



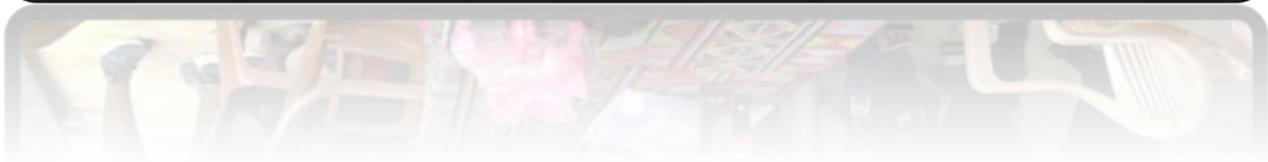
# EMSAGS

*LOBI YU LIBI, WROKO KRIN GOWTU*

## FINAL REPORT:

An Assessment of Gender Aspects of Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) in the Snesi Kondre Area

January 2026





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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background and Context

The Project “Improving Environmental Management in the Mining Sector of Suriname, with Emphasis on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining”, (EMSAGS Project) is a GEF funded project being implemented in Suriname by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the National Environmental Authority (NMA) as national implementing partners, the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment as Beneficiary and with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The main objective is to improve the management of small-scale gold mining (ASGM) in Suriname and promote environmentally friendly mining technologies to reduce adverse impacts on biodiversity, forests, water, and local communities. The strategy for this includes creating an enabling policy framework and disseminating responsible mining methods through demonstration projects. A central element in the project is the Mining Training and Extension Centers (MTECs), which serve as training and demonstration centers for miners. Three project areas were identified in the project document: Compagniekreek & Nieuw-Koffiekamp in the Brokopondo District and Snesi Kondre in the Sipaliwini District in Eastern Suriname.

The EMSAGS project integrates gender as a core component, based on the premise that women and men are unequally affected by ASGM activities and that gender equality is needed for the successful implementation of the project.

**This consultancy** is to deliver a gender assessment of the local communities participating in the ASGM in the project area of Snesi Kondre.

**The project area:** the gender assessment covered the following 3 sections in the project area:

1. along the LT road (from km 78, where Basja Van Dun lives) and Snesi Kondre (see figure 1);
2. 1 mining site: Tumatu; and
3. The 9 inhabited Pamaka villages on the Marowijne River: Langa Tabiki, Pikin Tabiki, Bada Tabiki, Sebedoe Kondre, Nason, Tabiki Ede, Skin Tabiki, Atemsa, Loka Loka (see figure 2),

**The target groups:** women, men, youth, teachers, medical personnel, traditional authorities, local government, miners, and residents along the LT-road.

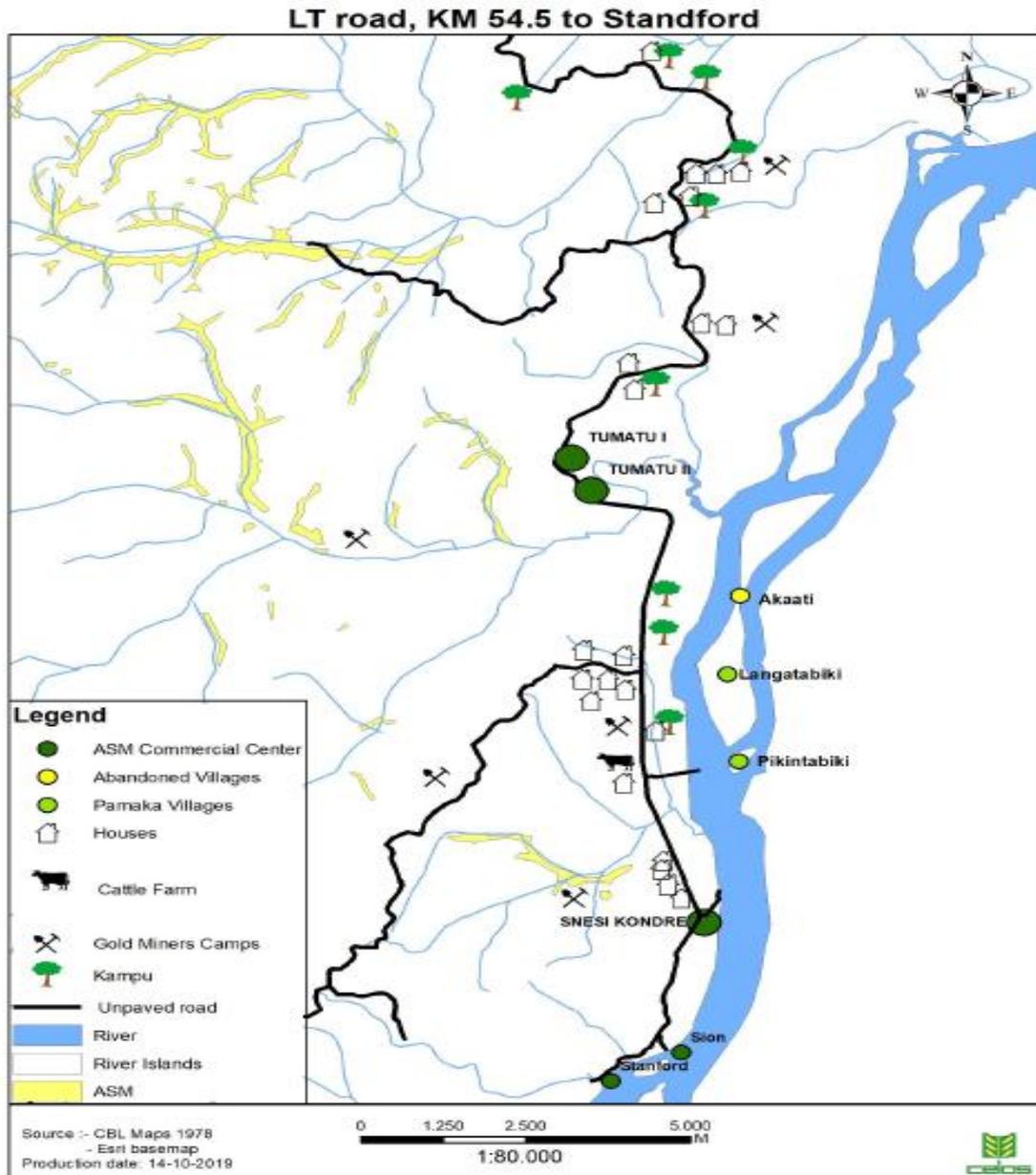


Figure 1. Map of the Langa Tabiki (LT) road from the first Pamaka household to Snesi Kondre (54.5 km). Source: Newmont SIA Merian 2019 Update.

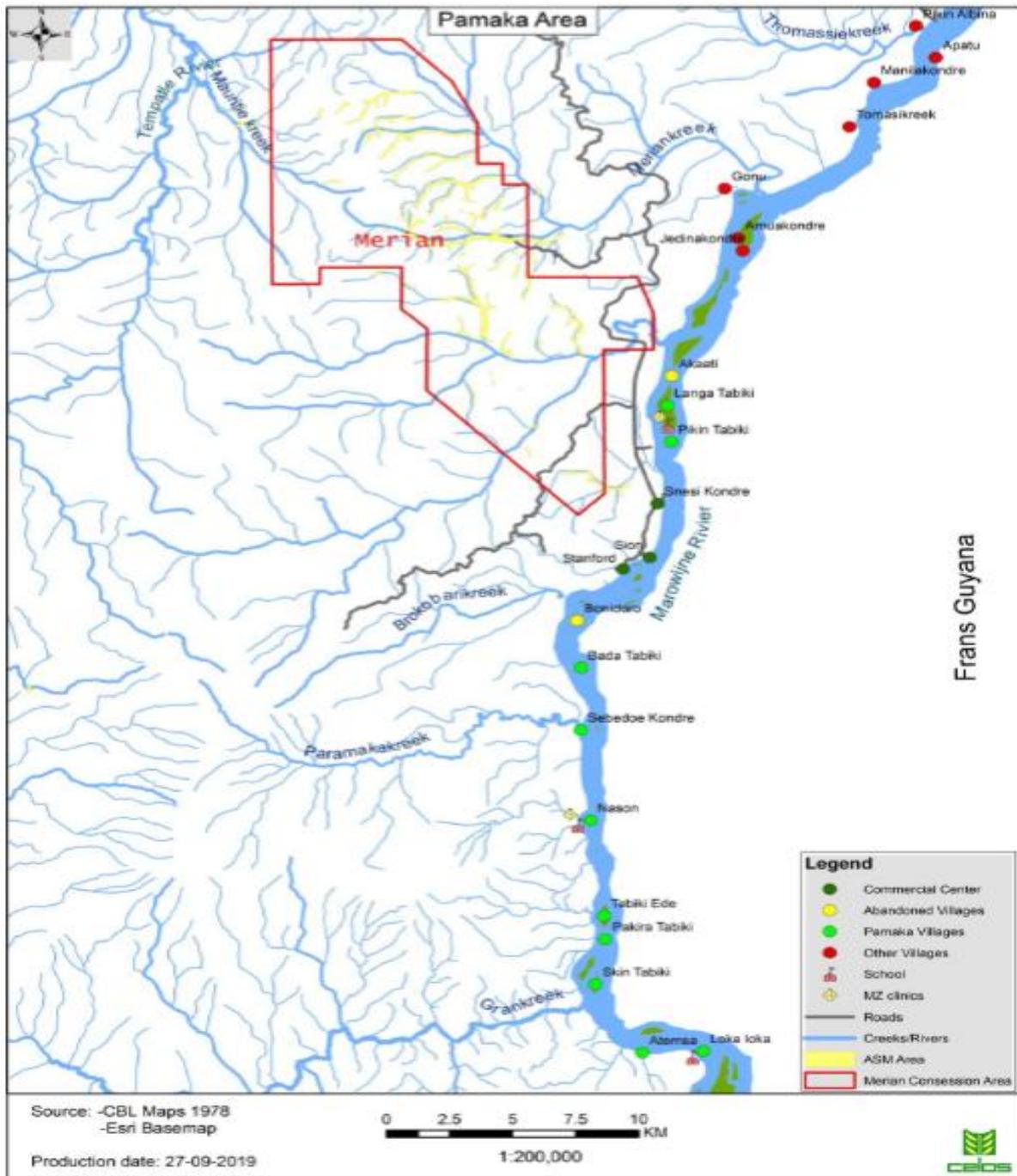


Figure 2. Map with the location of Pamaka villages in the Marowijne river. Source: Newmont SIA Merian -2019 update

