



## The World Bank & Gender Based Violence Case Study: the Democratic Republic of Congo



More than a decade of violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has led to devastating rates of gender-based violence (GBV). GBV has reached epidemic proportions in the DRC's mineral-rich eastern region, where militia groups use rape as a weapon to control the lucrative supply of coltan, tungsten, tin ore, tantalum, diamonds and gold (Pact, 2008; Megar, 2010; Mukenge, 2010; Vigaud-Walsh, 2011). In addition to numerous human rights and development organizations, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)—a global system that uses voluntary global standards to monitor oil, gas and mining sector management—confirmed that GBV is widespread in the DRC's mining regions in 2010 (EITI International Secretariat, 2011).

GBV, including rape, prostitution, forced marriage and domestic violence, is especially rampant in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) areas where women and children constitute up to 60 percent of miners, sorters, transporters and suppliers (Pact, 2008). Although ASM accounts for up to 90 percent of the DRC's mining exports, ASM remains unregulated, dangerous, and largely controlled by illegal traders and security personnel who perpetuate GBV (Pact, 2008). Pact, an organization funded in part by the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector arm, reports that female ASM laborers are easily exploited and marginalized; their average income ranges from just US\$2-US\$4 per day. Hazardous living conditions in ASM camps, including large concentrations of migrant men, high levels of alcohol and drug abuse and intense militia presence, increase women and girls' risk of GBV and sexually transmitted infections (Pact, 2008).

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the World Bank (WB), inadequately invest in GBV prevention and services for GBV providers. The World Bank currently funds GBV projects in only three countries—DRC, Cote D'Ivoire and Haiti. Totaling US\$3.2 million, these GBV investments represent just 0.005 of the WB's FY2010 budget (Gender Action, 2011a). Despite the WB's obligation to transparently share project information with the public, it has not disclosed any documentation for these three GBV investments on its website. The WB has also fueled the DRC's GBV epidemic through mining sector investments that disregard negative gender impacts. For example, the WB assisted the DRC to revise its Mining Code in 2002 in order to attract foreign private investment, but the new Code completely fails to address GBV that stems from mining activities (DRC Law No. 007/2002). In 2009, the WB loaned the DRC government US\$255 million to rehabilitate a 700 km rail line in Eastern DRC in order to strengthen the mining industry and "encourage the development of isolated communities and help fight poverty" as part of a US\$631 million mining infrastructure investment (Frost Illustrated, 2011). Although the WB project appraisal document acknowledges that "extreme violence and urgent humanitarian needs persist" in the targeted area (WB, 2010a), it completely ignores GBV (WB, 2010a; 2011).

### Gender Analysis Methodology and Findings

In order to assess the extent to which WB extractive industry investments in the DRC address GBV, this case study applies Gender Action's [Essential Gender Analysis Checklist](#) (Gender Action, 2011b) to the WB's two current mining and extractive industry investments.\*\* The Checklist is part of Gender Action's [Gender Toolkit for International Finance Watchers](#) (Gender Action, 2011c), a user-friendly toolkit for civil society groups that wish to incorporate gender perspectives into their work on IFIs, including the WB. Gender Action's analysis demonstrates a critical lack of gender sensitivity in both projects, which ignore potential negative gender impacts and increased risk of GBV among female beneficiaries. This case study underscores the urgent need for IFIs to implement their own gender policies, explicitly address GBV against women and men, boys and girls, and promote sexual and reproductive rights in their investments. This is the first in our series of case studies that analyze the GBV impacts of IFI projects following the publication of our [IFIs and GBV Primer](#) (Gender Action, 2011a).

\*Muadi Mukenge and Elaine Zuckerman provided valuable input.

\*\*At the time of publication, these projects were the WB's only active extractive industry investments in the DRC for which project documents were available.

## The WB's "Growth with Governance in the Mineral Sector" Project, 2010 (US\$50 million loan)

The WB's US\$50 million "Growth with Governance in the Mineral Sector" project purportedly encourages the government to use mining sector revenue to lift citizens out of poverty. The project aims to strengthen institutional capacity to manage the minerals sector, improve conditions for private investment and thereby increase mining revenues and socioeconomic benefits from artisanal and industrial mining (WB, 2010b).

