



SIERRA LEONE GEM

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE NATIONAL MINERALS AGENCY

Year 2 - Edition 1
January — March 2014

ONE YEAR OF THE NMA

Achievements and Challenges

On the 8th of March 2013, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, formally launched the National Minerals Agency to promote the development of the minerals sector by effectively and efficiently managing the administration of mineral rights and minerals trading in Sierra Leone, to provide technical support to the mining industry including geological survey and data collection activities, and to enforce mining laws and policies.

At the historic launch of the Agency, the President expressed the hope that “the Agency will play a critical role in ensuring that the mining sector is of benefit to all Sierra Leoneans”. This and similar sentiments expressed by the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, development partners and other stakeholders challenged the NMA to deliver upon its mandate and ensure maximum benefits for Sierra Leoneans from our mineral resources. One year on, as the Agency reflects on the journey so far, it has made significant gains



Pres. Koroma and Govt. Ministers on the day NMA was launched

in promoting and regulating the mineral sector, even as it continues to grapple with several challenges.

The Agency has significantly improved upon the geological knowledge of the country by proactively engaging exploration companies to submit reports, as required by law. It is exciting to note that significant discoveries of mineral potentials, notably iron ore, are being made in several areas. For example, reports from China Investment Mining Company indicated huge deposits constituting seven (7) ore bodies, believed to be connected with the already proven iron ore mineralization at Tonkolili Iron ore mine site, which is located north of Kingho's concession area.

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S. L. to Investors*

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prepare Model C.D.A.*

.....and More

WORLD BANK TO SUPPORT REVISION OF CORE MINERALS POLICY

The World Bank has accepted a request from the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to lead the process of revising Sierra Leone's Core Minerals Policy, with the view of bringing it up to date and consistent

with international standards as reflected in the Natural Resources Charter and the African Mining Vision.

This agreement was reached during a World Bank Extractive Industries Sector mission visit to Freetown on March 22–31, 2014 led by Daniele La Porta, Senior Mining Specialist and Task Team Leader, during which future World Bank support to the mining sector was discussed, and the progress toward reaching the implementation milestones agreed earlier for ongoing activities was assessed.

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DEPUTY MINISTER SELLS SIERRA LEONE TO INVESTORS

As part of efforts to promote the development of the minerals sector and attract investment into the sector, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma, and the Director General of the National Minerals Agency, Sahr Wonday, attended the 2014 Investing in African Mining Indaba (3-6 February 2014) in South Africa.

This event, which is held annually, is a professional conference dedicated to the capitalization and development of mining interests in Africa. It is currently the world's largest mining investment event and Africa's largest mining event. For two decades, the annual Mining Indaba has served as the pathway for foreign investments into Africa's mining value chain - opportunities ranging from small diamond deposits to mega coal projects. Mining Indaba has become the platform of choice for governments, mining companies, and investors and analysts to break market sensitive information.

Addressing participants during one of the sessions, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources explained that Sierra Leone is richly endowed with mineral resources such as chromite,

iron ore, platinum, gold, diamond, bauxite, rutile, ilmenite, zircon, base metals and rare earth elements such as columbite – tantalite (coltan), and the presence of these deposits represents major opportunities for potential investors and the country to derive optimal benefits from extracting, processing and exporting of these minerals.

Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma, Minister also explained some of the major reforms undertaken by government to create an enabling environment for investment in the minerals sector, and maintained that in view of our rich mineral endowment and recent reforms in improving the governance framework for the mining sector, Sierra Leone is today considered a global destination for investment in the mining sector. He then, on behalf of government, encouraged good, reliable and credible investors, their contractors and financiers to participate in the country's new economic strive in the area of mining.

Over 7,000 delegates representing more than 110 countries across six continents attended the event.

*Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources
Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma*



NMA AND PARTNERS PREPARE MODEL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

The Mines and Minerals Act, 2009 requires the holder of a small-scale or large-scale mining licence to have and implement a Community Development Agreement with the primary host community. This agreement will outline the specific support that the company shall give, and the specific projects it will undertake to assist in the development of the mining communities affected by its operations. The Act gives the framework and broad criteria for entering such an agreement, and these are further elaborated upon by the Environmental and Social Regulations for the Minerals Sector, 2012.

Against this background, the NMA led a multi-stakeholder group comprising of representatives from government ministries and agencies, mining companies, civil society, and development partners to put together a Model CDA, which will serve as a template and a concise guide for the CDAs to be entered by mining companies and primary host communities across the country.

Several documents and CDA examples from other

countries were referenced to come up with the initial CDA document. Notably, the Newmont Agreement in Ghana and South Africa CDA agreements served as source documents, with careful attention to difference in context, socio-economic and legal settings. Other international sources, mainly the Africa Mining Vision, EITI principles, and World Bank CDA research and reports were considerably reflected in the document. After robust and exhaustive scrutiny and discussions of all the clauses in the initial document, with polarized opinions and interests from the different

stakeholders involved, it was decided that all their salient opinions be synthesized and harmonized into one piece. Volunteers with legal backgrounds from within the group synthesized the document, taking into account the consensus reached on all sections of the initial draft.

The multi-stakeholder group has already held meetings with London Mining, Nimini and OCTEA companies on how to proceed with the first implementation of the model CDA by using it as a template for drawing up CDA with identified communities.



NMA and Stakeholders Meeting on CDA



MINING AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The National Minerals Agency has responsibilities to promote the rights of communities, and the Agency has committed itself to ensuring that Sierra Leoneans derive maximum benefits from our mineral resources. Apart from the financial benefits derived from mining companies through taxes and royalties paid to government, they are also required by law to make direct payments to communities as surface rent, assist in the development of mining communities affected by their operations, promote sustainable development, enhance the general welfare and the quality of life of the inhabitants, and recognize and respect the rights of local communities.

In view of this, the NMA continues to work closely with mining companies to not only fulfil their financial obligations to government, but to also ensure that they enhance the general welfare and the quality of life of the people in mining communities. We herein present to you reports of payments and community development projects from mining companies to local communities.

PRESIDENT KOROMA COMMISSIONS 5 AML COMMUNITY PROJECTS

On 22nd February 2014, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, formally commissioned five community development projects, including a health centre, a market and store, a vehicle overhead by-pass, a bakery and a club house, constructed by African Minerals Limited for the people of Pepel, Lokomasama chiefdom, Port Loko district.

In his address, President Koroma commended African Minerals for taking their corporate social responsibility seriously and for demonstrating their commitment to the welfare of the people of Sierra Leone. He reiterated government's commitment to ensuring that the people derive maximum benefits from mining activities, and noted that as a result of the increased investment in mining, areas such as Pepel, once considered to be remote and lifeless, are now bustling with economic and social activities.



The Israel Raphael School in SandaLoko

He called on the people to take ownership of the facilities and ensure that they serve their intended purposes.

Executive Chairman of AML, Gibrilla Bangura, and AML CEO, Frank Timis, both reechoed AML's commitment to national

development, noting that the company is not only in Sierra Leone to make profit, but also to contribute to national development. Other stakeholders, including the Parliamentary Representative for the area, the Paramount Chief and the local people expressed thanks and appreciation to AML for the projects.

AMR GOLD CONSTRUCTS SCHOOL IN SANDA LOKO CHIEFDOM

On 15th February 2014, AMR Gold, an exploration company operating in Sella Limba and Sanda Loko chiefdoms in Bombali District, Northern Sierra Leone, officially handed over a six class room school worth Le92,765,000 (Ninety Two Million Seven Hundred and Sixty Five Million Leones) to the community people in Laminaya town, Sanda Loko Chiefdom.