## 2. Approach & Methodology

### 2.1. Approach

**The study was conducted in 3 phases:** (1) The preparatory work consisted of a desk study, one-on-one sessions with key stakeholders, and a one-day field visit to the area. This phase was documented and concluded in an inception report for this consultancy. (2) The field work consisted of an eight-day visit to the project area. During this period, the team conducted field visits to three distinct sections and organized short information sessions on gender and the EMSAGS project, followed by interviews with residents, either in group settings or individually. Most of the primary data was collected during this phase. (3) The analysis and reporting: the development of a gender assessment report for the project area and the presentation of this work.

### 2.2. Data Collection and Sampling

In this study, a combination of several data collection methods was used:

**Secondary data** was collected through desk study: academic reports, the SIA 2019 update of the Merian area, the EMSAGS PRODOC, research documents, documents on gender, and government policy documents on gender and the small-scale gold mining sector in Suriname were included to understand developments in this sector, the area and to obtain information about gender participation in ASGM in the project area.

**Primary data** were collected through interviews, group sessions, observations, and informal discussions conducted during fieldwork. The fieldwork was conducted from 20<sup>th</sup> October to 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025. During this period, field visits were made to the 3 sections of the project area, and in-person interviews were conducted with the target group. The following methods were used for data collection:

- Group sessions were conducted in the villages: available community members were gathered to participate in the sessions. The villages visited on-site were: Langa Tabiki, Bada Tabiki, Sebedoe Kondre, Nason, Tabiki Ede, Atemsa, and Loka Loka. There were no gender assessment sessions conducted in Atemsa and Sikin Tabiki. Members of these villages were interviewed in the group sessions in Langa Tabiki.
- Group sessions were also used in a mine, as we visited the mine on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2025, when miners were not working. A mine in Tumatu was identified for the interview, and an interview session was conducted with two mine operators and one worker.
- The format of a group session or individual formal interview was used when interviewing school and medical personnel. Personnel from all three local schools (Langa Tabiki, Nason, and Loka Loka) and two medical clinics (Langa Tabiki and Nason) were interviewed on site.

- Individual formal interviews were used during the assessment along the LT road. Along this road, stops were made at all three concentrated areas of the road (Snesi Kondre included) to talk to store owners, residents, sex workers, and encountered miners. The assessment team also visited the police and the church owner.
- Individual informal interviews were used for people of interest and miners encountered on the SK road or people in villages encountered outside of group sessions.
- Extensive in-depth interviews with Mr. Rene Amaunten and Ms. Remenia Asaiti, members of the Pamaka community and part of the assessment team in the field. This method was also used to discuss observations and verify information gathered.
- Observations of dynamics between people, places, and situations.

**Convenience sampling** was used to select participants for the interviews. Once target groups were identified within the project area, visits to the area were arranged. Those individuals who were encountered, available at the time, and willing to participate in the sessions were interviewed. This approach was adopted in response to field-related constraints (Ch. 2.5).

### 2.3. Ethical Considerations

**The incorporation of local assistance** from Pamaka community members (who enjoy the support of the community) in the planning and implementation of this gender assessment was deliberate to mitigate certain ethical considerations:

- Many cultural aspects, preferences, prohibitions, and sensitivities of traditional communities were not known. Given that access to tribal villages is only permitted when accompanied by and/or at the invitation of local community members, these community members took responsibility for the proper conduct of the team in the village. Mr. Amaunten held this role in the assessment team and facilitated all village visits, calling and speaking with village captains, introducing the team to the villagers, and gathering villagers to a meeting point for the interview session. When village captains were present, Mr. Amaunten facilitated all formalities in that regard.
- Confidentiality differed from community to community: the assessment team requested permission to document names (attendance list), record sessions, and take pictures of the sessions, before every session. Data collection was anonymous in cases where permission was denied.
- All interactions were done in Sranan Tongo. The local assistants assisted community members when translation was needed (not often).

### 2.4. Gender mainstreaming

**Gender mainstreaming** is defined as “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs,

in any area and at all levels”. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.<sup>1</sup>

During the fieldwork, an effort was made to visit the communities in the evening. At 5 PM, women in the Pamaka villages were usually back from their cassava fields, available to participate in other activities, such as the interviews for this project. This was taken into account (where possible) during the fieldwork for the gender assessment. There were instances where interviews had to be conducted outside of these hours; mostly men and older women participated in those sessions.

## 2.5. Limitations

- The Gender assessment was to be conducted within the planned period of the 20th -28th of October 2025.
- The Pamaka communities’ traditional activities were prioritized, and the assessment team needed to adjust to the communities’ availability. One such activity was a Gran Krutu “poti kabiten”, a meeting with all leading community members to appoint new kabitens (Head of the village). This was needed as many kabitens were old and some passed away over the past two years. This activity was planned to be organized earlier but was postponed. When all village leaders had reached consensus to meet, the dates coincided with the period of the fieldwork. This Gran Krutu “poti kabiten” resulted in a small number of village captains participating in the interview sessions.
- Many projects were conducted over time within the Pamaka community, especially in relation to Newmont and the Pamaka Community Development Fund (PCDF). The community had seen many consultants and many projects before the EMSAGS project. Not all projects had a meaningful impact on the community. The community members expressed “project fatigue”, which resulted in a lack of community members to engage in new projects, such as the EMSAGS project.
- Local sourcing for catering for larger sessions (only in Snesi Kondre) and accommodation (1 in Loka Loka and 1 in the vicinity of Nason) was limited.

## 3. ASGM in Suriname and Gender Context

**In general, artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) in Suriname** is characterized by its informality, illegality, and chaotic nature. This is also the case in the project area. There is a large influx of people involved, including immigrants

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<sup>1</sup>

ECOSOC, Agreed Conclusions 1997/2.

(mostly Brazilian), often with different values and beliefs. There is also a lack of government presence, leading to poor services, disorganized community development, and lawlessness. Currently, the estimated number of people working in the ASGM in Suriname is 10,000–15,000, of whom 10% are believed to be women. This is an estimate, as there is no gender-disaggregated data available on ASGM in Suriname.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding gender roles, men are often concession holders or mine managers, equipment owners, shop owners, and gold miners working the pits; they are responsible for the mining and extraction of the gold. Women are often engaged as managers of hotels, shopkeepers, and service providers, including bars, restaurants, brothels, cooks, sex workers, and are responsible for domestic chores. In addition, a small number of women may be equipment owners and managers or are the wives of equipment owners or workers. The fact that ASGM is often remote, informal, and illegal makes women more vulnerable to human rights abuses, sexual and gender-based violence, and health risks. In addition, the absence of judicial support and of basic infrastructure and services in many ASGM communities also means that women are at greater risk of sexual and gender-based violence and require more sexual health and reproductive services. Children, often young boys, from the age of 12-13, participate in ASGM in Suriname. Boys may experience extreme exertion from very labor-intensive jobs. Women and children working in artisanal gold mines experience increased illness, injury, and stress from dust and noise pollution. They are also disproportionately negatively impacted by the lack of access to drinkable water and sanitation. Thus, women and children are considered vulnerable groups in this sector.<sup>3</sup>

Although the degree of vulnerability varies, all population groups (men, women, and children) are considered susceptible to health risks associated with exposure to methyl mercury. Epidemiological and toxicological evidence indicate that prenatal and early life stages are particularly vulnerable, resulting in pregnant women and children experiencing significantly greater adverse health effects compared to adult men.

**In Suriname, the majority of the people working in the ASGM sector** are Brazilians, so-called Gariemperos, and Maroons. Other groups include Chinese, Venezuelans, Guyanese, Colombians, and Surinamese of other ethnicities.

A distinction between different groups of women in the ASGM is necessary because their occupations can determine their interests and the impacts they experience from mining, and also because their ethnic group determines the level of access to resources.

