

Opening

It is ironic that diamonds, the beautiful stones that many cultures use to celebrate love and marriage, have also been used to finance war and violence. African countries are among the world's greatest source of diamonds, they are also where millions of people have been killed and uprooted in battles to control them.

In the late 1990s, the world learned that criminal warlords like Charles Taylor used what came to be known as blood diamonds, to finance the death and destruction they inflicted on unarmed civilians in Sierra Leone and other African Countries.

Conflict diamonds have been a huge problem, over 70 Million people live in African countries that have been torn apart by struggles over diamonds and other minerals. The wars and rebellions shattered already weak economies, spread disease and created millions of refugees.

Responding to this growing crisis, the United Nations, governments of diamond producing and trading countries, including the United States, joined forces with the industry and civil society to create a system to reduce the market for conflict diamonds. In 2002 these organizations created the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme to combat trade in conflict diamonds on a worldwide basis.

The US Congress passed the Clean Diamond Trade Act to support and fund the effort.

In order to restrict conflict diamonds from entering the marketplace, the Kimberley Process creates a system for tracing diamonds from their source to the world diamond market. It's an ambitious goal, made even more difficult by the nature of artisanal diamond mining.

Throughout the rain forests of Central Africa, surrounding some of the great river basins and the streams that flow into them, there are significant deposits of alluvial diamonds scattered in the sub-soil. Over time, rivers and streams erode rock formations containing diamonds and the stones show up in the sediment downstream from the source rocks.

Artisanal miners in remote areas dig up the diamonds using just basic tools and backbreaking labor. The small scale and remote locations make alluvial diamonds very hard to trace. For these reasons, they are perfectly suited to being used by warlords and criminals and are therefore of deep concern for the Kimberley Process.

THE SITUATION IN THE MINING COMMUNITIES

In spite of the value of the stones they find, diamond-mining communities are desperately poor. Their poverty is accompanied by a host of other problems- poor health and malnutrition, rampant teen pregnancy, high rates of HIV AIDS, low literacy rates and widespread environmental degradation.

The miners, living at the edge of survival are easy to exploit, not only by warlords and criminals; but on a daily basis by dishonest buyers who cheat them on price.

French Subtitled

BRUNO (DIAMOND EVALUATION TRAINER)

If you look at the chain of diamond sales, it begins with miners, then collectors and up to the buying house... the ones who lose the most are at the bottom, the artisanal miners. At the top of the chain, you have people with fancy villas and cars who travel the world, while those at the bottom, live in misery. That's why we want to rebalance this situation.

Narration

INTRO TO CUSTOMARY - STATUTORY AND KIMBERLEY

One problem facing many countries that want to comply with the Kimberley Process, is determining who owns the mine where the stones were found. Land ownership at the grass roots level where artisanal miners work, is confusing- stemming from the existence of parallel systems, one customary and the other statutory. How to reconcile customary and statutory systems is a challenge.

INTRO TO PRADD PROJECT

In the Central African Republic, the United States Agency for International Development sponsored a pilot project, launched in 2007 called PRADD (the Property Rights and Artisanal Diamond Development Project).

It is designed to identify and test methods to strengthen property rights and production accounting, in order to improve compliance with the Kimberley Process.

The project also seeks to raise incomes and living standards for miners and mining communities.

MADELEINE WEKOMBO INTRO

As the owner of a small diamond mining claim, Madeleine Wékombo is called the Chef de Chantier. She lives in the heart of the Pilot Zone and worked with the PRADD team on the project.

Songo Subtitled

MADELEINE WEKOMBO (CHEF de CHANTIER)

I'm very happy for the PRADD training. Before this project, we didn't know that much about diamonds. We didn't know the real value of our diamonds and usually we sold them at a very undervalued price.

Since 1960, we were like blind people. But after this training in 2007, We began to see things more clearly.

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Cook

The PRADD project is a pilot intended to validate procedures for protecting the rights of the individual artisanal miner, the community in which that person lives, as well as increasing the revenue to the central government and by extension the entire population of the Central African Republic

The property rights of artisanal miners are rooted in customary rules and traditions.

But these rights are not written or recorded anywhere.

The absence of formal property rights and the failure to maintain production records, make it difficult to trace the diamonds they find.

PRADD developed a systematic process to identify miners and help them affirm their customary property rights claims, providing them a measure of protection they never had before.

At the same time, it helps the Government to comply with the Kimberley process, by identifying the exact source of the diamonds.

Songo Subtitled

YABA

Here, I show you the tomb of my father, Yaba David
who worked very hard for the community

Clans and tribes continue to play an important role in determining customary property rights.

Songo Subtitled

YABA

This is the tomb of Fidele Youane who was also a Chief.
who reigned from 1964 to 1971

These customary rights are invisible to the state and difficult to document.

But they are **very** real to people living in villages all over Central Africa.

Songo Subtitled

YABA

Here is the tomb of my grandfather who is the son of Chief Yaba

These rights are rooted in tribal history and culture
and managed by traditional leaders in the local communities.

