



COVID AND ARTISANAL MINING SHORT FORM SURVEY

REPORT (5) – JULY 31, 2020

Mandalay and Sagaing Regions, Myanmar

Consultant – Saw Benjamin Thulayphaw



NARRATIVE ANALYSIS – 5th REPORT

Description: Reporting summary that provides analysis of qualitative and quantitative data captured during the collection period. Data collection partners are expected to provide summary of key points and if applicable: quotes, photos and research limitations for biweekly reporting period.

Reporting Frequency: Biweekly (July 31)

Reporting Method: A reporting survey will be created in Kobo toolbox to be completed by research partners.

Date of Reporting:	July 31, 2020
Data Collection Partner (Organization):	Saw Benjamin Thulayphaw
Individual Completing Report (Full Name, Title):	Respondents from Sagaing Region
Geographic Context (Country, Subnational)	Homalin Township, Khamti District, Sagaing Region
How many key informants are you synthesizing information from? [Integer]	0
What were their roles? Select all that apply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owner of tunnel/pit/hill (license holder) - State agent (government-affiliate) - Buyer (purchaser of mineral) - Exporter (sale of goods out of country) - Customary authority - Civil Society - Non-governmental organization - Private Business - Other, specify 	Gold Smith and Gold Shop, Mines owner (sub contractor, Pump Man /mine site sub contractor (digger), Transportation Service provider, Sellers of goods (in the mine), Shopkeeper and Gold dealer
Relevant minerals in key informant interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colored Gemstone (if yes, specify) - Diamond - Gold - Sand - Stone Aggregate (Gravel) - Tin (Cassiterite) - Tantalum (Coltan) - Tungsten (Wolframite) - Other, specify 	Gold

Synthesis of Key Informant Response

Of all key informants interviewed during this period, provide a summary of key insights for each research category based on key informant questions.

Health & Safety	
<p><i>Note any prevalence of COVID-19 in mining communities</i></p> <p><i>ASM operators compliance with government restrictions & practices to limit spread.</i></p> <p><i>Any key gaps, needs and risks in COVID health response</i></p>	<p>In the fifth round of interview, there is no Covid Case in this area. Government message to prevent to wear mask and washing hand is still announced on daily basis, but most people don't follow it because people feel it is unlikely that this disease will come to them by the fact it is far away from central part of Myanmar and transportation wise, it is hard to access. In the early restriction works well and country quarantine system worked well. People are moving around more freely now.</p>
Gender	
<p><i>Note any changes to men & women's roles in ASM sector and any emerging vulnerabilities</i></p>	<p>Nan Taw in particular has different case with men and women role. Most men do pumping and carrying ore and women do panning. As things are getting back to normal, there are more job opportunities for both men and women, although some places have difficulties to operate not because of Covid but due to local armed conflicts and dual taxation duties. There is no difference between men and women, they are required by their roles. When a site operates women take the roles of panning and cooking whereas men work in pumping and sluicing. This has been the same all throughout interview period.</p> <p>There is no big impact on women by Covid, except a slow down and less income make them slowdown and had hard time to manage household. Women basically work dual role both household and panning, there is no big changes for them.</p>
Human Security	
<p><i>Note any changes and emerging risks in ASM mining communities related to human security</i></p>	<p>Mine sites in Homalin are not very secure. There are some ethnic armed forces around. Homalin or upper Sagaing region is the territory of Shan Ni tribe, they are very nationalistic and there is often some tension with government army or other smaller tribal EAOs such as Naga or Chin.</p>

	Currently, there is no fight but at night they come to ask for tax, that threatens miners. It makes the miners worried. When they come, there can be potential clashes between national security forces. This makes the miners worried. This is current situation.
Food Security	
<i>Note any changes and emerging risks in ASM mining communities related to food security</i>	Everything is back to normal with regarding to selling foods. Now the logistic is flowing back and forth as per normal with same price. There is slight higher price food getting to villages farther from Homalin Town. However, for mine sites, they buy food for two weeks or a month in Homalin. People feel quite ease on food supply.
Service Delivery & Government Engagement	
<i>Note any government & non-government responses to COVID and existing gaps and needs related to services</i>	Government is main body to disseminate information and services. During Covid 19, all information is from government and there is no other non-governmental group who interfere with this. People mainly watch TV and use social media, so government use those channel to distribute information especially guidelines and notification.
Markets & Supply Chains	
<i>Note any changes in mine site activity and supply chains and how COVID is directly or indirectly linked</i>	Gold market is back to normal operation. Miners come and sell as per normal. There is no price distortion in the mine. Now, price is higher compared to last week as Mandalay price is higher. Since Covid 19 breakout, price has been constant around 1,210,000 MMK, now it is almost 1,290,000 to 1,300,000 MMK. Gold price is rising but gold production is little. This price rise gives hope and aspiration to miners.

Summary

Note three key insights that stood out or were important from this data collection period.

1. People sound normal and business is almost back to normal. There is little concern about Covid 19 now.
2. Mine Sites provide more job opportunities now and people get job. As Covid restriction relaxes, people back in from other places and human activities are back to as it was before. And mine sites started to operate with full force, so people can get job easily.
3. This is the time going back to normal, people are very careful spending their earning because in

their mind, Covid 19 pandemic is not completely gone with the fear that they might face this situation again.

Quotes

Note any key quotes from any of the interviews conducted. Quotes help to bring the date to life and help the participant's voice and story be captured and heard in their own words.