Brazilian women. In 1997, significant numbers of Brazilian migrants arrived in Suriname to work in gold mining as well as other sectors. Many Brazilian women in

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<sup>2</sup> Annex N: Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan for the UNDP GEF project: “Strengthening the capacity to manage the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Suriname”

<sup>3</sup> Annex N: Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan for the UNDP GEF project: “Strengthening the capacity to manage the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Suriname”

the gold mining sector are sex workers, and others work as hairdressers, shop owners, or food sellers. Some of the women have a home, partner, and/or family in the mining fields. This means that they visit Paramaribo to buy the products they need and then return to the gold mines. Nowadays, some of these women have their own mining machinery and equipment and manage mining camps.

Maroon women. Historically, gold mining was a temporary activity in Maroon society. Today, gold mining has become a primary source of subsistence for many Maroons living in villages near the gold mining fields, the city, or elsewhere in the country. At present, Maroon women not only perform several jobs in the gold mining fields, but are also disproportionately affected by the impacts of gold mining. Cultural differences between the Maroon society and the Brazilian women create limitations in terms of access to income and employment. For example, menstruating Maroon women are not allowed to cook for men; Brazilian women comprise the majority of sex workers in the area.

**ASGM also creates unsustainable social conditions** for many families, as men and women leave their communities to become miners or traveling salesmen, and/ or seek employment in town. This leads to families being broken apart, often separated for months or years as incomes are precarious, irregular, and unpredictable. Furthermore, the inadequacy of services and infrastructure, such as roads, transportation, shelter (housing), safe drinking water, sanitation systems, energy sources in rural areas, exacerbates the inherent vulnerability of those women left behind or of those living in villages in the interior. It should be noted that the influx of cash from gold mining is leading to problems of male alcoholism, which in turn is associated with domestic violence. Prostitution and health issues such as HIV/AIDS and other STDs are also common in the interior area of Suriname.

The communities living in the immediate and or surrounding area of ASGM also suffer from **the environmental impacts of ASGM**: water pollution, pollution of aquatic ecosystems, depletion of fish stocks, all resulting from the use of mercury, deforestation, and the alteration of hydrologic systems.

#### **4. Community Profile in the Project Area, ASGM and Gender Context**

This chapter gives an overview of ASGM and its gender context specific to the project area. The three sections in the project area will be separately addressed. Based on the Merian SIA 2019 update, 1338 permanent residents were counted in the project area: 1234 Pamaka and 104 non-Pamaka. Approximately 800 non-permanent Pamaka are estimated to visit the area often.

##### **4.1. The Langa Tabiki road and Snesi Kondre**

**This area is characterized by a mix of Pamaka and non-Pamaka residents.** It has the highest concentration of non-Pamaka residents in the project area. The Pamaka

live in clusters along the LT road linked to specific traditional Pamaka villages' rights to land; Akaati families (Babel) and Langa Tabiki families (Van Gennep, Van Geenen, Sana and Forster, Amaunten and Van Dun) dominate the area along the LT road and Snesi Kondre (figure 1, page 4). In Snesi Kondre, some families from Loka Loka also have land rights. Pamaka community members in this area have stores and businesses, but also sell or lease the land to foreigners, often Brazilians and Chinese, to set up houses, supermarkets, restaurants, bars, brothels, a church, and a repair shop. There is a lot of commercial activity along this road and at Snesi Kondre. These activities provide services to the ASGM sector and local communities in the area. The commercial centers in the settlements of Sion and Stanford also contribute to these activities. An indication of population (SIA- Merian 2019 update): permanent residents along the LT- road were 122 persons, of whom 68 were Pamaka, 8 other Surinamese, and 46 foreigners, including 27 Brazilians, 17 Chinese, one Dominican, and one Guyanese<sup>4</sup>. Several of these foreigners have been living in the area for a long time, some longer than 20 years, and are integrated members of the local community.

**In ASGM, women's roles** (cooks, maintenance, sex workers, sellers of goods) are generally considered less profitable than those taken on by men (e.g., owners, managers, miners). However, women working in the brothels capture most of the miners' income as payment for their services. In the case of Pamaka miners, a disproportionately low amount of funds is sent back to the family (wife and children) in the villages. It is considered "normal" that men stay in the gold mines for many months before visiting their families in the village. Some men may not return to the village at all. Some Pamaka miners will pay for the commitment of a sex worker and thus stay in the field for longer periods. Pamaka miners treat the foreign sex workers well and hold them in high esteem. Problems are often about payment or between miners. While brothel environments are perceived as relatively safe in comparison to mining camps, they remain embedded in a broader ASGM context characterized by insecurity and limited state oversight. Sex workers have access to health care. For small issues, they visit the local Medische Zending clinics, and for other medical problems, they will visit the medical centers in Apatou or Saint Laurent, French Guiana. They may also go to the capital city, Paramaribo, for care. There were no children observed in and around the brothels, and according to the interviewees, the children of sex workers are left behind in Paramaribo. The main concern for the women in this area is access to water. There is no running water along the LT-road and or at Snesi Kondre. Rainwater is collected in water tanks for drinking. In the dry season, there is scarcity. Water for non-drinking purposes is collected from the river or from wells (some people have one) and transported by ATV.

**Local government authorities and supporting government services** are concentrated in the Snesi Kondre area. There are many buildings and facilities under

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<sup>4</sup> Merian Social Impact Assessment Update 2019 report

government management, many of which require maintenance and are abandoned. Although there are public servants among the community with government service tasks (persons in service of the Ministry of Regional Development Suriname and the Ministry of Internal Affairs), none of the government buildings are in use. People go to Paramaribo for these affairs.

There are police and military present in Snesi Kondre. Policemen work from a storage room of a supermarket near the waterfront in Snesi Kondre, in an abominable situation. There are efforts made to change this as soon as possible. The police confirmed that safety in the brothels is not a problem. The most common issues are among miners, fights in bars and/or brothels, armed robberies in the mines, and along the LT road leading to the East-West connection to Paramaribo. There are some domestic violence cases, but not abundant.

#### 4.2. The mining sites in the project area

**There are several mining sites in the area.** There is a mining site in the Snesi Kondre area (1 -2 km off-road), the area is called Markus Boesie. There are also mines West of the LT road, a large area called Tumatu mines. And there are other mining sites at the base of the Nasau mountain, crossing the river from the village of Tabiki Ede. During the gender assessment fieldwork, a mining camp in the Tumatu area was visited. Both Pamaka and Brazilian mine operators work in the area. A single mining camp consists of 8-12 people: the mine operator, 2 machinists, 6-8 miners, and 1-2 women who prepare food and cover household chores. No children were observed in this camp. Brazilian camps usually have Brazilians working. Pamaka camps may have a mix of people working in the camp. Often, Pamaka operators will have a Dominican, Cuban, or Brazilian woman for food preparation, household chores, and private services to the operator in the camp. Men working in the mines obtain the services of sex workers mainly by visiting the brothels along the LT-road and Snesi Kondre; however, there are also a limited number of small brothels near the mining sites (off-road).

Based on a conversation with a Brazilian and Pamaka “patron” (Head of the mine operation in the field), two approaches to mining can be taken: mining with a fixed base camp from which the other mining pits are served, or mining with non-permanent camps, where the camps are abandoned or recycled and moved to where the (new) mining pits are. The latter is more common. The visited Tumatu mine had a fixed base camp, surrounded by several pits. There was a well, a convenience shop, fruit trees, two dogs, and chickens. Although this may reduce costs and create more stability with better facilities (growing food, water from a well, etc.), there is a safety risk. The interviewed mine operator has been robbed at least 3 times in the past 5 years. ASGM remains a high-risk income-generating activity for both genders.

Other communities (briefly) observed were: Chinese miners and indigenous miners. The Chinese miners implement a mining process that reuses the areas that have been mined. They process the sand from the pits, the so-called “baka santi” (the tailings),

add a weak form of cyanide to solidify the gold particles left in the sand, and recapture them through a chemical process with activated charcoal. It was unclear whether an agreement was made with the concession holder of the area to conduct these mining activities, or whether some other form of permission was paid for or obtained. Indigenous miners come with their families (wife and children) and seek work in existing camps; they may come from Bernarddorp, Witsanti, or further away. We could not collect any more information about these two groups – Chinese and Indigenous - within the available timeframe.

**The gender roles in ASGM** in the mines in the project area are similar to those in general for Suriname. Working the mine pits is labor-intensive, and it is not considered (by men or women) a woman's job. The other jobs in mining are mostly done by men. There are rare exceptions where Pamaka women engage in the more managerial tasks of operating a mining site (logistics, purchasing equipment and or spare parts, troubleshooting on-site, filling in for the operator when absent), in close collaboration with their male partner as mine operators, but this is an exception.

#### 4.3. The Pamaka villages in the Marowijne River, from Akaati to Loka Loka

**There are 12 Pamaka villages in the Marowijne River** from North to South: Akaati, Langa Tabiki, Pikin Tabiki, Bonidoro, Bada Tabiki, Sebedoe Kondre, Nason, Tabiki Ede, Pakira Tabiki, Skin Tabiki, Atemsa, and Loka Loka (see figure 2, page 5). Akaati has been abandoned since 2017 to date. Boni Doro has also been uninhabited for a long time. Pikin Tabiki has only one person still living there to date. Based on the SIA 2019 update, the most inhabited villages with permanent residents are: Langa Tabiki (213) and Loka Loka (207), followed by Tabiki Ede and Atemsa (respectively 152 and 137 residents). In 2019, approximately 1100 Pamaka permanent residents were counted in these villages.