Addressing representatives of government, AMR Gold and the local community, the Deputy Director General of the National Minerals Agency (NMA), Mr. Mathew Tarawalli, called for harmonious relations between the company and the local people, noting that development is only possible where there is peace and harmony. He explained that the role of the NMA is to ensure mutual benefits for all, wherein companies receive good returns on their investments, and the government and people also derive maximum benefits from the mineral wealth. He commended AMR Gold for the new school, noting that it will support the attainment of government's development agenda by promoting education in the chiefdom.

The Deputy Director General also admonished the people to refrain from illegal mining, and called on the mining committees to reorganize themselves and support government in suppressing illegal mining activities.



One of the AML Projects

The Managing Director of AMR Gold, Isreal Rafael, after whom the school was named, explained that although as an exploration company AMR is not obligated to pay local communities, they decided to construct the school to respond to an urgent demand for a conducive learning environment for school children in the chiefdom and to complement government's efforts in education. He noted that they have undertaken similar development projects in other chiefdoms.

The Paramount Chief of Sanda Loko, PC Samura Fombo III, and other stakeholders thanked AMR Gold for the kind gesture, and promised to work with the company for the development of the chiefdom.

AML PAYS LE 1.9 BILLION TO LAND OWNERS

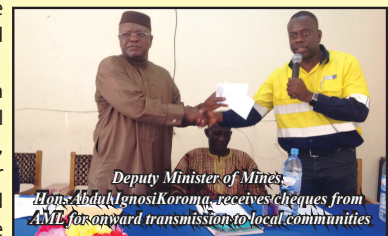
On 28th and 29th March 2014, African Minerals Limited paid a total of Le.1,890,671,600 (one billion eight hundred and ninety million, six hundred and seventy one thousand six hundred leones) as surface rents to local communities in Port Loko, Bombali and Tonkolili.

Addressing beneficiaries in the respective districts, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma, noted that as a result of the transformation of the minerals sector undertaken by the present government, the people in local communities are now getting direct benefits from the mineral resources in their backyard. As part of the transformation, he explained, government passed a new Mines and Minerals Act in 2009, and this Act makes several provisions for communities to benefit from mining activities. These provisions include the payment of surface rent to land owners and the obligation on companies to assist in the development of mining communities affected by their operations, to promote sustainable development, and to enhance the general welfare and the quality of life of the inhabitants.

Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma also maintained that the payment is being made publicly for all to see because government believes in transparency and accountability. He explained that the payments are for two (2) years, 2012 and 2013, as payment was temporarily suspended in 2012 due to issues around transparency and the EITI process. Government has now put systems in place to ensure that all payments made are fully documented and accounted for, consistent with the requirements of good governance and the EITI.

Making the payments on behalf of AML, AML Legal Adviser, Kweku Lisk, thanked the people for their patience, and called for a continuation of the good relations that exists between the company and the communities. He outlined some of the support AML has provided, including scholarships, schools and health-centres, and pledged that the company will do more.

Other stakeholders, including the Deputy Minister of Local Government, the Minister of Education, Chairmen of Councils, Paramount Chiefs and landowners, thanked AML for fulfilling their obligations and commended government for ensuring that the people derive benefits from the country's mineral resources.



Deputy Minister of Mines Hon. Abdul Ignosi Koroma receives cheques from AML for onward transmission to local communities

ONE YEAR OF THE NMA

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Achievements and Challenges

Industrial grade potential was reported at 1.6 Billion tonnes of Industrial Ore at an average Hematite grade of 28.58% and 21.01% Magnetite, and an estimated resource of 64.722 million tonnes of low grade ore at an average Hematite grade of 21.83% and 12.54% Magnetite at a cut-off grade of 25% Hematite. The life of mine (LOM) was set to be 25 years with a production rate of 10Mt/a in the first phase of operation and 20Mt/a in the second phase. Mass Energy and Northern Mining companies have also discovered a high iron ore potential in their respective concessions, with a combined ore resource of about one billion tones.

The NMA has also improved upon the management of geological and mining data by creating a unified and centralized data management system for geological and mineral rights information, thereby ensuring the provision of reliable and consistent information to stakeholders.

