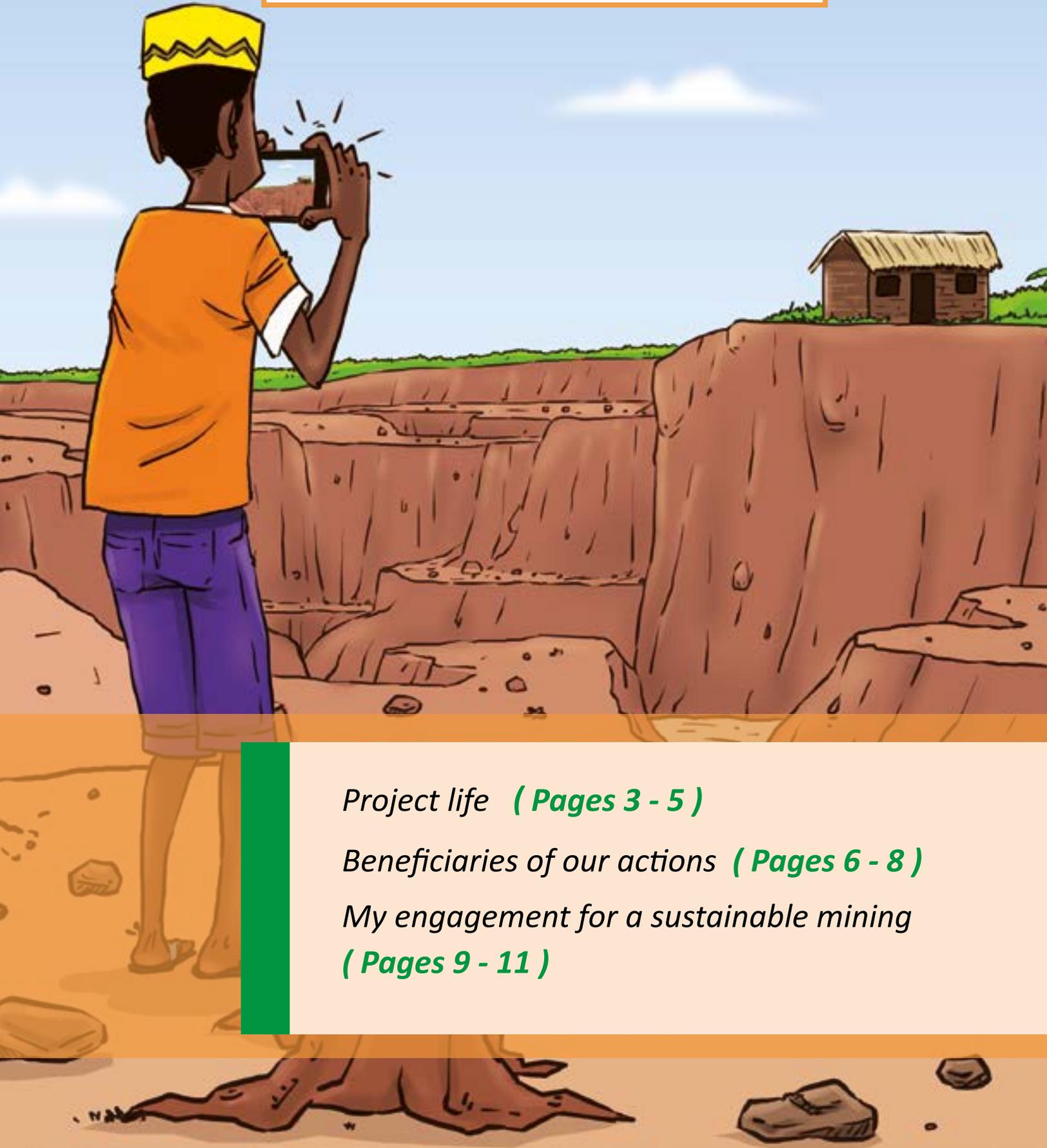


Number1

# ProMESS

PROJET MINES-ENVIRONNEMENT-SANTÉ ET SOCIÉTÉ

## NEWSLETTER



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## Justin KAMGA

Coordinator of the Organisation  
Forêts et Développement Rural  
(FODER)

I have the pleasure to present to you the first volume of “**Newsletter**” of the project Mines-Environment Health and Society; Phase 2 (ProMESS 2). Other volumes will be released at the end of each year after implementation of this project. Our aim is to make a selection of our best actions, results, changes obtained during the implementation of this project.