Almost all inhabitants of the Pamaka villages in the Marowijne River self-identify as Pamaka. The Pamaka community consists of 5 lo (founding fathers) and many bé (grandmothers' children). The lo are represented through villages and families and ultimately through kabitens (village leaders). There are frictions amongst and between families and villages, due to historical circumstances. One is all, but all is not one: each village is Pamaka, but separate villages cannot represent all Pamaka villages. Each village consists of one or more lo, bé, and/or families. Due to this, any engagement with Pamaka ideally needs to cover all villages.

**The traditional authority consists of** Granman Samuel Forster, the Head of the Pamaka community, followed by the ede kabitens. Currently, there are 4 ede kabitens: (1) Langa Tabiki- Ede Kabiten Albert Kamille, (2) Nason- Ede Kabiten Walter Doedoe, (3) Bada Tabiki – Ede Kabiten Antonius Abadi, (4) Loka Loka – Ede Kabiten Hendrik Ceder. Under the ede kabitens are the kabitens, based on representation of the 5 lo's and the bé's and families. Each lo, bé, and/or family may request from the granman to be represented by one or more kabitens. The granman may or may not

grant this request. Pamaka villages thus have between 0 and 6 kabitens per village. Villages can have both female and male kabitens. Each kabiten has 2 male basja and 2 female basja. In the period of the fieldwork, there was a Gran Krutu called “poti kabiten” (i.e., putting in place of the kabiten), during which new kabitens were appointed. Currently, there are 6 female kabitens and 11 male kabitens. The granman also has granman basja’s who assist the granman personally. Although they fall under the kabitens, they are considered above the other basja in hierarchy. In addition, there are also dorpsoudste (village elders), who can advise kabitens and basja’s when needed, but also the granman. Another distinction is made for persons where both parents come from the same Pamaka village. These are called pranasi pikin (children from the village). They are presumed to have the true interest of the village at heart, as they only have one village they belong to; if it is lost, all is lost. Given the structure described, there is ample representation and participation of women with authority, as kabitens and basjas, in the Pamaka community. It could not be assessed within the limitations of this study to what extent this representation of women in the traditional authority affects decision-making dynamics or the community as a whole.

**There is a high cross-border mobility of Pamaka** between the Pamaka villages and French Guiana (Apatou and Saint-Laurent). All villages have (1) members who travel often between Suriname and French Guiana, have homes in both places; (2) members who live in French Guiana (out-migration) and visit the villages regularly or irregularly; and (3) members who live in the villages and visit French Guiana often for family visits, to sell produce, for healthcare, or otherwise. Some Pamaka community members have also moved to Paramaribo. Many Pamaka community members who obtain a job at Newmont have moved to Paramaribo with their family members (In 2019, 20 out of 264 Pamaka employed by Newmont were transported to the traditional Pamaka communities during their break; this number has reduced to 6). The rest of the Newmont personnel are transported to Paramaribo for their break. Reasons given for out-migration, based on the SIA 2019 data: (1) the absence of adequate infrastructure and services; (2) absence of income-generating opportunities; (3) relocation to be closer to family who have already moved out of the area; (4) appeal of migration to nearby French Guiana due to an attractive social benefits regime and a higher standard of living. Most mothers deliver their children in French Guiana, and many Pamaka children attend school in French Guiana.

**Children are most affected by migration.** Almost 95% of school children from Langa Tabiki, Snesi Kondre, and Langa Tabiki road attend the school in Apatou daily. The SIA 2019 update counted 576 children among the 1338 permanent residents and 162 children in all 3 local schools combined. Currently, only 109 pupils are attending the 3 local schools combined. Women say the highest cost of transmigration of children is the social cost: their children estrange from them, their culture, and their community. The latter is especially the case for the villages from Bada Tabiki to Loka Loka, as these kids do not return home daily, only during the French holidays.

**There were not many residents aged 15- 40** observed in the villages during the fieldwork. The young men in that age category leave the villages to seek work in the gold mines and/or in Paramaribo. The young women move to French Guiana, mostly when they are second-generation French nationals, meaning their parents were born in French Guiana, they themselves were born in French Guiana, and they also went to elementary school in French Guiana. In French Guiana, they receive a stipend for each child they raise. Depending on the number of children, it is considered more than enough to sustain a household and live well.

**The men aged 40 and more** observed in the villages were mostly working in nearby mines (especially men from Bada Tabiki, Sebedoe Kondre, and Tabiki Ede), in boat transportation, and in agriculture (larger plots than the regular “kostgrondje”). Almost all women in this age category have a relatively large agricultural plot. The SIA 2019 noted that 25% of permanent households were female-headed households, without adult men present. Data collected during fieldwork confirmed that men leave the villages to work in ASGM sites and remain there for months before returning to their families in the villages. In some cases, men may not even return for longer than a year. In those cases, they work and live in the mining area. In the absence of men, women have the responsibility over the household, which is not limited to care and responsibility, but also includes income generation to cover associated costs. Many women cover these costs by expanding their agricultural plots. Most women grow cassava for food, but also for commercial use: the cassava is mainly processed into kwaka and some into cassava bread. Women also grow many tubers: ginger, tayer, zoete patat, yamsi, etc. The women do not consider their income from agriculture plots as work, but more as a necessity. When asked what occupation or profession they have, they either answer that they have none or that they are housewives looking after the family. In these cases, Pamaka women in the villages also consider and report the men as part of the household and main breadwinners of the household, despite the men’s absence and the women fulfilling that role. This is especially the case in Atemsa and Loka Loka. The men who conduct mining in areas near the village (Sebedoe Kondre and Tabiki Ede) often return home daily. It was not clear from the interviews what impact the long absence of men has had on women’s roles and responsibilities in the family, and if this differs from the experience of, for example, Loka Loka women.

**ASGM in the Pamaka community:** ASGM is generally safeguarded by the community as a source of income for men. The Pamaka feel strongly connected to ASGM in the area. Many women provide supporting services to ASGM through the sale of their produce and or kwaka. And many men are working in ASGM, either directly in the mines or through supporting services. Unfortunately, not much of the revenue from ASGM reaches the households in the community. Before the 2011 evictions, women benefited through the sale of kwaka and other goods to men working in ASGM; there were more buyers of goods and services. The reduction of buyers and thus income for women was not corrected by Newmont. The known services sold to

Newmont to date are: (1) A Pamaka woman with a catering service who supplies food for workers outside of the Newmont complex; (2) A Pamaka man who regularly supplies vegetables to Newmont; (3) a Pamaka man who regularly supplies eggs to Newmont (this egg farm was owned by a women “Big Mama”, but she passed away); (4) a Pamaka man who supplies regular bus and boat transportation services to Newmont; (5) a Pamaka man who supplies regular boat transportation services to Newmont; and (6) a local Pamaka training and sourcing business (Pansa Group). This list may not be exhaustive, but people could not recall other activities. In short, ASGM was and is mainly an income for Pamaka men. Much of this income was and still is not spent in the villages. Pamaka women were and still are the main contributors of resources from gold mining to the village by selling goods and services to miners. Due to the declining number of miners in the area, the buyers of their goods were reduced as well. Women are looking for access to new markets to sell kwaka and agricultural produce at reasonable prices. Women want more local income generation options for themselves, but also for the men, as they believe that the jobs away from the village keep the men out of the village, away from their families.

**Perceptions of (the use of) mercury in ASGM:** Mercury is generally perceived by many Pamaka as a stable substance that does not affect the human body or living environment, as it is perceived to leave the body without dissolving. Some Pamaka do not share this view and acknowledge that the use of mercury in ASGM is not similar to the historical use of mercury by Pamaka, namely, one would use and reuse less than a kilo of mercury for years. Currently, kilos of mercury are used (not reused) for one operation. They also acknowledge that the burning of mercury stains pots and pans, which means that it does not just evaporate, but it subsides elsewhere. Some are concerned about mercury pollution and want to know what the current situation is, especially in the soil and water. There is also concern about mercury poisoning in the population. However, this is not communicated clearly. A woman said: I have a daughter who is very sick, doctors cannot find what is wrong with her, we even went to Paris, no help. What is it? The most pressing concern in this regard is the polluted water in the river, a result of mining upstream and mining in the creeks feeding the river. There are similar concerns regarding cyanide in the air, soil, and water. Still, the overall perception of ASGM in the Pamaka community and its impact is positive. There is some interest in mining without mercury and a willingness to cooperate, but the men are skeptical about the practicality of this approach.

## **5. Community Development and Organizations**

### **5.1. Livelihoods**

**Along the Langa Tabiki road, there are two commercial centers:** Tumatu 1 and Tumatu 2; Snesi Kondre is the 3<sup>rd</sup> commercial center. Sion and Stanford are also considered commercial points in this area. These centers provide services for the small-scale gold miners in the area, the villagers, and other persons passing by.