NMA and Stakeholders - Local Content Workshop



To get a firm grip on the management and administration of mineral rights, the NMA has reviewed all mineral claims lodged in the Mining Cadastre System (MCAS), and determined the clear and updated status of all mineral right holders in the system. This clean-up exercise was important as it provides clear information on who has mineral rights in the country, whose application is pending, and at what stage. It also enables the Agency to effectively manage the administration of mineral rights by tracking the performance of mineral rights holders and weeding out inactive claims, thereby freeing up additional areas for serious investors, and it now makes reporting and EITI compliance easier.

The NMA has also streamlined the licensing processes and procedures to ensure a predictable and efficient licensing system. Applications for mineral rights now go through a well-defined process with clear timelines, and applicant know exactly what they are expected to provide, and what they are to expect at every stage. Application guidelines for the different categories of mineral rights are available upon request.

Government revenue from the mining sector has also increased significantly under the watch of the NMA. This has been largely due to the combined effect of increased mining activity and the

NMA Board and Management during Field Visit



pro-active stance of the agency in chasing companies to comply with their payment obligations. When the Agency commenced operations in February 2013, it reviewed the payments records, and began chasing companies in arrears to pay up. The Agency also began sending early notifications, 'order to pay', to mineral rights holders, and alerting the National Revenue Authority (NRA) a month ahead of any upcoming payment date.

These strategies immediately paid off, and by the first half of 2013, government revenue from the minerals sector exceeded projections for the first time in many years, as total revenue collected was Le.119,301,000,000 (one hundred and nineteen billion, three hundred and one million Leones)

against a projected figure of Le.114,653,000,000 (one hundred and fourteen billion, six hundred and fifty three million Leones); which means that the actual revenue collected exceeded projection by Le.4,648,000,000 (Four billion, six hundred and forty-eight million Leones). By the end of the year, total revenue (royalties and licences) generated from the minerals sector for 2013 was Le.440,151,000,000 (four hundred and forty billion, one hundred and fifty-one million leones).

Enforcing compliance with all mining laws, regulations and agreements has also been a major preoccupation of the





Min of Mines and DG of NMA at an Investment Summit

Agency. The NMA made several unannounced monitoring and compliance visits to the sites of mining companies to conduct physical inspection of exploration and mining sites, verify implementation of work-programmes and environmental plans, and verify reports submitted. During some of these visits, the NMA discovered several anomalies and compliance issues, which resulted in the recommendation for cancellation of twenty four (24) mineral rights, and by the end of 2013 nine (9) of the twenty four (24) licences recommended for cancellation have been cancelled by the Minister on the advice of the Minerals Advisory Board (MAB).

The NMA supported the EITI Secretariat and the EITI Reconciler enormously in completing the 2011

reconciliation report, by compiling and providing critical information about mineral right holders. The NMA was instrumental in ensuring that all relevant companies operating in the country submitted their reporting templates, and with the full report submitted, Sierra Leone expects to be recalled as a full EITI member shortly.

The above successes notwithstanding, the Agency was faced with a number of challenges that continue to affect its operations. Key among this is budget certainty; the reliability of funds to enable the agency to carry out its regulatory function, geological survey activities as well as other engagements on community relations.

The NMA will continue to work with partners to address the challenges.



NMA Board & Management at a Mine Site

WORLD BANK TO SUPPORT REVISION OF CORE MINERALS POLICY

1st page cont...

Giving that the revision of the Core Minerals Policy (CMP) is a critical task for the Ministry of Mines, the World Bank has initially guaranteed the funding for the exercise from the recently approved Korean Trust Fund proposal: Local Development Partnerships for Mining. This is a Bank executed trust fund, where the procurement of the consultant will be managed by the Bank in agreement with MMR and other Development Partners.

The starting point will be the draft CMP prepared by the Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU) in 2008, and the revised CMP will identify the main areas for future support and guide project preparation.