1. "It is really hard to work in the situation where I have to pay both parties tax." said one mine owner. (Ethnic Armed groups claim informal taxes on top of government taxes. There is a channel of corruption to get government license also. When the amount or frequency of taxation especially from EAOs, it makes miners hard to survive. One interviewee really lamented it.)
 2. "Gold price is higher but gold production is slow and not a lot." Said one gold dealer. (after stopping for a while, as they restart the operation, they have to prepare the site and now it is still preparation stage, but hopefully they will find gold and produce gold. Stopping operation makes them rework the mines requiring them to prepare as they are semi-river mining system.
 3. "People are moving around as per normal some with mask but a lot of them without masks. They don't listen to government instruction anymore." said one seller of goods.
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Photos & Other Media

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Photo File Name	Caption	Photo Credit

Research Limitations

Note any issues encountered in gathering information and recommendations for filling any additional information gaps.

As the interview was designed for conducting through phone call, it was hard to get to the people and hard to connect with the people on the ground. As they don't see the interviewer, there is a hesitation. The interview times is also a challenge as they go to work and come back in the evening, they are tired and can't focus to answer the interview. Therefore, remote interviews have limitation and recruitment is also an issue. On top of that, people are not in the good mood as their works are not in normal operation. As they are repeated asked, there is respondents' fatigue. As the interview came to an end, some of the respondents feel comfortable sharing their stories, I became their listeners to their problems.



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Data Collection Partner (Organization):	Saw Benjamin Thulayphaw
Individual Completing Report (Full Name, Title):	Respondents from Mandalay Region
Geographic Context (Country, Subnational)	Singu and Thabeikkyin Townships, Pyin Oo Lwin District, Mandalay Region
How many key informants are you synthesizing information from? [Integer]	0
What were their roles? Select all that apply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owner of tunnel/pit/hill (license holder) - State agent (government-affiliate) - Buyer (purchaser of mineral) - Exporter (sale of goods out of country) - Customary authority - Civil Society - Non-governmental organization - Private Business - Other, specify 	Digger, Gold Shop/Refiner/Purifier, Seller of Goods, Crusher, Mine owner/sub-contractor
Relevant minerals in key informant interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colored Gemstone (if yes, specify) - Diamond - Gold - Sand - Stone Aggregate (Gravel) - Tin (Cassiterite) - Tantalum (Coltan) - Tungsten (Wolframite) - Other, specify 	Gold

Synthesis of Key Informant Response

Of all key informants interviewed during this period, provide a summary of key insights for each research category based on key informant questions.

Health & Safety	
<i>Note any prevalence of COVID-19 in mining communities ASM operators compliance with government restrictions & practices to limit spread. Any key gaps, needs and risks in COVID health response</i>	There is no case in this area. They all believe that there is no likelihood to have transmission in their area. People feeling normal and don't wear mask or worry very much.
Gender	
<i>Note any changes to men & women's roles in ASM sector and any emerging vulnerabilities</i>	<p>There is no change of roles for both men and women. Most people work in a group and in a community. Both men and women take the workload equally although men do harder job such as bringing out the ore.</p> <p>Women lives were not impacted by Covid but current socio-economic situation makes it hard to survive, mainly family are having less income. Young people and men start thinking to move to other places for work. Women especially mother remains in the same place and look after family. From the interviews, it is always men who go out and look for other opportunity.</p> <p>Although they don't change their roles, if there is any change to go and mine in other place they will go as the situation is getting tougher.</p>
Human Security	
<i>Note any changes and emerging risks in ASM mining communities related to human security</i>	Security is not an issue, no insurgency and close to big city for better rules of laws.
Food Security	
<i>Note any changes and emerging risks in ASM mining communities related to food security</i>	Food system is back to normal.
Service Delivery & Government Engagement	
<i>Note any government & non-government responses to COVID and existing gaps and needs related to services</i>	<i>As Covid recovery and prevention efforts are put by government in ways of disseminating the information, it has effectively worked in most places. There is no gap, but some practices new to people such as partition at restaurant. But survey sites do not follow them.</i>
Markets & Supply Chains	
<i>Note any changes in mine site activity and supply chains and how COVID is directly or indirectly linked</i>	Now that some parts of their places are under scrutiny for license, hopefully they will get license.

	<p>Another difficulties is raining season bring water to their worksite, if company with bigger investment and pumping machine suck the water out from their sites, small scale miners will have advantage to do mining as well.</p> <p>Gold price is rising but production is very low now. It is reaching almost 1,300,000 mmk. Two weeks ago, it was 1,262,000 MMK. It is now rising.</p>
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Summary

Note three key insights that stood out or were important from this data collection period.

1. The hardship on the ground is water in the pit. ASM miners can only pump their water when bigger company start sucking the water with their machine. ASM miners can't afford to do that. It is groundwater and rain in addition.

2. There is conflict between local people' right and new comers in terms of company. What is stuck currently, government is scrutiny who is local company and whom to issue the license for. Between this decisions making, ASM should be considered, therefore, there should be proper lobby for them.

3. People now start thinking of alternatives livelihood, but they don't want to do other sort of work. They mainly want to find other place to mine. It happens when friends say there is place to be mined, then people go to those places.

Quotes

Note any key quotes from any of the interviews conducted. Quotes help to bring the date to life and help the participant's voice and story be captured and heard in their own words.

1. "I am not selling that well, this is not impact of Covid but the income of people ." said one seller of goods.

2. "Our production last week found a size of one grain of rice size gold in one day which is ridiculously small." said one gold miner.

3. "The situation is still the same, no improvement with regard to mining license, but I heard other places have the license already, I must go and find out." said one mine owner.

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