Several businesses were identified in the area. Pamaka businesses: 1 training center (Pansa group), 4 animal husbandry, including poultry farming, small fruit farms, several agriculture (cassava) plots, 2 transportation companies, 2 catering (food) shops. Pamaka also leases land and/or concession rights to mining managers and equipment owners for exploitation. The regular fee is 10% of revenue. There are also local miners living along the road. Non-Pamaka businesses identified: 10 supermarkets (Chinese), 4 bars and restaurants (Brazilian), 8 brothels (Brazilian). The brothels host mainly foreign sex workers (Brazilian, Dominican, and Cuban), but there are also some Surinamese, often non-Pamaka women. Most of these livelihoods of people living in this area are directly connected to ASGM. Except for the sex workers who are predominantly female and the local miners who are predominantly male, there are no clear gender roles for the different jobs within the identified businesses.

**Traditionally, in the Pamaka villages, gender roles** were distinct and clear for women and men. Women were traditionally responsible for the care of the home, the family (her husband, children, parents, and brothers), and a plot of land to grow crops needed for sustenance, and the surplus was sold. They provided clothing and food (they could go fishing), took care of the home, their parents, and raised the children. Traditionally, the female *basja*'s were also responsible for dealing with women's issues in the village and for 'women's work', such as cleaning the village. The men were to provide the financial means to meet the needs of the home, wife, and children. They also took financial responsibility for their parents and their sisters' children. Men were also responsible for building a house for their wives, preparing the plot for planting, and providing a boat. The men would primarily do that themselves; when they could not, they would hire someone to do so. If someone else, other than her husband, would offer to prepare the plot for a woman, it was perceived as an offence towards the husband. Over time, gender roles with regard to livelihoods, deviating from tradition, became less distinct and vague, more focused on what is needed, what works, and who is present to do so.

**Much has changed in the Pamaka community**, due to the social impacts of both ASGM and the migration between the villages and French Guiana. Due to the absence of men working in ASGM, women were obligated to fill in for the provision of financial means: they pay other men to prepare the plots (payment signals the business arrangement), and the agricultural plots became bigger, so there was more produce left to sell. When there were many miners in the area, they had ample income for their efforts and could provide for their families. Due to a decrease in ASGM activities in the project area (after the 2011 eviction), more women left the village looking for a better life in French Guiana. Once their papers are finalized, they can receive a stipend for each (French) child they raise. This is perceived as an income. The French municipality also provides for housing.

**For the Pamaka men who live with their families in the villages** and who are not working in ASGM, gender roles are more aligned with the traditional roles. There are

deviations, however, when men and women will share responsibility for the family as a whole. For example, many of these men will have agricultural plots, not for sustenance, but as income generation. They do this together with their wife, or separately. Other income-generating activities are: boat transportation, boat production and maintenance, building houses, producing wooden planks and woodworks, selling fuel, hunting and fishing, small store keeping, entertainment (DJ during parties), guiding tours, and providing lodging, among others.

There was no documentation available on how many Pamaka households are directly impacted by ASGM (men working in the gold mines) or indirectly affected by ASGM (men or women providing supporting services to ASGM). Villagers estimate 90% of Pamaka households are directly and/or indirectly impacted by the ASGM sector for their livelihoods. After ASGM, agriculture is the main income-generating activity for both Pamaka men and women, especially for those who still stay and live in the villages.

**With regards to income for the traditional authority**, all members of the traditional authority, both male and female, receive a government salary. Other public servants (among others) are the men maintaining the village generator and persons working for the Ministry of Regional Development and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

## 5.2. Education

**There are three (3) primary schools in the Pamaka area:** (1) the Granman Forster school in Langa Tabiki; (2) the Anton Donici school on the mainland across the river from Nason; (3) the O.S. Loka Loka on the mainland across the river from Loka Loka. See Table 1 for further details.

Table 1. An overview of the primary schools in the Pamaka community

| <b>School location</b>                                   | <b>Langa Tabiki</b>                           | <b>Nason</b>           | <b>Loka Loka</b>                      |
|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| School Name  | Granman Forster school (approx. 80 years old) | Anton Donici School    | O.S. Loka Loka (approx. 25 years old) |
| Denomination   | Moravian Protestant                           | Roman Catholic         | Public                                |
| Total number of pupils Oct. 2025                         | 18 (15 boys, 3 girls)                         | 47 (33 boys, 14 girls) | 44 (25 boys, 19 girls)                |
| Total number of pupils Oct. 2024                         | 25 (21 boys, 4 girls)                         | 40 (23 boys, 17 girls) | 57 (29 boys, 28 girls)                |
| Number of teachers (incl. the Head master) for 2025-2026 | 2   | 5                      | 7                                     |

| <b>School location</b>                                   | <b>Langa Tabiki</b>   | <b>Nason</b>           | <b>Loka Loka</b>      |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total number of pupils at the end of 2018-2019           | 32 (25 boys, 7 girls) | 65 (35 boys, 30 girls) | 65(29 boys, 36 girls) |
| Number of teachers (incl. the Head master) for 2018-2019 | 4                     | 5                      | 10                    |

There is illiteracy among older people in some villages, especially in Loka Loka. Pamaka children, similar to other children from traditional communities in the interior, have challenges in obtaining knowledge and learning in Dutch, the country's official language. It starts with reading, followed by reading and text comprehension. Currently, most children in the project area have access to education and go to school. The children living along the LT-road, and Snesi Kondre visit the school in Langa Tabiki. Some who are born in French Guiana or who are acknowledged by a French citizen can visit the school in Apatou. They cross the river to Langa Tabiki. A French school boat picks them up and brings them back to the Langa Tabiki daily. This situation is somewhat different from the villages upriver, which cannot take this school boat; even so, there is a relatively low number of children visiting the local schools. For education after primary school, children go to Paramaribo. The children mostly stay with their families. Children already in the French system attend school in Saint Laurent or Cayenne.

The teachers at the local schools do their work under impoverished conditions. The condition of the school buildings and teachers' accommodation is very poor. The buildings need a clean-up and renovation. The Loka Loka school is in the worst condition (entire ceilings in the classrooms have fallen down. The teachers abandoned part of the building to allocate resources more effectively to a couple of classes for teaching. There is an overall lack of educational materials, and chairs and tables are broken. There is no electricity and an overall scarcity of drinkable water. Rainwater is collected in water tanks, but there are not enough tanks to have water throughout the dry season. In Langa Tabiki, there is a situation where 2 teachers (including the Head master of the school) teach all grades. In October 2025, the school had 18 pupils, comprising 15 boys and 3 girls, in all grades combined. It is a true challenge for the two teachers to cover the curriculum of all classes with the children. The teachers have left their posts out of protest (they have been asking for more teachers before the start of this school year). As mentioned before, many of the children in Langa Tabiki visit the primary school in Apatou, hence the low number of pupils at the Granman Forster school.

Teachers at the local schools do not perceive significant differences between boys and girls at school or preferences of parents for one over the other. Apart from the conditions of housing and the school building, they appreciate their work and the

children. They would want more engagement of parents in the education of the kids. Another concern is how to prepare children who are challenged by the regular education system to thrive in society. They would want a school that teaches competencies needed in everyday life and to obtain a diploma/ certificate in more vocational education: woodwork, taking measurements, listing ingredients, making a budget for an activity, equipment maintenance, farming techniques, etc. In this way, the children would have a better chance to develop a skill and have meaningful employment in their community or elsewhere.

### 5.3. Health and Well-being

Everyone in the Pamaka area has access to basic health services at the Suriname Medical Mission Primary Health Care (MZ) centers. There is one MZ clinic in Langa Tabiki and one on the mainland across the river from Nason. These centers do not have physicians on site; instead, the clinics have 2 health care assistants. They refer patients to the doctor in Albina or Paramaribo when needed. They do provide first aid and care in case of fevers, cough, diarrhea, and preventive care such as measuring blood pressure, check-ups for diabetes mellitus, and breast cancer inspection. The centers are clean. There is no electricity, except for a solar panel that generates electricity for a small fridge to keep vaccinations. There is also a lack of water here in the dry season. The main concern is the limited amount of medicine and medical materials available to do the work. Patients are perceived as distrustful of therapy, and they do not trust the MZ health workers' professional conduct with regard to the handling of their medical information. This is due to the small size of the community and familial ties. People do not regularly visit the clinics, even when required. Diabetes mellitus and hypertension are the most prevalent health issues in the communities and require regular check-ups. Patients do not have to pay for medical services, only for medication on prescription. People from this area can also visit the clinic in Apatou or Saint Laurent, with no costs for medical care; people do have to travel by boat to get there and pay for the medication prescribed by the doctor. Most Pamaka women use French health services for delivery and pre- and post-natal care; saying they experience better mother-and-child care. Children born in French Guiana have better options to obtain French citizenship.

As mentioned, the most prevalent diseases reported by the medical assistants at the MZ are: diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and diarrhea in the dry season when there is a shortage of drinkable water. There are also often cases where they have to treat inflicted wounds on men. Men drink and fight, especially during parties, and may injure one another. One would suspect that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) would be prevalent in the community. However, there is no evidence to support this assumption, not from the respondents, and not from the medical assistants at the MZ clinics. Occasionally, there are only men coming in with gonorrhea, a common sexually transmitted bacterial infection. There is no evidence of HIV infections among the population. Villagers of Langa Tabiki and Loka Loka have mentioned the use of

party drugs (sukru) and cocaine in the community and have shown concerns for the next generation.