“**Newsletter**” presented in this note book will be a concrete proof to show that our actions contributed to improve mining governance in Cameroon through monitoring of mining activities, promotion of transparency and promotion of socio-economic and environmental development.

The committed actions of our beneficiaries, our methods put in place to obtain results, our innovations for the monitoring of mining activities are all found in this “**Newsletter**”. These “**Newsletters**” constitute a mean to appreciate the important role played by the project in the improvement of knowledge and implication of the audience in legislation, the fight against fraud and corruption in the mining sector thus, reducing illegal practices. This note book will also present the capacity-building initiatives of none state authors, state and decentralize local authorities (CTD) in monitoring legal mining. It will summarise accompanying majors given to artisanal gold miners including women and youths in the process of legalizing their mining activities and adopting responsible mining practices.

The Project Mines-Environment Health and Society (ProMESS 2) has been put in place by the Forest and Rural Development Association (FODER) in collaboration with Transparency International Cameroon (TI-C) with the financial support of the European Union. The project will be implemented in four (04) years (2019 – 2023).

I will let you discover this newsletter of our first-year project, wishing you a nice reading!

## Key numbers to master

### 35000

*During the first year of the setting up of ProMESS 2, at least 35 persons were sensitized about the challenges of the mining sector using social medias including linkedIn, tweeter, facebook. Hence a performance rate of 35% which is quite satisfactory for the first year.*

### 10

*CVCs were established in the communities; namely Meziong (Yokaduma); Ouéssou, Botoundou, Ndjock Doumo (Garri-Gombo); Kadey-Malewa, Samba, Gangan-ga(Ngoura); Gala, Secretaire and Wakasso (Meiganga). These new CVCs were added to the 20 existing ones put in place during the first phase of the project; thus a total number of 31.*

### 13

*Death cases were registered since the project started back in March 2019 to February 2020. These cases have been recorded in the Bétaré Oya, Meiganga, Ngoura, and Batouri sub divisions.*

### 10 000

*Members of 45 neighbouring communities from mining sites were informed and sensitized on the importance to organize a Citizen Watch Committee (CVC) for the defense of their rights on questions related to mining exploitation.*



## PROJECT LIFE

# Official launching of the project

It took place on March 28 2019 in the conference hall of Djeuga Palace Hotel in Yaounde, the launching workshop of the second stage of the project Mines-Environment Health and Society. This workshop brought together participants from the administrative sectors (MINMIDT, MINEPDED, MINFI) state control bodies (CONSUPE, CONAC, ITIE CAMEROON) Decentralized Local Authorities (Meiganga, Ngoura, Garoua-Bouläï, Ouli, Kentsou, Kette); state programs and projects (PASIE, CAPAM, PRECASEM) Mining communities (Traditional rulers of Kombo Laka, Gbanguida, Boubara, Bengué Tiko, Bindi-ba, Bétaré Oya) EU; NGO/CSO (INBAR, FODER, TIC, CRADEC, DMJ, PCQVP, SeP, Environmental volunteers, UICN), medias (Equinox, Canal 2, Vision 4, CRTV, Quotidien l'Economie, Repère, Radio Kpawara, RTS, KALAK FM); student researchers. The aim of this workshop were to inform stakeholders of the mining sector about the objectives, methodology, activities

and results expected from the project; to let stakeholders understand the project and make them to be committed to the project in order to meet up with the objectives; Sensor and gather needs and orientate stakeholders in relation with the project. This workshop was under the chairmanship of the S.G of MINMIDT in the presence of the head of the European Union Delegation.



Official launching of the project



## The Trainers 'training on rehabilitation of mined sites and responsible use of Mercury

It was organized in December 2019. Its aim was to equip the executives of the administration involved in the management of mining resources and the personnel of FODER, on innovative techniques on mined sites rehabilitation and actions to be taken. The training organized in Batouri, was facilitated by

the Ghanaian consultant; Dr. Ismael QAICOE from the University of Mines and Technology of Ghana (UMat). 32 participants gained knowledge from this training including 17 persons from MINMIDT, 6 persons from MINEDED and 9 persons from FODER..