### Human Rights and Gender Safeguards

Although the project appraisal document acknowledges "human rights violations on mining sites or caused by the mineral trade" (WB, 2010b), including GBV, it fails to include specific actions to address them (see box).

The project does not contain any social safeguards, which the WB boasts are a "cornerstone of its support to sustainable poverty reduction" (WB, 2011b). The project appraisal document merely mentions an Indigenous People Participatory Framework, which is supposed to be "open to issues such as gender and inter-generational justice" (WB, 2010b), then focuses only on women's economic opportunities stemming from the mining investment. This focus is in line with the WB's Gender Action Plan, which approaches women's empowerment solely as an instrument for economic growth, without promoting women's and men's equal rights (WB, 2006; WB, 2010c; Gender Action, 2010).

### Gender Data, Input and Access

The project appraisal document notes that women constitute 40 percent of those involved in ASM, which exhibits some of the "worst forms of labor, environmental and social practice found in the DRC today" (Perks, 2011). No other gender indicators or sex-disaggregated data are provided. The project's latest Implementation Status and Results Report lists "working and living conditions of mining communities" among its indicators, but provides neither specific conditions for women, men, boys and girls, nor baseline or ongoing data on mining communities' working and living conditions (WB, 2011c).

While the project appraisal document acknowledges the importance of addressing the "gender dimension in mining benefits sharing" (WB, 2010b), it fails to discuss how gender inequalities may create different levels of access for men and women. The project appraisal document claims that the project should pay particular attention to "opportunities that the mining investment creates for women and youth" (WB, 2010b), but it ignores the "deplorable conditions and discrimination facing artisanal miners," particularly women and girls, often due to their lower educational status (Perks, 2011).

Commendably, the project aims to address gender bias through "training on how to better engage community groups" and engage women as key stakeholders "to promote inclusion and enhance social accountability and governance" (WB, 2010b). However, the project lacks indicators to track and measure women's project participation.

### Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

**Gender and Human Rights:** The project appraisal document neglects to promote gender/human rights and approaches women's livelihoods solely through economic empowerment.

**Gender In/equality:** The project appraisal document neither adequately addresses gender inequalities, nor seeks to redress them through project activities.

**Gender Data:** The project appraisal document notes that 40 percent of people involved in artisanal and small-scale mining are women," but does not provide data on GBV prevalence. Outcome indicators disaggregate the percentage of women included among project beneficiaries, but do not explicitly measure women's access to economic opportunities that stem from mining investments.

**Gender in Context:** The project appraisal document does not provide any context in which to understand gender relations, besides a brief mention of "gender biases" in the mining industry.

**Gender Access:** The project appraisal document commendably states that "particular attention should be paid to the opportunities that the mining investment creates for women and youth," but then it neither explicitly supports creating such opportunities, nor states how these opportunities will be evaluated.

**Gender Input:** The project appraisal document does not indicate whether women and girls were able to participate in any or all of the project stages including design, implementation and evaluation.

**Gender Output:** The project appraisal document does not explicitly promote project outputs and outcomes that equally benefit women and men.

**Gender Impact:** The project appraisal document does not explain what measures will be used to assess gender-sensitive policy reform and its potential gender impacts.



Photo by Thehunter1184

## Gender Output and Impacts

The WB's Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment is supposed to "provide detailed information on sectoral environmental and socio-economic policies and potential impacts" and "recommend measures" to mitigate "potentially adverse...social impacts, while at the same time enhancing pro-poor and gender-sensitive policy reform and positive impacts" (WB, 2010b) in the course of the project. While the assessment acknowledges that "artisanal mining is frequently associated with negative social impacts including...gender discrimination and violence" (WB, 2010b), it fails to suggest ways in which the project could actively address and prevent GBV. It also lacks measures to assess gender-sensitive policy reform and its potential impacts. The project appraisal document includes an indicator to measure industrial mining's social and environmental impacts, but does not examine the project's differential impact on women and men, boys and girls.