Data from the SIA 2019 states that 9.3% of the 405 permanent households have a person with a disability. 41 persons with a disability were counted in the project area in 2019. A comparison could not be made with the country's average.

**Sanitation.** There is no public sanitation system. Most people have an outhouse. At the MZ centers, schools, and lodges, there are water closets. Some people may have a water closet, and some use the river.

**Waste.** There is no waste collection service. Most of the waste ends up in the river. Along the LT road, much of the waste is dumped at specific spots and burnt regularly.

**Water.** Drinkable water is mainly sourced through collected rainwater. Even so, there is no clear system to guarantee availability of drinkable water (clean roofs, proper catchment in pipes, closed catchment of water in water tanks, strategically placed number of water tanks, etc. People also obtain water from wells, or creek water, and as a last resort, water from the river. The polluted water, as a result of ASGM, restricts its use for the community.

**Electricity:** the public village generator, if present, will provide electricity in the evening until 11 or 12 at night. During the day, villagers should provide for their own electricity. Most people along the LT road and Snesi Kondre have a generator. Other households do without. The use of solar panels is not common in this area.

**Transportation and connectivity:** Apart from the school boat, there is no public transportation by boat in the area. Most boat transportation is personal or commercial. Most agriculture plots are outside the village on the mainland across the river, and women need a boat to travel to and from these plots. Some women own a boat, others take a lift or pay for the crossing daily. This increases the cost for women to attend to their plots. Transportation over land: there is a public bus that maintains the route between Snesi Kondre and Paramaribo, 3 times a week for 600 SRD per person. There are also daily commercial buses between Snesi Kondre and Paramaribo for 1000 SRD per person.

#### 5.4. Organizations

The active organizations in the area mentioned are: (1) the traditional authority, (2) three churches: one church (Brazilian) along the LT road, one Gospel of Christ church in Snesi Kondre, one Protestant church in Langa Tabiki and one Catholic church in Nason; (3) a Pamaka miners cooperation: Small-Scale Mining Pamaka- SSMP, represents Pamaka miners in negotiations with Newmont; (4) men in goldmining have also organized themselves in smaller groups, one of which is Meki u Opo Taampu; (5)

two cultural organizations, Awasa dance and recreational groups: Kifoko in Paramaribo, led by Maria Dewini and Awibenkiben in French Guiana, led by the Tojo family; and (6) the association for Sustainable Development of Paamakka (Duurzame Ontwikkeling Pamaka -DOP). The latter was founded in relation to Newmont and the Community Development Fund. Some of its tasks are: to represent the Pamaka community in negotiations with Newmont, serve as a liaison between Newmont and the community, and monitor and regulate compliance with agreements between Newmont and the Pamaka community.

There are many inactive organizations mentioned: mostly women’s organizations: Opo Seki, in Langa Tabiki; Uma Denki in Nason, and Mi sa Doe. There are also organizations from Pamaka in French Guiana, one of which is Ana Makandi (an umbrella organization for all Pamaka villages), but the permanent Pamaka residents of the villages are not actively engaged in these organizations. There are no local cultural groups in the project area and no sports organizations or recreational groups. During the interview sessions, the participants were encouraged to either kick-start these organizations back to life or establish new ones. Based on the interviews, there is an obvious need for agriculture organizations or cooperatives. Agriculture is the main income-generating activity after ASGM, especially for women, but also for many men currently living in the villages. It is also an activity shared among and between villages, with common problems, approaches, and solutions.

## 6. Community Concerns, Capacity, and Training Needs

During the interviews, respondents (both men and women) were asked to identify concerns they would want to address, and training and capacity needs to improve their income and or livelihoods. The EMSAGS project will be terminated in November 2026. The following table is an overview of the short-term training and capacity needs, which could be addressed under the project. The table specifies whether the concerns and needs were identified by men only, women only, or both. The numbers 1,2,3 refer to the project areas the concerns apply to: (1) LT-road and Snesi Kondre, (2) the small-scale goldmining areas, (3) the Pamaka villages.

Table 2. Community concerns and short-term training and capacity needs

| <b>General concerns</b>               | <b>Training needs</b>                                 | <b>Capacity needs: Materials &amp; equipment</b> | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|------------|--------------|
| No access to drinkable water (1,2, 3) | Training in the installation and maintenance of water | Make more water tanks available                  | x          | x            |

| <b>General concerns</b>  | <b>Training needs</b>   | <b>Capacity needs: Materials &amp; equipment</b> | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> |
|--|---|--|------------|--------------|
|  | tanks (semi-closed system).   |  |            |              |
| No electricity during the day (1,2,3)  | Installation of low-tech solar panel systems, especially for schools and MZ clinics.  | Complete low-maintenance solar panel systems     | x          | x            |
| The water quality of the river and rainwater (1,3)   | Research into the quality of the water in the river and the water from the tap water in Langa Tabiki.   | NA   |            | x            |
| Mercury pollution (3)  | Research into mercury pollution of the water in the river and collected rainwater. Also, the soil from agricultural plots and fish in the river.      | NA   |            | x            |
| Soil degradation (3)   | A soil survey to inform villagers which areas are best for which crops and how to manage soil degradation.  | NA   | x          | x            |
| Repeated failure in the harvest of the cassava crops in the entire area, including French Guiana (1,3) | Support and a survey from CELOS and the Min of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries. To look into the cause of this phenomenon <sup>5</sup> . | NA   | x          | x            |
| Poor governance of the Pamaka villages (3)   | Leadership skills for traditional village leaders to improve organization, communication, and community development skills                            | NA   |            | x            |

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/share/17uazPC6YP/>

| <b>General concerns</b>                 | <b>Training needs</b>  | <b>Capacity needs: Materials &amp; equipment</b>   | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> |
|---|--|--|------------|--------------|
|   | aligned with their authority and mandate.  |  |            |              |
| (Women's) organizations do not last (3) | Support in kick-starting inactive organizations. Training in engagement, communication, and administrative skills. | NA   |            | x            |
| Low job opportunities                   | Vocational training in the maintenance and repair of generators  | Tools and equipment  | x          |              |
|   | Vocational training in maintenance and repair of outboard engines.   | Tools and equipment  | x          |              |
|   | Maintenance training   | Equipment to use in a welding workshop   | x          |              |
|   | NA   | Equipment to use in building construction and woodworking  | x          |              |
| More recreational activities (1)        | A sports field for soccer  | Goals and nets   | x          |              |
|   | Vocational training in textiles  | Sewing machines and accessories  |            | x            |
|   | Increase production of cassava crops and other produce.  | Plowing machines, chain saws, agricultural manual equipment, a cooling facility at Snesi Kondre (to collect and store produce) | x          | x            |

Some concerns mentioned by the respondents require a long-term approach: (1) illiteracy among adults through literacy programs, (2) limited market access to sell produce and kwaka for a reasonable price, (3) limited support to maintain community organizations, and (4) identified gaps in reading skills of children at local schools. Some concerns require a structural change: (1) safety in mines and on the road, (2)

sanitation issues- waste management, (3) formal vocational training opportunities for children in rural areas, (4) paving the LT road, and (5) shortage of medical materials and equipment.

## **7. Analysis and Discussion**

### **7.1. Differences between the 3 Sections in the Project Area**

Although the Pamaka communities in the Snesi Kondre project area share a common cultural identity and historical relationship with artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM), the assessment reveals clear differences between the three sub-areas: (1) the Langa Tabiki road and Snesi Kondre, (2) the mining sites, and (3) the Pamaka villages along the Marowijne River.

Ad 1. Langa Tabiki road and Snesi Kondre are characterized by a mixed population of Pamaka and non-Pamaka residents and a strong concentration of commercial activity directly linked to ASGM in the area. Gender roles in this area appear to be shaped primarily by market dynamics rather than tradition. Women, often non-Surinamese women, are highly visible in service-based livelihoods (shops, bars, restaurants, brothels, catering). A significant portion of the income earned by men working in ASGM is spent on services provided by the women in this area.

Ad 2. Mining sites are highly male-dominated and organized around productivity and risk management. Women at mining sites are predominantly in cooking, domestic labor, or the provision of sexual services. Decision-making power within mining sites is largely concentrated among men. While mining camps provide temporary income opportunities, they expose both men and women to health and safety risks, including criminality, theft, and mercury exposure.

Ad 3. Pamaka villages along the Marowijne River remain primarily residential and culturally anchored spaces. Traditional gender norms are more visible, particularly in relation to agriculture, household responsibilities, and community leadership. However, prolonged male absence, due to ASGM, has significantly altered these norms. Women increasingly function as de facto household heads and income providers, while still perceiving themselves as dependents within male-headed households.

### **7.2. Similarities across Villages**

An analysis of the data revealed several shared patterns among the Pamaka villages:

- There is a strong dependence on ASGM, both directly and indirectly; it is the main source of income, especially for men.

- The second form of income generation in general is agriculture. Agriculture is the main income-generating activity for men and women living in the villages.
- There is limited local income diversification (gold mining and agriculture-cassava), resulting in economic vulnerability for both women and men.
- There is a fragmentation of households, driven by the mobility of community members due to ASGM, transmigration, and migration for educational, economic, and/or health purposes.
- Both men working in the mines and women in the villages are in high-stress environments, constantly in survival mode. The statement of health workers at the MZ clinics confirms that ‘hypertension and diabetes mellitus are the most prevalent diseases in the area.
- There is a generally weak social organization. A lack of activities to keep the community members engaged and connected to each other and concerned with shared community needs. Currently, there are no active women’s organizations in the Pamaka community.
- Lastly, there is a lack of basic services, particularly drinkable water, sanitation, electricity, and waste management. However, this is not unusual for rural areas in Suriname.

