

## Artisanal Mining Women's Empowerment Credit & Savings Project (AFECCOR)



The Artisanal Mining Women's Empowerment Credit & Savings project (AFECCOR), supports women and men in artisanal gold mining communities to access savings and credit in an effort to promote entrepreneurship and economic security.

### Fast Facts

- Located in Democratic Republic of Congo's northeastern Ituri Province, in Mambasa Territory.
- **1400** women and men have signed on to participate.
- **50** Village Savings and Loans Associations have been formed.
- **65** community members are trained to provide literacy and financial coaching.
- Associations are receiving support and sensitization with groups kicking off savings activities in October 2017.



An extension of the Just Gold project, AFECCOR is funded through the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals. The project launched in March 2017.

### Our Approach

Women and men participating in the Just Gold project and those in nearby mining communities in Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri Province are supported by AFECCOR to establish village savings and loans associations.

Members meet regularly to put money into their association's savings and to loan their growing funds to members. In contrast to microfinance institutions, the interest paid on credit goes back into the communal pot so members see their savings increase over time.

The AFECCOR project promotes women's leadership and economic empowerment in their homes, at artisanal mine sites, and in the wider community.

We facilitate sensitization on gender equality and lead discussions with female members of associations and their partners about household finances to challenge traditional stereotypes and gender roles. We provide financial literacy training to women who access credit from their association to undertake new entrepreneurial activities around mine sites



## Components of AFECCOR

Village savings and loans  
association

Literacy training

Group discussions on gender  
equality

Business skills training for women



## Our Objective

By participating in the AFECCOR project, artisanal miners and community members also decrease their reliance on informal credit networks that characterize the “gold economy,” where gold is used as currency to cover basic needs, small businesses and mine site operations, often with unfavourable conditions.

The AFECCOR project provides a safe space for all members of the associations to save and access credit. To encourage sustainability and knowledge sharing, volunteers in the community are trained to provide literacy and financial coaching to other members of their association. Artisanal miners are provided with additional training to support effective equipment management.

Through AFECCOR, artisanal mining communities gain economic security and access favourable credit alternatives while promoting women’s economic empowerment.

## The Issues

Through its Just Gold project, IMPACT developed a model for traceability and due diligence implementation for artisanal gold. The project also supports efforts to formalize the artisanal gold mining sector in Democratic Republic of Congo.

The project has spotlighted a “gold economy” that exists within the artisanal mining sector—an opaque system of credit and loans, where gold is used as currency to cover basic needs and mine site operations, often with unfavourable conditions.

As part of the Just Gold project, a complete gender analysis of the artisanal gold supply chain at the mine sites and neighbouring mining communities demonstrated that women have an important role in artisanal mining, but often experience barriers. IMPACT’s research showed the lack of access to secure savings and credit, proved an additional challenge.

AFECCOR is an extension of the Just Gold project.