## Development of a thematic study on Legality, Fraud, and Corruption in the mining sector

The project's first year was crucial for the collection and analysis of data to come up with a cartography of integrity deficiencies in the value chain of mining in Cameroon. The result will be released during the second year of the project. Data collection was done from October to November 2019

in the Adamawa, East, and Center regions precisely in Yaounde, Bertoua, Batouri, Kette, Ngoura, Colomine, Betaré oya, Meiganga, and Ngaoundéré. This activity was conducted by the implementing partner of the project Transparency International Cameroon (TI-C).

## Capacity building of journalists

Twelve (12) journalists were trained on fraud and corruption in the mining sector. The training was organized from 12 – 13 December 2019. Several resource people conducted this training. Particularly, an executive member of the ministry of mines, an experimented investigation journalist, a third-grade

magistrate and an Environmental Geologist. From this training we obtained a regular broadcast of articles on mining governance. So, the first year of the project contributed to the production of 12 articles published by journalists.

# Support to the functioning of Citizen Watch Committee (CVC)

The first year of the second phase of the project helped to diagnose the CVCs put in place during the first phase of ProMESS, the extension of communities structured into watch Committee in new communities where activity was established and who requested for the assistance of FODER's . It also helped in the sensitization of communities on crucial matters (The presence of underage school children in mine sites, observation and denunciation of illegal mining activities and violations of community rights, social responsibility of mining operators, mining stakeholders), the following up of communities (CVCs) in making complaints, denunciations and community advocacy.



## Development of alternatives to mining activities



Activities carried out during the first year of the project equally aimed at showing gold artisanal miners other means of subsistence apart from the mining activity they carry on. The aim was to ameliorate their living condition. Thus, in order to ensure promotion and support to the development of alternatives to mining activities, a site to developed

improved species of cassava and plantain seeds has been put in place. Distribution of seeds to artisans was scheduled for the second year of the project, but to anticipate the agricultural campaign of 2020, a nursery of Plants derived from stem bits (PIF) of an agricultural production capacity of 15,000 plants or seeds (PIF) was put in place in February 2020 in Bertoua.



## **BENEFICIARIES OF OUR ACTIONS**

# **Parental Teacher Association (PTA) schools to promote education of children and reduce their presence in mine sites**

**T**he sensitization of communities on the inconvenience of children working in mine sites helped parents to realize that children can have a better future other than mining exploitation. So, four (04) different communities were mobilized for the creation of PTA schools officially called “*Centre d’Education de Base*” which was informal (for primary education) and “*Centre Précolaire Communautaire*” (for nursery). These schools were thus established in the communities of Yassa (Garoua-Boulai), Ngoe Ngoe (Ngoura), Gbengoubou (Bétaré Oya) and Haya Haya (Bétaré Oya). The active CVCs of Bindiba, NgoeNgoe, Gbengoubou, Longa Mali, worked for the creation of these schools and will still help to reduce the presence of children in mine site areas.

The new created schools facilitated a massive presence of pupils. In the nursery and primary PTA schools of Yassa we presently

have 113 pupils. Nursery and primary PTA schools of Gbengoubou, Haya and Ngoe-Ngoe have respectively 60, 57, and 35 pupils from nursery to primary 1 and 2. Moreover, the sensitization of gold artisanal miners influenced 20 site managers to forbid the presence of school age children (underage) in their sites..



# Community action of CVC

The organization FODER reinforced the capacity of CVCs and helped them to carry out community interest actions. They are very active towards the protection of community rights, denunciation of illegalities and abuses observed, sensitizations, the prevention/management of conflicts.

## MBANGBEL

The CVC of Gbangbel gathered the population and chiefs of neighboring villages to repair the bridge over river Mali which had reached a very advanced level of degradation. The bridge which was damaged due to the exploitation of a semi-mechanized mining company was repaired due to community work. Moreover, with the knowledge acquired on their riparian rights during the sensitization organized in the framework of the project, the CVC of Gbangbel succeeded in stopping the works of a semi-mechanized mining company. Indeed, the members of this CVC were victorious.

## NGOE-NGOE

The CVC of Ngoa-Ngoa applied the knowledge acquired to manage community advocacy and obtained an agreement from a company to prepare a site towards the construction of a stadium, public borehole within the community.

