mining site located in the Laung Hpaung village area, where extensive extraction and processing activities are underway to recover valuable gold deposits from the earth.

### Income and Social Issues:

- In Thar Yar Gone, there has been an economic shift from farming to mining labor, altering the traditional livelihood of the community.
- In Manly, drug rehabilitation efforts include a fee of 500,000 kyats (approximately \$238 USD) per addict. Continued drug use after rehabilitation results in arrest.
- Gambling operations in Laung Hpaung pay taxes to the Shanni armed group, while market shop owners are required to pay a monthly fee of 200,000 kyats (approximately \$95 USD).

### Health and Social Issues:

- In Manly, there is a lack of government healthcare; pregnant and breastfeeding mothers must travel to Homalin township. No reported sexual harassment within the village, but verbal harassment occurs at militia checkpoints.



*Figure 20 Gold mining operations employing the hydraulic mining method are taking place in Thar Yar Kaung village, showcasing a powerful technique where water is used to dislodge and transport gold-bearing material.*

## Report on the Impact of Mining Extraction at Mawchi Mine

### Introduction

Mawchi Mine, located in Hpasawng Township, Bawlakhe District, Karenni State, is home to various ethnic communities, with the Paku (Karen) people being the native inhabitants. Over time, other ethnic groups such as the Payea and Manaw from Karenni State, as well as individuals from different parts of Myanmar, have settled in the area to engage in mining activities. The primary livelihood of the villagers revolves around tungsten (wolfram) and tin mining, along with cardamom plantations. However, the mining operations have significantly impacted the local environment, economy, and social fabric, leading to various challenges for the community.

Mining in Mawchi has a long history, dating back to around 1956. Initially, local villagers engaged in mining using traditional methods. However, over time, businessmen from other regions began investing in the area, purchasing land from villagers and transforming some into shareholders. Across different government administrations, including previous military regimes and U Thein Sein's term, various companies—including Ye Tun Tin and some unknown Chinese investors—obtained permits to operate in the region. The military was deployed to guard these operations, often seizing local farmland. After the 2021 coup, the military presence diminished due to escalating conflicts, but the environmental and social impacts of mining persisted.

## Environmental Impact

The mining operations have severely degraded the local environment. The use of water to wash raw tungsten (wolfram) and tin has resulted in contaminated water flowing into the Molo stream, rendering it unfit for drinking and household use. Forests have been destroyed, leading to the loss of cultural heritage sites and sacred places.



Due to the mining operations, the stream has become significantly contaminated. The runoff from the mining activities flows directly into the stream, visibly affecting its water quality and impacting the surrounding environment. The contamination is evident as pollutants are observed in the stream, highlighting the environmental consequences of the mining activities.





*Figure 21 the company and small-scale mining operators systematically collect logs to be used as supports, reinforcing the roof and maintaining the structural stability of the tunnels in the dimly lit, confined environment*

The Molo stream, once rich in biodiversity, now suffers from depleted fish, prawns, crabs, and turtle populations. The depletion of water resources and the destruction of bamboo forests near conservation areas further exacerbate the environmental crisis. Logging and unsystematic waste disposal have also led to landslides and further environmental degradation.

## **Social and Economic Impact**

The social and economic impact of mining on the local communities has been profound. Villagers face health issues such as skin diseases, diarrhea, respiratory diseases, and arthritis due to unhealthy working conditions and pollution. The influx of migrant workers from other regions, including Toungoo, Kyaukpadaung Township, Ayeyarwady Division, and Chin State, has led to increased drug-related issues, further straining the social fabric of the community.



Figure 22 A drill operator holds an air gun, piercing the bedrock in the pit of Mawchi mine



In the depths of the mine, miners carefully maneuver carts brimming with ore through a narrow, dimly lit tunnel. The deep, dark surroundings, barely illuminated by the sparse and faint light, underscore the challenging conditions faced by the workers as they push the heavy carts towards the surface. Their labor, characterized by the constant struggle against the oppressive darkness and confined space, reflects the harsh realities of mining work.





After emerging from the mine, the miners stack the ore in neat piles, each sack carefully packed and arranged for transport, transitioning from the dark, confined underground to the open air above.

The economic benefits of mining have been skewed in favor of investors, with villagers receiving inadequate compensation for lost farmland and little to no profit from the mines. Despite being the primary source of livelihood for 60% of the villagers, the mining operations have left the local community impoverished and vulnerable. Small-scale mine owners typically sell raw tungsten (wolfram) and tin to local brokers, who then sell it to Chinese businessmen. The tungsten and tin are then transported to China. The market price for high-quality tungsten and tin ranges from 50,000 to 65,000 Myanmar Kyats per viss (approximately \$24 to \$31 USD), depending on the quality.

Local organizations such as the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) collect taxes from these operations. Small-scale mine owners are taxed 100,000 Kyats annually (about \$48 USD), while larger companies are taxed based on the amount of mine production.

## Cultural Impact

The mining operations have also led to the destruction of culturally significant sites, such as the sacred mountain Lo Poi Ko Tawng, which holds spiritual importance for the villagers. The protective area around this sacred place has been destroyed, causing distress among the local population.



*Figure 23 A viewpoint of Ler Pwar Kho (or) Bread Mountain from Ler Kha Loe village*

## Governance and Conflict

The lack of systematic regulation and protection policies in the mining operations has resulted in frequent accidents, disputes, and conflicts within the community. The Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Karenni National Solidarity Organization (KNSO) have taken on the responsibility of resolving these conflicts, but the challenges remain significant. The disputes often arise from inadequate compensation for lost farmland, unsystematic waste disposal, and the invasion of local farms by mining companies.

## Recommendations

Due to weak management of natural resources and ineffective laws by successive Myanmar governments over the years, natural resources and the environment continue to be severely damaged. To address this ongoing issue, Myanmar Mining Watch Network (MMWN) has suggested several recommendations to the relevant stakeholders based on field findings on the ground and data collection of local voices, aiming to prevent the over-exploitation of natural resources, protect the environment, and strengthen the conservation efforts to reduce environmental damage in the future.

- 1** Mining companies and relevant organizations must strictly follow the Myanmar Mining Law and Regulations. They should also ensure compliance with and implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Social Impact Assessments (SIA) in the region. Additionally, they must refrain from engaging in any business or financial activities, or collaborations with the State Administration Council (SAC) or any entities associated with it, to uphold ethical standards and avoid supporting or legitimizing an administration involved in human rights violations.
- 2** During this interim, transitional and construction period, it is essential to strengthen sustainable natural resource management systems. It is important to elect leaders who are respected by local communities and who are responsible for accountability when implementing local governance mechanism to ensure success.
- 3** At the union, state, and regional levels, natural resource management policies should be developed and implemented that prioritize public protection and responsible resource use when the federal union will be built. When managing natural resources, it is essential to act in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and uphold the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- 4** Armed organizations and regional leaders from their respective areas should work with civil society and local communities to implement transparent regulations and monitoring mechanisms to prevent the excessive exploitation of natural resources, especially in times of political instability.
- 5** Develop a mechanism that can protect women, who are increasingly vulnerable to sexual violence as a result of the social impacts from unregulated/uncontrolled excessive mining activities.