The World Bank team also noted that the creation of the NMA was a great achievement for the mining sector in Sierra Leone. It however observed that there is increasing concern regarding the reliability of funds to enable the agency to carry out its regulatory function, geological survey activities as well as their other engagements on community relations, the preparation of the Artisanal and Small Scale Mining (ASM) policy and inspection of activities. The mission highlighted the importance of guaranteeing funds, either by including a specific allocation for the NMA in the legislation or through other mechanisms so

it can fulfill its regulatory mandate adequately and support Sierra Leone to capitalize on the current mining boom.

Concerned that the Extractive Industry Technical Assistance Project (EITAP) funds are fully committed, that the project will close in 2016 and the significant number of emerging issues that need funding to consolidate project achievements, the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources requested that the Bank assess the possibility of a follow up project. This is under consideration.

Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Hon. Alhaji Minkailu Mansaray, thanked the World Bank for their support to the development of the minerals sector in Sierra Leone, and noted that the revised Core Minerals Policy will send a strong signal to the world that Sierra Leone is serious about catching up with international trends in ensuring that mining is done in a responsible and transparent manner, which provides benefits for the country and its people.

Other members of the World Bank team were Christopher Gabelle (Senior Governance Specialist), Nina Inamahoro (Operations Analyst) and Fatu Karim-Turay (Executive Assistant).

NMA MEETS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION

Members of the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations, led by their National Coordinator, Charles Mambu, held a meeting with the management of the National Minerals Agency on 26th February 2014 at the NMA office on Wilkinson Road. The purpose of the meeting was for the two sides to better understand the roles and responsibilities of each other, and explore areas of collaboration to address issues in the mining sector.

Director General of the NMA, Sahr Wondoy, gave a background to the establishment of the NMA explaining that it was borne out of the desire to transform the minerals sector for it to benefit the people of Sierra Leone. He noted that opportunities exist for collaboration with civil society groups in the area of sensitization, consultation and promoting the rights of communities. He advised civil society to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the relevant mining laws, policies and agreements to avoid misinformation, and also implore them to separate advocacy from militancy in order to ensure peace and development.

Civil Society Coordinator, Charles Mambu, explained that as civil society, they represent the common man, and that they have been concerned with reports of unrest in mining areas and allegations of abuse of human rights by some mining companies. He pledged that civil society will work with the NMA to address some of these issues.



NMA Management meeting with CSO Representatives

NMA MEETS WITH MINING STUDENTS



Cross Section of Mining Students with NMA Staff

Staff of the NMA held a one day interactive session with Management, staff and students offering mining and petroleum courses as the Institute of Advanced Management and Technology (IAMTECH) on 28th March 2014 in the College main Hall at Kissy, Freetown.

Leading the NMA delegation, the Facilities Manager, James Flangoh, gave a brief background of the Agency, explaining its mandate, vision and mission. He encouraged the students to take their studies seriously, noting that the mining sector in Sierra Leone is growing, and opportunities exist for Sierra Leoneans with the right combination of knowledge and skills to gain employment and contribute to national development.

The President of the Mining and Petroleum Society, Mr. Lahai Koroma, and his vice, Ms. Margret Sia Suluku, both welcomed the opportunity to learn more about the management and regulation of the mineral sector, and the activities of the NMA.

Principal of IAMTECH, Dr. Lauretta Will, expressed appreciation to the NMA for reaching out to the institution and for providing valuable information, which will motivate students to take their work seriously.

The participation of IAMTECH students in the forthcoming Sierra Leone International Mining and Petroleum Conference and exhibition was also discussed.