The differences between villages are grounded in the dynamics between lo’s, be’s, and families. These differences dictate an individual approach to the villages in communications and benefit sharing, with regard to project activities.

### 7.3 ASGM, Mobility and Gender Dynamics

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) is the central economic driver in the project area and fundamentally shapes gender relations, roles, and vulnerabilities. At the household level, prolonged male absence due to ASGM has normalized women’s responsibilities for care, agriculture, and income generation. However, this shift has not translated into a redefinition of gender norms. Women continue to self-identify as dependents within male-headed households, even when they function as primary providers. ASGM remains embedded in Pamaka's perception of identity, autonomy, and land rights, making it resistant to critique by both men and women, despite some acknowledgment of environmental, health, and social concerns. These concerns and discussions regarding these concerns have resulted in a need for information and data, and a need for research into mercury pollution in the project area.

Mobility is another key factor influencing gender dynamics. Men’s mobility is primarily ASGM-driven, characterized by long periods in mining camps with occasional or more regular returns to the village. Women’s mobility is more closely linked to care strategies and long-term security, particularly through migration to French Guiana for access to education, healthcare, social, and financial benefits. These differences in mobility shape the current gender and family dynamics, and

community cohesion. They accelerate social fragmentation, cultural and social disconnection from the villages.

## **8. Recommendations**

The findings suggest that uniform, area-wide interventions are unlikely to succeed. Village-specific approaches are required, with clear communication about what the project can and cannot deliver. Gender mainstreaming must focus on practical improvements to daily life rather than abstract equality goals. All recommendations are framed within this context, the remaining timeframe (until Nov. 2026), and the scope of the EMSAGS project, and prioritize feasibility and tangible outcomes.

### **Community-focused support for both women and men:**

- Develop and implement an agriculture improvement activity that includes the following components:
  - Conduct a soil survey to identify which area is best suited for specific crops. This can also lead to crop diversification, in addition to cassava, better sales and prices for products, and risk spreading in the event of disease or crop failure.
  - Facilitate an exchange between Pamaka and Saamaka agricultural groups, enabling Pamaka farmers to visit Samaaka plots and observe best practices.
  - Initial support and training for the development of at least 3 agriculture cooperations (Loka Loka, Nason, and Langa Tabiki-Snesi Kondre), smaller agriculture groups can contribute under these 3 cooperations.
  - Training in networking and collaboration to increase options for market access to French Guiana and obtain support from other planters.
  - Purchase of various agricultural (manual tools and small plowing machines, chain saws, etc.) and processing tools (oil processing, cassava processing, etc). Training in the use and maintenance of these tools.
  - Regular support from CELOS to facilitate and engage the community, teach best practices and approaches, and introduce other techniques for planting crops.
  - Support from CELOS to guide the community to properly handle the cases of this Cassava disease among plots in the community.

### **Women-focused support:**

- Conduct targeted research and systematically share the findings with the community. These findings can be used to inform and organize education and awareness efforts regarding mercury pollution and its effects on the environment and people.
  - Conduct research on mercury pollution in the environment, including river water, rainwater, soil, and aquatic life.

- Research into the quality of water in the river and the water taps in Langa Tabiki.
  - Research into mercury pollution among the population is needed but was not specifically requested. Such research could be done in collaboration with the medical center in Apatou to introduce an independent factor. The latter would increase the validity of the results among the Pamaka people and the French authorities, which will inform the next steps to be taken in this regard.
  - Education and awareness activities on the harmful effects of mercury for human beings and the environment, conducted based on or together with the above-mentioned research, could better convince communities and individuals who still do not believe that mercury use is harmful.
- Support the re-establishment of women's groups through targeted capacity-building activities. As one of the first activities under these groups, provide training in textiles. Includes support for creative groups with training in the versatility of textiles, textiles' uses and manipulation, and designs. Purchase sewing machines and other relevant materials.
  - Provide leadership training to members of the traditional authority to strengthen their capacity to support community development. This includes training in communication and community mobilization and engagement, negotiation, community organization and administration, and planning for regular opportunities to engage with their constituents.

#### **Men-focused support:**

- Support the development of technical support groups and provide vocational training in maintenance and repair of outboard engines and generators; and vocational training in basic water installation, placement, and maintenance of water tanks, to improve the setup and use of water tanks. This also includes the purchase of materials, equipment, and tools (if groups are formally in place). Other tools include: brush-cutters, tools for welding, tools for building construction, and tools for woodworking.
- Develop a soccer field along the LT road to provide miners with opportunities for leisure and social interactions outside of work hours.

#### **General guidelines for engagement:**

- Conduct activities in a transparent manner, with clear communication and proper management of expectations, especially concerning expected results, what the community needs to do, and what the project will do. Communicate project limitations and expectations clearly to avoid reinforcement of project fatigue and mistrust.
- Make an effort to cover all inhabited villages.
- Ensure frequent, clear, and consistent communication, be repetitive, be unambiguous, be focal, and speak proper Sranan Tongo, Pamakan, or Aucanisi

Tongo. Use anecdotes, everyday experiences, and or visuals. These guidelines for communication should especially be followed to share the results of the research.

**Other opportunities for support:**

- Work within established groups and cooperations and provide additional training in project writing to interested participants, equipping them with the mindset and tools to secure project funding and support for the Pamaka community.
- Explore collaborations with other GEF projects, funding initiatives, foundations, and organizations to facilitate follow-up and or continuation of community engagement under the EMSAGS project after termination of the project.

## **9. Conclusions**

This gender assessment set out to examine the current situation regarding gender participation in the ASGM sector in the Snesi Kondre project area. The findings confirm that ASGM is an economic activity that has greatly impacted the lives of the communities in the project area, the mobility of individuals, family and community dynamics, access to resources, and perceptions of responsibility for both women and men within the area. Across the project area, ASGM remains a critical source of income, particularly for men. While it provides cash flow and supports household survival, it also reinforces gendered divisions of labor and contributes to prolonged male absence from the village and homes. Women have responded to this reality by expanding their roles as household managers, agricultural producers, and income earners. However, these shifts have increased responsibilities for women and occurred largely without recognition or renegotiation of gender norms.

During the field visits undertaken, it proved impossible (within the time frame) to identify a cohort of specific active women miners. Both the women directly interviewed and the participants in the village meetings were unanimous that mining activities are not considered women's work. In general, women engaged in ASGM in the Pamaka area provide a variety of services to the miners (transportation, cooking, cleaning, laundry) or are sex workers. The team met one woman along the LT road who said she was a miner, but she was not interested in further engagement in the project.

Women are key actors in the efforts to change the perception of the Pamaka community regarding mercury pollution and thus create opportunities for the community to adopt mercury-free mining in the area. Many steps will be required; the first step is the women's request for research into mercury pollution in the Pamaka community. Awareness of the harmful effects of mercury use should be linked to such requested research as a second step, since it would then probably be more effective. Mobility

emerged as a defining characteristic of Pamaka life. Men's mobility is closely tied to mining cycles, while women's and children's mobility is increasingly oriented toward French Guiana in search of education, healthcare, and economic security. These parallel mobility systems reflect rational responses to economic pressure and structural neglect, but they also contribute to social fragmentation, cultural disconnection, and weakening of village-based development prospects.

Overall, the findings underscored the importance of context-specific and gender-responsive interventions. The assessment provided a valuable evidence base to inform EMSAGS programming and to support the development of targeted actions aimed at improving gender equity, community well-being, and sustainable livelihoods within the ASGM sector in the Snesi Kondre area. Ultimately, improving environmental management in ASGM areas cannot be separated from the social and gender realities of the communities that depend on mining for survival. Long-term progress will require sustained, culturally respectful engagement that acknowledges both the necessity of ASGM in the present and the need for diversified, safer, and more equitable livelihood pathways in the future.