Added to these common actions developed by the CVC and in relations to this project, many complains and denunciations have been filled by the community to defend their rights. Thus, by the end of the first year of the project ProMESS 2, a total of 13 complains have been filled. 64% of these complains and denunciations have been resolved by the administration to whom the complaints had been forwarded and this in a short period of time. By the way, it is worth mentioning that the members of the CVC whose communities are better implemented (better knowledge on legislation text, of their rights, of the community advocacy and of the procedures to follow up, to solve their misunderstandings), participate more and more actively beside the competent authorities to look for solutions on the problem they face.

## NDEM 2

By applying their community advocacy actions and their knowledge on their rights, the CVC of Ndem 2 and chief of the village jointly addressed petitions in view of the realization of social amenities to a Chinese company mining gold and valorizing timbers in their village as well as to the mayor of Batouri. The purpose of the petitions was on the construction of a classroom, the construction of a community shed, the payment of parent teachers and the construction of a public borehole as a compensation for mining and logging activities in the village. After negotiations, the Chinese company accepted to build classrooms. Construction works are operational. The Batouri council has paid 09 months of salary to 03 PTA teachers an amount of thirty thousand (30,000) Franc CFA per teacher. The town hall has equally built and equipped the community shed with 50 chairs.



# The Gold artisanal Miners create cooperatives and adopt best practices

The information, sensitization and education of more than one thousand (1,000) artisanal miners allowed to 292 artisanal miners to gather them into 19 groups in forms of simplified cooperatives. Four (04) of the 19 groups are made up of mostly women and 6 groups made up of only men. These 04 groups of women are well organized and practice credit savings. From May 2019 to February 2020, these groups have saved 982,900FCFA. The monitoring of gold artisanal miners in the legalizing process have

permitted to 09 artisanal miners to obtain worker's cards and 05 collectors to obtain their collecting cards to purchase gold from the mining administration. Concepts of good practices of in artisanal exploitation have permitted to reduce death rate and accidents to 30% as compared to 2018 in artisanal gold exploitation site and the closing of about 10 holes were done by workers themselves in order to restore the environment after their activities.

## Monitoring of mining activities

The implication of administrations in charge of mining resources management in capacity reinforcement actions as well as sensitization have strengthened relations with the project's team. Thus, the knowledge acquired by agents of control of mining and environmental administrations during the first year have been used to improve the control and monitoring of activities. Also, a joint control mission of mining activities has been led by the divisional delegation of mines of Lom and Djerem and FODER in Small Scale mining sites in Bétaré Oya subdivision. During this mission, 11 small scale mining sites have been inspected. The following illegalities have been noticed: Mining without artisanal authorization (AEA), exploitation in water beds, release of hydrocarbons in rivers. At the end of this mission, all non compliance exploitation site has been sealed by the divisional delegation. In the same vain, in order to enhance the monitoring of mining activities, the project have worked for the development of an online platform and an android application for the denunciation of illegal mining activities and traceability of gold products by artisanal miners. This includes <http://minin-dataportal.org> (online platform) and the android application called Mining Data App. This technological application



will be presented to the administration in charge of mining resources management before its launching during the second year of the project.

ET ON PLANTE LES ARBRES  
APRÈS FERMETURE DE  
CHAQUE SITE



## MY ENGAGEMENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE MINING

### DANBIRO KORO inhabitant of Bidinba in Garoua- Boulai subdivision

« I am the president of the CVC of Bidinba's locality. We the population of Bidinba were living in complete ignorance with regards to our rights and responsibilities on mining activities in our communities. But due to numerous sensitization of the Organization Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER) through the project Mining-Environment Health and Society (ProMESS), we are now better equipped. These sensitizations enabled us to acquire much knowledge on the role and importance of communities to gather into Citizen Watch Committee (CWC), denunciation of illegal practices, dangers in mining activities. We, members of the Citizen Watch Committee have been chosen by the Bidinba community with the active participation of traditional authorities to watch out on the community and its resources. It's worth mentioning that a watch committee is a group of organized persons who monitor the primary problems in our locality. One of our duties is to ensure the monitoring of mining in our locality. For example, when a miner comes, we make sure he presents the official document which authorizes him

to mine in our locality. If he has no official document or if he is reluctant to show documents, we summon administrative and traditional authorities by oral or written means. For instance, during the month of April, we have been called upon by the community of Cassa-kana, a suburb of Bidinba located on the bed of river Lom of the presence of a mining company called BEDEL (Congolese nationality) who exploited gold on the river and who did not present itself to the community nor the chiefdom. The members of the CVC went down on the field to check if the mining company had an authorization. The company recognized not having any permission. We asked the operator to go close to administrative authorities to comply with norms of mining. He instead continued its activities which have been developed for about more than 9 months without control. The CVC then informed the head of the locality, the sub divisional officer, the forces of order and the environmental head post of Garoua-Boulaï. These authorities went down on the field for a control. This then permitted the authorities to notice that the

mining company had no authorization. The authorities then seized their working equipment including 07 ships and other materials. The offender who was summoned to conform, instead ran away.