153 CARAT DIAMOND FOUND IN SIERRA LEONE

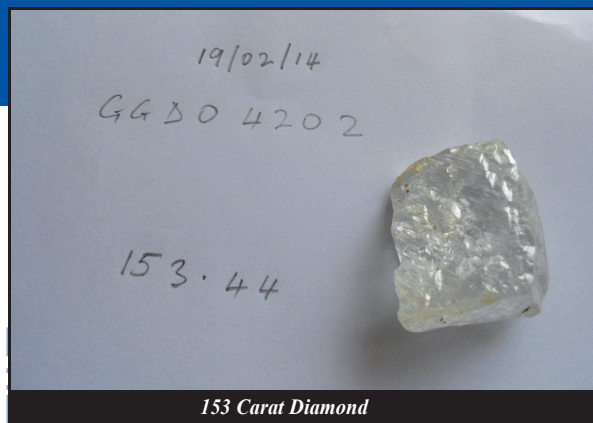
A 153 carat diamond, valued at over US\$ 6 million, was found along the Moinde stream in Bendu II village, Kamara Chiefdom in Kono district on 15th February 2014.

The diamond was brought to the Directorate of Precious Minerals Trading (former GGDO) at the National Minerals Agency (NMA), by a licenced diamond exporter, for valuation today 19th February 2014. This 153.44CTS diamond is one of the finest diamonds to be found in Sierra Leone in the

last ten years. It is a D+ which is the topmost in terms of colour, and this colour could only be matched or surpassed by fancy diamonds such as blue or pink in terms of price.

The diamond is a cleavage in terms of shape, and the clarity is of very high quality.

In other words, this is a premium stone as a result of its color and clarity, and had it been an octahedron shaped stone, it could have almost doubled the price of six million USD.



153 Carat Diamond

It is worth recalling that an octahedral shaped diamond of 125 carats was found recently in Kono district, and these latest discoveries further lend credence to Sierra Leone's reputation as a source for premium high quality diamonds.



Funeral

The Board of Directors, Management
and Staff of the
National Minerals Agency
extend our deepest sympathy to the
KANNEH FAMILY
May His Soul Rest in Peace!!



Late MOHAMED KANNEH
Died on the 7th March 2014
Age: 30 years

Birthday Greetings

Management and Staff
of the National Minerals Agency
*Extend Warm Birthday Greetings to the
following Celebrants*

Kelvin MacCormack	-	4th January
Khadijatu E. Kargbo	-	13th January
James Flangoh	-	15th January
Mohamed Bah	-	15th January
Yusuf Dauda Suma	-	15th January
David Tamba Sheku	-	15th January
Cecilia Moriba	-	18th January
Cedric Palmer	-	27th January
Johannes Rogers	-	28th January
Morie Sallieu Amara	-	6th February
Mohamed Kemokai	-	10th February
Christian A.V. Sesay	-	11th February
Roudoulph C. M Wilson	-	17th February
Mohamed Mansaray	-	1st March
Agnes Smith	-	8th March
Edward Pessima	-	11th March
Sahr Wonday	-	12th March
Cordelia Jackson	-	27th March
Isa Koroma	-	30th March

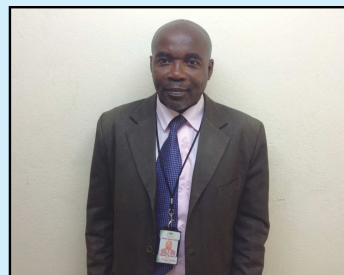
Profile of Abdul Amara

Abdul Amara was appointed to the position of Manager, Technical Services and Laboratory in the National Minerals Agency in April, 2013. He has a Joint Honours Degree in Chemistry and Marine Science from Fourah Bay College (USL) and over twenty (20) years experience in Laboratory analyses and management. He started his scientific career as a laboratory technician and later became a graduate science teacher for few years.

He joined the Geological Survey Department in the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Resources as a Geological Chemist in 1991 with key responsibilities of analyzing geological and geochemical samples for precious minerals and base metals evaluations; developing and managing databases of chemicals and equipment; etc. He has worked for several Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) projects and exploration companies that have successfully developed in productive mines, including Nimini Gold Project/Nimini Mining Company; Baomahun Gold Project/Amara Mining PLC; Port Loko Bauxite Project/formal SLEMC; etc

As part of his impressive career with the Geological Survey Department, he was involved in the establishment of the

PANGIS Bibliographic Database using CDS-ISIS; the establishment of the Sierra Leone Mining Cadastre System; and the implementation and monitoring of the World Bank Mining Technical Assistance Project (EITAP). Mr. Amara has also received and participated in several UN trainings and conferences on the development and implementation of international policies on sound chemicals management and safety, including Nuclear Techniques in mineral exploration (IAEA); Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (UNEP/WHO); Globally Harmonised Systems (GHS) for Classification and labelling of Chemicals (UNITAR); National Authority and Chemical Databases (OPCW); and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Sierra Leone (UNEP/UNIDO).