## 10. Annexes

### Appendix 1. Planning and activities for the gender assessment on-site

| Activity  | When    | Description   | Proposed Dates     |
|---|---------|---|--------------------|
| Travel from Paramaribo to Snesi Kondre  | Day 0   | The team will travel from Paramaribo to Snesi Kondre EMTEc center and make preparations for the information sessions.   | Oct. 20, 2025      |
| The information session by the EMSAGS team & Preliminary activities for Gender assessment | Day 1   | The EMSAGS team will present the EMSAGS project in Langa Tabiki to the community of Langa Tabiki and the surrounding area (Snesi Kondre, Pikin Tabiki, Bada Tabiki, Sebedoe Kondre, and Nason).<br>The activities will include observations, preliminary sessions, and a teach-in session for local community members joining the survey team.<br>Travel to Loka Loka (1-2 hours depending on the water level)  | Oct. 21, 2025      |
| The information session by the EMSAGS team & Preliminary activities for Gender assessment | Day 2   | The EMSAGS team will present the EMSAGS project in Loka Loka to the community of Loka Loka and the surrounding area (Tabiki Ede, Pakira Tabiki, Skin Tabiki, Atemsa, and Loka Loka).<br>The activities will include observations, preliminary sessions, and a teach-in session for local community members joining the survey team.   | Oct. 22, 2025      |
| Assessment in riverine villages   | Day 3-5 | Travel by boat to villages. The assessment in the villages will be done mainly through group sessions. Some effort will be made to ensure that the kabitens and basjas can participate in the meetings, especially the female basjas, as they are mostly engaged in organizing the villages with respect to socio-economic activities.<br>Day 3: Loka Loka & Atemsa;<br>Day 4: Skin Tabiki, Pakira Tabiki, Tabiki Ede, Nason en Sebedoe kondre.<br>Day 5: Bada Tabiki, Pikin Tabiki & Langa Tabiki. | Oct. 23 – 25, 2025 |
| Assessment along the LT-road and at Snesi Kondre and mine site (Marcus Boesie)            | Day 6-8 | Site visits by car to each establishment along the LT road. Primary data was collected through field observations and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Individual or small group (2–3 persons) interviews with persons present in the mine. Women will be interviewed separately from men. Limited sessions will be conducted on Sunday (Day 6).<br>Day 7: the mine site, Markus Boesie and Snesi Kondre<br>Day 8: Snesi Kondre and LT road   | Oct. 26 - 28, 2025 |

Appendix 2. List of Respondents during the Field Visits (20-27 Oct. 2025)

| <b>October 22<sup>nd</sup> ,2025</b>   |   |                              |                         |
|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Loka Loka</b>             |   |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b>    | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Atipai Theo  | agriculturalist/Electricien             | Loka Loka                    | M                       |
| Ceder Fabian   | agriculturalist/all-rounder             | Loka Loka                    | M                       |
| Ceder Marchiano  | agriculturalist/all-rounder             | Loka Loka                    | M                       |
| Asoma Leonarda   | agriculturalist                         | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Dende Wanda  | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Bena Elmien  | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Ceder Maria  | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Ceder Denice   | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Ceder Jacoba   | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Ceder Magdalena  | agriculturalist/housewife               | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: O.S. Loka Loka School</b> |   |                              |                         |
| Misidjan, S  | Teacher                                 | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Steenberg, D   | Teacher                                 | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Van Bosse ,A   | Teacher                                 | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Kwadjani, R  | Teacher                                 | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Naingi, S  | Teacher                                 | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| <b>Individual formal interview- Location: Loka Loka- Wada</b>                          |   |                              |                         |
| Ceder Lucia  | Agriculturalist                         | Loka Loka                    | F                       |
| Adriaan Adawde   | Lodge holder/Agriculturalist/shopkeeper | Loka Loka                    | M                       |
| <b>October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025</b>   |   |                              |                         |
| <b>Informal interviews- Location: Atemsa</b>   |   |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b>    | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Gerda Ceder  | Agriculturalist                         | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| Mathilda Ceder   | Agriculturalist                         | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| <b>October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025</b>   |   |                              |                         |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Tabiki Ede</b>            |   |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b>    | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Anelli Marie-Octavie   | agriculturalist/housewife               | Tabiki Ede                   | F                       |
| Asaiti Ifna  | Agriculturalist/housewife               | Tabiki Ede                   | F                       |
| Asaiti Matilda   | retired                                 | Tabiki Ede                   | F                       |
| Candice Maria  | retired                                 | Tabiki Ede                   | F                       |

|   |                                      |                              |                         |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Abijawai Marie  | unemployed                           | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Ajatoe Agnes  | unemployed                           | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Langa Tabiki</b>           |                                      |                              |                         |
| Amekan Philip   | Gold miner                           | Nason                        | M                       |
| Forster Ivan  | unknown                              | Langa Tabiki                 | M                       |
| Amekan Regillo  | unknown                              | Langa Tabiki                 | M                       |
| Amautan Lesley  | Basja/Fisherman/agriculturalist      | Langa Tabiki                 | M                       |
| Amautan Andwele   | Kabiten/agriculturalist              | Langa Tabiki                 | M                       |
| Asaiti Willem   | Agriculturalist                      | Skin Tabiki/Nason            | M                       |
| Tojo Johannes   | Agriculturalist/ Basja/tour guide    | Atemsa                       | M                       |
| Sanna Roij  | Agriculturalist/Goldminer            | Atemsa                       | M                       |
| Sanna Alwin   | unemployed                           | Boni Doro/Snesikondre        | M                       |
| Ceder Wensley   | Agriculturalist/ boatman/miller      | Atemsa                       | M                       |
| Asaiti Simon  | Basja/ Agriculturalist/woodcarver    | sikiengtabiki/Nason          |                         |
| Asaitie Willem  | Agriculturalist                      | Nason                        | M                       |
| Kastiel Martin  | unknown                              | Langatabiki                  | M                       |
| Leter Andre   | unknown                              | Langatabiki                  | M                       |
| Forster Charles   | unknown                              | Langatabiki                  | M                       |
| Adoenga Carmen  | Agriculturalist                      | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| Sanna Melka   | Agriculturalist                      | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| Sanna Veronica  | Agriculturalist                      | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| Ceder Tenicha   | Agriculturalist                      | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| Ceder Lucia   | Agriculturalist                      | Atemsa                       | F                       |
| <b>October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>  |                                      |                              |                         |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Granman Forster school</b> |                                      |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>  | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b> | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Zaalman Scharlton   | Headmaster                           | Non-Pamaka                   | M                       |
| Konoe Dolia   | Teacher                              | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: MZ clinic Langa Tabiki</b> |                                      |                              |                         |
| Nauna Yvonne  | Health Assistant                     | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Pinas Natasia   | Health Assistant                     | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| <b>October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>  |                                      |                              |                         |
| <b>Individual informal interview- Location: LT road</b>                                 |                                      |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>  | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b> | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Orpheo Babel  | Gold miner                           | Akaati                       | M                       |
| Guno van Genep  | Gold miner                           | Langa Tabiki                 | M                       |
| Abiona Babel  | Gold miner                           | Akaati                       | F                       |

|  |                                       |                              |                         |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Yvette Maria   | Church owner                          | Brazilian - resident         | F                       |
|  | Sex worker                            | Dominican                    | F                       |
|  | Restaurant owner                      | Brazilian- resident          | M                       |
| Negao  | Technician/ all -rounder              | Brazilian - resident         | M                       |
|  |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Individual formal interview- Location: Snestikondre- Police Station</b>                   |                                       |                              |                         |
| Zandveld   | Police officer                        | Paramaribo                   | M                       |
| Kiezel, R  | Police Officer                        | Paramaribo                   | M                       |
|  |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>   |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Individual formal interview- Location: Tumatu Mine</b>                                    |                                       |                              |                         |
| Charles  | Mine operator                         | Loka Loka                    | M                       |
| Cairo  | Mine operator                         | Brazilian                    | M                       |
|  |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Group session- Location: MZ- clinic Nason</b>   |                                       |                              |                         |
| Fania Y  | Health Assistant                      | Non-Pamaka                   | F                       |
| Sana, M  | Health Assistant                      | Nason                        | F                       |
|  |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Nason</b>                       |                                       |                              |                         |
| Clemens R  | villager                              | Nason                        | M                       |
| Amerkan  | pastor                                | Nason                        | F                       |
| Aboi Petrus  | unemployed                            | Nason                        | M                       |
| Asaiti Johannes  | villager                              | Nasson                       | M                       |
|  | 4 villagers                           | Nason                        | 4 x F                   |
|  |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>   |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Bada Tabiki</b>                 |                                       |                              |                         |
| Aboeka Jozef   | boatman/ pastor                       | Tabiki Ede                   | M                       |
| Amerkan Riko   | Agriculturalist                       | Tabiki Ede                   | M                       |
| Sanna Majosie  | unknown                               | Sikintabiki                  | M                       |
| Alifons Naol   | Agriculturalist/gold miner/woodcarver | Badatabiki                   | M                       |
| Deel Samuel  | Agriculturalist                       | Cottica                      | M                       |
| <b>Gender information session &amp; group session- Location: Sebedoe Kondre / Kiki Mofoe</b> |                                       |                              |                         |
| <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Role/ Occupation/ Profession:</b>  | <b>Associated residence:</b> | <b>Gender identity:</b> |
| Sanna Alwin  | unemployed                            | Kiki Mofoe                   | M                       |
| Tjappa Ronald  | Agriculturalist                       | Kiki Mofoe                   | M                       |
| Tjappa John  | Agriculturalist                       | Kiki Mofoe                   | M                       |
| Neda Hendrika  | retired                               | Non-Pamaka                   | M                       |
| Sanna Johannes   | Agriculturalist                       | Sikintabiki                  | M                       |
| Wasai Stuart   | Agriculturalist                       | Kiki Mofoe                   | M                       |
| Tjappa Petrus  | retired                               | Kiki Mofoe                   | M                       |
| Asaiti Asje  | Agriculturalist                       | Nason                        | F                       |

# **FINAL REPORT:**

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An Assessment of Gender Aspects of Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM)  
in the Snesi Kondre Area.

**January 2026**

Improving Environmental Management in the Mining Sector of Suriname,  
with Emphasis on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (EMSAGS Project)

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