Songo Subtitled

YABA

He was a well-known personality who died in 2002.

Narration

KENT INTRO

Kent Elbow, a land tenure specialist worked with Zéphirin Mogba and the rest of the PRADD team to design and test the methodology for translating customary rights to statutory rights.

Elbow

Basically the approach of our project is to try to link these parallel systems the statutory and the customary by bringing the customary non-formal rules and regulations and rights into the statutory system.

Narration

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In order to define the customary rights of miners in the Pilot Zone, the team developed an 8-step process that combined community development techniques to identify, organize and motivate the miners with GPS devices to precisely locate the mines.

STEP 1 PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL PROCESS

The work began with a participatory rural appraisal, a creative process where men and women from the community gathered to map their environment. Looking at their environment in this new way can be a powerful experience. It helped change their perspective on their own resources and how best to use them.

STEP 2 CENSUS OF ARTISANAL MINERS

The rural appraisal process gave the PRADD team an overview of the community. Step # 2 - conducting a census of the miners, was a focused effort to generate the facts on mine ownership.

STEP 3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

The next step was the Socio-Economic Survey. It included a more formal survey with a detailed questionnaire that was given to every single miner. The miners described not only the location of their mine, but also how and when they acquired ownership of it.

STEP 4 COLLECTING GPS COORDINATES

In every step of the process, the information about the mines and mine ownership became more accurate. In this next step, the PRADD team located each mine site using GPS devices. It was time-consuming, but it generated critical information.

With the precision of the GPS coordinates, they often discovered new facts about ownership and location that didn't come out in previous steps.

These GPS points connect the mine site locations to an amazing amount of metadata that is available from GIS sources, including data on vegetation, water and other resources that can be useful in land use planning.

French Subtitled

YOUANE (CAR KIMBERLY REP)

They located the mining sites with geographical coordinates, using the GPS devices. So wherever you are – in the US, Germany, or Ndjamena – you can see on a map, each of these mining sites: with their coordinates, owner's name and surface area, down to the square meter.

The GPS devices allow us to establish precise locations for them.

Narration

STEP 5 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The team regarded the miner's claims as provisional until it was determined that there were no conflicts. To handle the few conflicts that did come up, the team developed a successful community-driven mediation process to resolve them.

STEP 6 PUBLIC VALIDATION OF MINING CLAIMS

Songo Subtitled

ZEPH

Ngaisse has his mine on the Ngoube river.

Once the miner's claims were identified and precisely located, and after they determined that the claims were clear of any conflict- the claims were then publicly validated in front of the community.

Songo Subtitled

ZEPH

Everybody knows Naigaisse is a Chef de Chantier. So, if this is true. Let's everyone applaud.

Pasqueline Mbolipola inherited her mine from her husband, so everyone knows that Pasqueline is a Chef de Chantier. Is that right? So if we agree this is her mine on the Nguilingala river, then let's applaud.

STEP 7 AWARD OF CUSTOMARY RIGHTS CERTIFICATES

Everyone was pleased with the results of the validation process, the miners, the Central African government and US AID. To celebrate their accomplishment, the US Ambassador, Frederick Cook, joined national, regional and local Central African officials in Bossoui, to distribute certificates.

HANDING OUT AWARDS CEREMONY

The artisans were proud of their accomplishment. For the first time, they had a written document that affirmed their claims.

STEP 8 LEGALIZATION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

According to current laws in the Central African Republic, the first step toward legalization is the acquisition of a license called a *patente*, which gives the miner permission to mine a specific site. It comes with a logbook, called a *cahier de production*, to help them track the diamonds they find.

The government is considering new laws and practices to expand recognition of customary property rights.

SOUND BITES FROM YOUANE AND THE AMBASSADOR

French Subtitled

YOUANE

Our wish is that we can expand the project to other mining sites that aren't already covered by this project. So that all the artisans understand the importance of using the production notebooks, the importance of the mining code, and that they will work legally. For their own well-being. And for the well being of the country.

How customary property rights become integrated into a government's legal or statutory system will vary from country to country, but the success of PRADD's pilot program in affirming customary rights proves that it has enormous value for all the stakeholders- the miners, the government and the Kimberley Process.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPERTY RIGHTS REGISTRATION

After going through the property rights process and getting their certificate, the miners spoke with greater confidence about their rights, knowing they had a document that verified their property and its exact location.

They are now in a stronger position to negotiate a win-win solution if an industrial mining company or a government organization ever challenged their rights.

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Equally important, the process, and what the miners learned going through it, changed their attitude about the tangible rewards of operating legally.

French Subtitled

EMANUELLE DESIRE

You can already see a change in mentality among the miners.
Those who were resistant at first; have become less resistant.
I think after one or two more years of following this policy, we will be able
To bring everyone into the legal framework for exploiting diamonds.