The facilitator- animator of FODER, equally sensitized us on the advantage of school and a better future for our children and the risk for our children staying in mining sites. After this sensitization we have duplicated our message in the suburbs of Bidinba especially at Yassa located at 4Km from Bidinba. During our sensitizations, the parents of Yassa mentioned the absence of school facilities near the quarter and the long distance to be covered before reaching the school at Bidinba for the young kids. The CVC represented by me, the president of a local mining operator by name ALADJI Bawé, a council member and the local chief of Bidinba have gone to meet the sub



divisional officer, an inspector of Basic Education of Garoua-Boulaï to ask them to build a PTA school to let out children of school age out of mining sites. This is how the school has been created on 11/1/2020 by the sub divisional officer and the inspector of Basic Education”.

## DIZA Marguerite inhabitant of Gbanam in Meiganga subdivision

«I am the president of the association of dynamic women of Gbanam. When FODER came to our village, he organized numerous sensitizations and gave practical advices on the importance and the necessity to gather into associations. These sensitizations opened our mind. This is how we women have decided to put in place an association. We have been guided by the facilitator animator of FODER who helped us to put in place our office. After several working sessions, I have noticed that the group functions normally and the members are hard working. We have decided to put in place these association so as to send our children to school, resolve our personal problems without depending on our husbands. In our association, we make contributions as follow: savings also called big book, for the realization of our projects, and the small book (funds kept as aids for the meeting members, old people, pregnant women, the sick and women who do not have enough means to sponsor their own children in school by giving them loans for them to invest in commerce and then refund later.



The message we want to pass across to those women who are not yet organized is that they should gather themselves into associations/ cooperatives. By organizing themselves, they receive good advices and develop their spirit of team work. It is equally in a group that we understand that there are many profit making activities that we can develop, because, we in the mining zones always thought that apart from gold, there was nothing else we could do, but today we want to practice agriculture as one of our primary

activity. To date, we can say it is due to associative gathering that we have noticed great improvements in our village, with some members buying roofs for their houses, sending their children to school and some buying beds. If today you go to Gbanam, you will notice that most of the houses has had roof sheds just in a few times, something which was impossible years before where people used palms because of lack of means».

## HAYATOU Doko local leader of Mboum North of Bidinba in Garoua-Boualaï sub-division

« FODER opened our eyes, orientated us and what they taught us is what we are now implementating, we did not have this idea before. We have organized a watch committee just as FODER taught us, we have put in place an office. We can actually say we organized our communities for the monitoring of our mineral resources, by a Citizen Watch Committee. In this committee, there is a president and his vice, the secretary and his vice, the treasurer, the statutory auditor and the councilor. If a company or a mining industry arrives in our locality without signaling, this committee goes down on the field to watch out it activates and ask them to come closer to the local chiefs so as to present their authorization before reengaging any mining activity. The message we want to pass to mining operators who want to work in our territory is that, when they come, they should first of all go to the chieftom so that we can have an appointment with them. This appointment is for them to present their official document (AEA), on welfare and souvenirs (Social Projects) that they will leave behind in the village because people need to know that this particular company once exploited minerals in Bidinba. They cannot extract mineral resources that is ours and we don't benefit anything. Since FODER



sensitized us on how to claim our rights, any company that comes in must present herself and the documents that authorize them to exploit. Equally if the area they want to exploit belongs to a community member, they must pay indemnities to the person in question. According to the mining law, the resident must benefit something. If this companies are not willing to do anything for the population or residence, I as head of a locality I will forbid them from exploiting because, they are in fraction. And added to this, my population will have nothing after their departure and the only thing left will be pain and misery».



European Union



*«All ideas presented in this document are those of FODER and cannot in any case be considered as a reflection of the European Union's point of view ».*

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