NMA STAFF ATTEND LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME

Three staff from the National Minerals Agency attended a professional development programme for emerging leaders engaged in roles related to the African mining sector, organized by the International Mining for Development Centre in association with the African Minerals Development Centre, in South Africa, from 26th January to 7th February 2014.

The Emerging Leaders in African Mining program, held in Cape Town, South Africa, provided an opportunity for young leaders to learn from international faculty and each other about how to lead effectively in the sector and to contribute meaningfully to mining-based sustainable development.

These NMA staff joined other young professionals, working in government, university, civil society and private sector organisations in Africa who deal with mining and development issues and have been identified as emerging leaders in their areas

of expertise.

The NMA participants benefitted from insights into the global minerals industry and emerging trends in the sector; exposure to current thinking about the relationship between mining and development and how to strengthen those linkages; an enhanced understanding of what is required to be an effective leader; practical guidance on how to analyze complex problems, devise effective responses and think strategically; and an opportunity to build networks and to interact with decision-makers from the mining industry, government and other sectors.

The NMA's participants included Peter Bangura, Deputy Director of Mines; Eugene Norman, Mining Cadastre and Records Management Manager; Cedric Palmer, Artisanal, Small Scale Mining & Compliance Manager.

NMA GETS NEW BOARD MEMBER

In January 2014, it pleased his Excellency the President, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, to appoint Francis K. Gbondo as a member



of the Board of Directors of the National Minerals Agency.

Francis Gbondo has a wealth of experience in artisanal diamond mining and is well informed on issues related to artisanal

mining in Sierra Leone. He was born in Gandorhun town, Gbaneh Chiefdom, Kono District in Eastern Sierra Leone.

A former employee of the defunct National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC) in the 70s and 80s, Francis Gbondo served NDMC as Store Keeper and later Time Keeper Clerk at the company's Diamond Separator House.

In 1985, he left the diamond industry for the insurance world, and worked as life underwriter at the America Life Insurance

Company (ALICO) and as Assistant Branch Manager at the Davies Branch in Freetown.

During the 11-year rebel war in Sierra Leone, he was involved in humanitarian work, which attracted the attention of other humanitarian agencies, and he was awarded a scholarship to study Management and Nation Building with M.S.I USAID where he earned a Diploma in Management in 2004.

Francis Gbondo is also a political activist and his messages of unity and tolerance have been instrumental in promoting democracy and good governance in his home district of Kono. In 2010, he was appointed Chairman of the Kono District Political Parties Association (KODPPA), an organization that worked in close collaboration with the Political Parties Registration Commission to promote tolerance among political parties in the Kono.

He also has experience serving in different boards, including Chairman – Hospital Management Board in Kono, and Chairman Board of Governors - Koidu Girls Secondary School.

His experience in the diamond industry and other sectors will be very useful to the NMA.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Charity begins at home, and as the Agency responsible to ensure that mining companies adhere to health and safety requirements in their operations, the NMA is leading by example.

To ensure the health and safety of its own workers, the Agency organized a one-day intensive fire safety drill for staff on 29th March 2014.

The purpose of the training was to provide staff with the knowledge and skills on fire prevention



and the use of fire extinguishers in case of a fire outbreak. The major risk factors associated with a work environment, as well as the common causes of fire incidents and preventive measures were explained to staff.

The training was climaxed with a practical session during which staff put out a mock fire using fire extinguishers.

Produced by the National Minerals Agency

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