THE ENVIROMENTAL IMPACT OF DIAMOND MINING

French Subtitled

JOSIANE

Very simply, artisanal miners work in fragile zones: around marshes and rivers. The holes inevitably cause environmental degradation, leading to the loss of streams. They damage the whole ecosystem around the streams.

INTRO TO DEGRADATION

Industrial and artisanal diamond mining do enormous damage to the environment- mining destroys farmland and forests and diverts rivers and streams, depositing silt and reducing fish stocks.

French Subtitled

JOSIANE

We have to make all artisanal miners completely aware of the dangers to the environment, to ensure the rehabilitation of damaged areas and develop new techniques to limit the degradation of their mining activities.

OVER REHABILITATION

Training artisans to use these techniques is essential to reduce future damage.

Songo Subtitled

NINGUIA

They work on the river until here...
When the land is damaged, some people say,
“Why bother repair it? We’re just looking for diamonds.”

INTRO TO DIAMOND VALUATION

Educating miners about environmental rehabilitation goes hand-in-hand with training focused on alternative livelihoods and agricultural productivity. It helps them to diversify their income and become more self sufficient in terms of food resources.

In the near term however, training them in diamond valuation is very helpful.

French Subtitled

BRUNO

When the artisans go to sell their products to the collectors or the buying offices, they don't really know exactly what their diamonds are worth. The collectors and the buying agents, who know very well what they are worth, very often cheat them.

The most direct, effective way to increase the income of diamond miners is to train them in diamond valuation. Learning how to value diamonds put the artisans on a stronger footing in their negotiations with buyers. Recognizing this, PRADD provided artisans in the pilot zone with a basic course in diamond valuation.

French Subtitled

HYACINTH (DAPM)

PRADD trained artisans on site to value diamonds. Now, in the pilot zone there are diamond valuation experts among the artisanal miners, which helps prevent the miners from being swindled when selling their product.

Songo Subtitled

UNNAMED WOMAN

We learned many things, but diamond valuation training was the most important aspect of the program. In the future, I will sell my diamonds at real value.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR MINING COMMUNITIES

OVER PLANNING SHOTS BEFORE KENT

Affirming the property rights of miners was the major goal of the PRADD project; building collaborative partnerships to promote economic development and diversify income sources was also a key objective.

Elbow

The diamond industry is of course very much linked to the global financial crisis. There's no longer the market that existed before and that changes very much the context in which we are working. We really need to pay more attention to helping our artisanal miners to engage in other activities to diversify them.

AFTER KENT

The global financial crisis and its impact on the local diamond market taught miners the dangers of becoming too dependent on one product.

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The exercises and the discussions the miners had, going through the process, provoked them to think and act differently about land use planning, economic development and natural resource management.

Songo Subtitle

Francois

We are talking about products we can sell,
And whether we can sell them easily or not.

OVER FRANCOIS

Ngotto, one of the villages in the Pilot Zone, PRADD team member Francois Ngbakoto facilitated a lively discussion about readily available alternatives to mining, market opportunities for different food crops and how to improve productivity in growing basics like potatoes, rice, corn and manioc.

Songo Subtitle

Francois

...rice, sesame seeds, sugar cane...
potatoes, honey and onions/

Cook

The PRADD Project was always presented as a pilot project and it is our hope that the Central African government will assess this project and select those elements which are most beneficial, and that they will spread these protections for the miners and for the environment across the entire country.

CLOSING SUMMARY

In looking at the whole property rights registration process, it is clear that the effort has far more value than just the documents the miners receive. The process itself promotes ownership and responsibility; it becomes a point of departure for community economic development, environmental rehabilitation and improved natural resource management. These activities are critical in order to improve the lives of miners and mining communities.

FINIS!

UNUSED LINES

In Ngotto, one of the villages in the Pilot Zone, PRADD staff members talked with the local community about alternatives to mining, and how to improve productivity for crops like potatoes, rice, corn and manioc. The diamond crisis has increased the miners' interest in learning to grow more farm products to diversify their income sources.

The diamond crisis has increased the miners' interest in learning to grow more farm products to diversify their income sources.

INTRO TO AMBASSADOR AND SUMMARY

Getting the artisans and their communities to think about property rights changed their perspective about their immediate environment and opened them up to many new productive conversations. The miners who actively participated in the program, gained significantly from the wide variety of experiences offered by the PRADD team.

Creating ways for miners to affirm their property rights, strengthens their ability to negotiate with large institutions like the government or industrial mining companies. In the Pilot Zone, a conflict over mining rights arose when a large company launched a diamond mine in complete disregard of the customary rights of the local miners.

En réponse à cette crise grandissante, Les Nations Unies, le gouvernement américain et d'autres organisations multilatérales ont uni leurs forces avec l'industrie diamantaire pour créer un système visant à réduire le marché des diamants de conflits.

De cette initiative commune est né en 2002 le système de certification du Processus de Kimberley pour mettre un terme au commerce des diamants de conflits à l'échelle mondiale.

(sert aussi à financer la guerre et la violence.)