## The "Growth with Governance in the Mineral Sector" Project's GBV Impacts

Artisanal mining communities have large concentrations of ex-combatants in northeast DRC where GBV is commonplace (Perks, 2011). Female miners are constantly exposed to a violent, unstable and male-dominated community, where most men are unattached to their families and traditional communities (Perks, 2011). Women engage in voluntary and forced sex work, often unprotected and under threat of violence, within a culture that promotes "individual survivalism, impunity, and escapism--primarily by men--into alcohol and drugs" (Perks, 2011). While the "Growth with Governance" project acknowledges some of these risks, it fails to take explicit measures to protect the thousands of women who depend upon ASM to support themselves and their families.



## International and Local Civil Society Responses to IFIs, the Mining Industry and GBV in the DRC

In order to reduce GBV in the DRC, civil society groups argue that it is essential to disable financial opportunities that lead to GBV. The Enough Project's "Raise Hope for Congo" campaign advocates for the protection of Congolese women and girls within conflict minerals' corporate supply chain (Enough Project, 2011). Global Witness also campaigns to improve Congolese livelihoods by advocating for due diligence standards within companies' supply chains. Both groups target corporations at the top of the supply chain, most notably electronics companies that produce high-demand items, such as laptops and cellular phones (i.e. HP, Apple, Microsoft).

Global Witness emphasizes that mineral extracting firms in the middle of the supply chain are also culpable of gender rights violations: "*Comptoirs* [contractors] claim publicly that because they are licensed and pay taxes that all the cassiterite they export must be conflict-free. In reality, their purchases are bankrolling abuses and instability in the region" (Global Witness, 2010). As corporations win WB and government procurement contracts to develop the mining industry, IFIs can play a distinctive role to prevent GBV in eastern DRC by implementing their gender safeguard policies.

Women's civil society groups in the DRC are also actively fighting against GBV. With the support of the Global Fund for Women, Congolese women's advocacy organizations are "challenging rampant sexual harassment and sexual violence that goes unpunished" (Mukenge, 2010). Women's advocacy groups have provided GBV survivors with medical and legal assistance, small loans for income-generating activities, and provided awareness raising for GBV survivors so they may claim their human, political and sexual and reproductive rights (Mukenge, 2010).

# The WB's "Private Sector Development and Competitiveness Project," 2003-2012 (US\$120 million credit & US\$60 million grant)

When the WB approved the US\$120 million "Private Sector Development and Competitiveness" project in 2003, the DRC was emerging from years of violent conflict and mismanagement, and was rated one of the riskiest places in the world to do business (WB, 2003). With the DRC's formerly multi-billion dollar mining industry in "shambles," the WB determined that its recovery depended on "restructuring and privatization of mining state-owned enterprises," namely *La Generale des Carrieres et des Mines* (Gécamines) (WB, 2003). The private sector project aims to "increase the competitiveness of the economy, and thereby contribute to economic growth" (WB, 2003) in Katanga province.

## Neglecting Human Rights and Social Services

Gender Action's analysis (see box) reveals the project appraisal document's lack of a human rights perspective; it completely ignores gender inequalities that could affect women and girls' ability to access project activities and ultimately cause them harm. The project focuses only on the mining, transport, telecom and energy sectors, since they are the "most important for promoting economic growth" (WB, 2003). The project's neglect of vital public health, education and social services is all the more egregious given that the project calls for retrenchment of 10,000 Gécamines workers. Before the WB's involvement, Gécamines provided housing, water, health care and education to over one million people in surrounding communities (WB, 2003; Keener, 2006). Although the project includes several compensatory measures for retrenched workers, it hardly compensates for the lost income and social services for all 10,000 workers and their extended families.

## Gender Data, Input and Access

As the project's monitoring framework does not include any gender-specific indicators or mandate the collection of sex-disaggregated data, it is impossible to determine how many women have access to income-generating opportunities and measure the impact of lost housing, utilities and social services upon women and men, boys and girls. The project appraisal document does not indicate whether women provided input to project planning or were permitted to participate in the project as equally as men. Although the project appraisal document states that the project will "rebuild effective public institutions and policies" by increasing citizen participation, it fails to explicitly promote women's participation in these processes of institutional reform.

Women's roles are not discussed in project plans to strengthen the judiciary system and Ministry of Mines, nor are women mentioned in plans to support local economic development, community capacity building, and the transfer of social services to government municipalities (WB, 2003). The latter project component is intended to support community "empowerment" by transferring social services to private or non-profit institutions, or to the central government—despite the WB's own acknowledgement that the DRC government is essentially bankrupt. The project therefore not only undermines the livelihoods of thousands of former Gécamines employees and their families, but also increases women's vulnerability by failing to incorporate or even acknowledge them within the Bank's so-called capacity building and community empowerment interventions. Although the project appraisal document claims that women will gain employment opportunities in "agribusiness," "small-scale mining," or "micro-enterprise and commerce," it fails to consider women's limited access to these fields, which are often male dominated (Perks, 2011).

## Gender Outputs and Impacts

The project appraisal document not only fails to promote outputs that equally benefit men and women, boys and girls, but actually indicates that the project may cause harm, particularly to women and children. The project primarily focuses on strengthening employment opportunities in male-dominated industries, and does not consider the gender impacts of retrenchment on employees and their families, including the loss of Gécamines' social services on women and children.

### Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

**Gender and Human Rights:** The project does not include a human rights perspective; the project focuses solely on strengthening the DRC's private sector and undermines health, education and social services.

**Gender In/equality:** The project does not examine or seek to redress gender inequality, nor does it explicitly promote gender equality through project activities.

**Gender Data:** The project does not contain any gender indicators, nor does it mandate the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.

**Gender in Context:** The project appraisal document does not offer any context in which to understand gender relations in DRC mining areas.

**Gender Access:** The project is supposed to include "employment creation initiatives" for women, but fails to consider gender inequalities as a potential barrier to formal employment.

**Gender Input:** The project appraisal document does not indicate that women, girls or other vulnerable groups were involved in the design, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of the project.

**Gender Output:** The project does not promote outputs and outcomes that equally benefit men and women, boys and girls. Discussion of project outputs fail to address women's loss of livelihood and access to health and social services.

**Gender Impact:** The project does not examine the differential impacts of the project on men and women, boys and girls, including women and girls' increased vulnerability to sexually transmitted infection and GBV.

A WB qualitative study of the project's impact on miners confirmed that by 2006, the project led to the consolidation and closure of Gécamines schools. This left children in eight localities with no other education alternatives (Keener, 2006). The project also led to decreased access to medical care, and a deterioration in quality of services that were available. Social service costs rose substantially for miners, retrenched workers and their extended families, who were forced to pay for private health care and supply their own materials and medicines (Keener, 2006). The WB's study failed to acknowledge the burden this placed on women, who must compensate for decreased access to social services by providing home-based health care for their families. The study also did not acknowledge that when access to public schooling decreases, female students often pay a greater price compared to boys.

In the absence of Gécamines income and without other employment opportunities, the WB noted an increase in "informal mining," particularly among women and children, despite the lack of security and poor working conditions (Keener, 2006). Although child labor was reported in Katanga after the project began, the project appraisal document and qualitative study do not adequately address this critical issue, let alone take active steps to prevent it. According to UNICEF and the International Labor Organization, thousands of children in Katanga province, where Gécamines is located, risk their lives working in the mines (Bouwen, 2006). Child labor not only affects boys who are forced into mining as young as age seven, but also includes "girls [who] come to the mines and practice prostitution, which accelerates the progression of HIV" (Bouwen, 2006). The project therefore not only undermines vulnerable communities' access to health care, but also contributes to occupational health hazards and the spread of sexually transmitted infection.

### **The "Private Sector Development and Competitiveness" Project's GBV Impacts**

The WB's "Private Sector Development" project not only ignores the staggering rates of GBV in Katanga province. It actually *exacerbates* women and girls' risk of GBV and its devastating health consequences by undermining retrenched workers' ability to support their families, increasing conflict within households, reducing access to health care and girls' education, and forcing women and children to rely on dangerous work in informal mines and prostitution in order to survive. Although the WB's Inspection Panel has addressed some violations against Gécamines workers (see box, right), the voices of Congolese women and children, who are the most vulnerable to exploitation and GBV, remain largely unheard.

### **Inspection Panel Investigation**

By December 2009, the WB's accountability mechanism, the Inspection Panel, had received three complaints from employees who had lost their jobs in the process of the "Private Sector Development and Competitiveness Project" implementation. The first two complaints were submitted by retrenched Gécamines employees, who alleged that they had not been adequately compensated for their loss of livelihood. The third complaint was submitted by two of the 3,480 employees who had lost their jobs when the DRC Central Bank liquidated three state-owned banks. The employees complained not only about their paltry financial severance package, but also about the social consequences of their retrenchment, their difficulty reintegrating into the workforce, and their unsatisfactory communication with WB staff (WB, 2010c).

The Inspection Panel concluded that the WB "failed to observe its rules and procedures in the context of the programs agreed with the Congolese government on the restructuring of Gécamines with a view to finding an honorable solution to reducing the labor costs of our former employer Gécamines and properly indemnifying the Gécamines employees" (WB, 2010c). It took until April 2010 for all three complaints to be addressed.

In response to this finding, the WB composed a Management Action Plan to respond to the complaints and "further improve the quality of the overall Bank's portfolio in DRC in connection with social and other aspects of public sector reform" (WB, 2010c), which required an additional US\$12-14 million. According to the WB, some Management Action Plan tasks were implemented in 2010. By the end of 2010, Gécamines reportedly still owed more than US\$300 million in unpaid salaries to their employees (Reuters, 2010).

The WB's April 2011 report to the Inspection Panel stated that a WB team spoke to affected community members, including civil society organizations and labor union representatives, to "discuss the best ways and means to address the various challenges" posed by the Management Action Plan implementation, to "correct past actions" and help government agencies "better deal with retrenchment plans, retirement plans and other social plans involved" (WB, 2011c). The report also stated that the WB assessed Gécamines' employees' education and health services under the Management Action Plan, and that its findings "generated several high-impact adjustments" that will improve health and education service delivery (WB, 2011c). Among these "high impact adjustments" are: 1) provision of education support (for 2011-2012) to children enrolled in Gécamines and non-Gécamines schools during 2010-11, up to end of secondary education or age of cutoff to be agreed; 2) provision of free access to NGO-provided health care for retrenched workers and eligible family members (including widows and spouses) for up to two years. After two years, retrenched Gécamines employees under the WB private sector project lose access to education and health services.

# Gender Action Recommendations

## The World Bank must:

- ✓ Stop investing in hazardous extractive industries that benefit corporations but harm women and men, boys and girls.
- ✓ Stop promoting the privatization of essential health and social services, which undermine poor men and women's livelihoods.
- ✓ Approach all investments from gender and human rights perspectives that promote women's and men's equal human rights.
- ✓ Ensure affected women's involvement throughout all project cycle stages, including design, implementation and evaluation, and promote outcomes that equally benefit women and men, boys and girls.
- ✓ Incorporate gender safeguards into procurement policies, and end contracts that are knowingly awarded to contractors who participate in illegal transactions with groups that are known to terrorize women and children.
- ✓ Promote diversification of the DRC's economy by increasing investments across sectors, particularly those that improve women's livelihoods (i.e. agriculture).
- ✓ Invest in rural roads, water, sanitation, health and educational facilities both within and outside mining districts.
- ✓ Assist the DRC government to improve corporate tax mechanisms, such as for industrial mining, so that generated revenues are funneled back into public services.

## Civil Society Organizations can:

- ✓ Use Gender Action resources to pressure IFIs to prevent GBV within mining/extractive industry investments, and invest in directly addressing GBV (Gender Action, 2011a; Gender Action, 2011b; Gender Action, 2011c).
- ✓ Help women, men, boys and girls who suffer from IFI mining/extractive industry investments' GBV impacts to gather information about IFI policies and procedures and bring gender discrimination cases to IFI accountability mechanisms.

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**Gender Action's mission is to promote women's rights and gender equality and ensure women and men equally participate in and benefit from International Financial Institution (IFI) investments in developing countries.**



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