

# Child Labor in the Small-Scale Gold Mining Industry in Suriname

TASK ORDER I, TASK III:  
IN-COUNTRY MIXED-METHODS RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

January 2012 | Final



*Submitted to:*  
United States Department of Labor  
Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20210

*Submitted by:*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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ABS	General Bureau of Statistics ( <i>Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek</i> )
ATM	Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment ( <i>Ministerie van Arbeid, Technologische Ontwikkeling en Milieu</i> )
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EBO	Easy Vocational Education ( <i>Eenvoudig Beroeps Onderwijs</i> )
GLO	Normal Lower Education ( <i>Gewoon Lager Onderwijs</i> )
ILAB	International Labor Affairs Bureau
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LBGO	Lower Vocational Education ( <i>Lager Beroepsgericht Onderwijs</i> )
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MINOV	Ministry of Education and Community Development ( <i>Ministerie van Onderwijs en Volksontwikkeling</i> )
MULO	More Extensive Lower Education ( <i>Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs</i> )
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIKOS	NGO Institute for Training and Research in Suriname
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
SOZAVO	Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing ( <i>Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Volkshuisvesting</i> )
SRD	Surinamese Dollars
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	U.S. Dollars
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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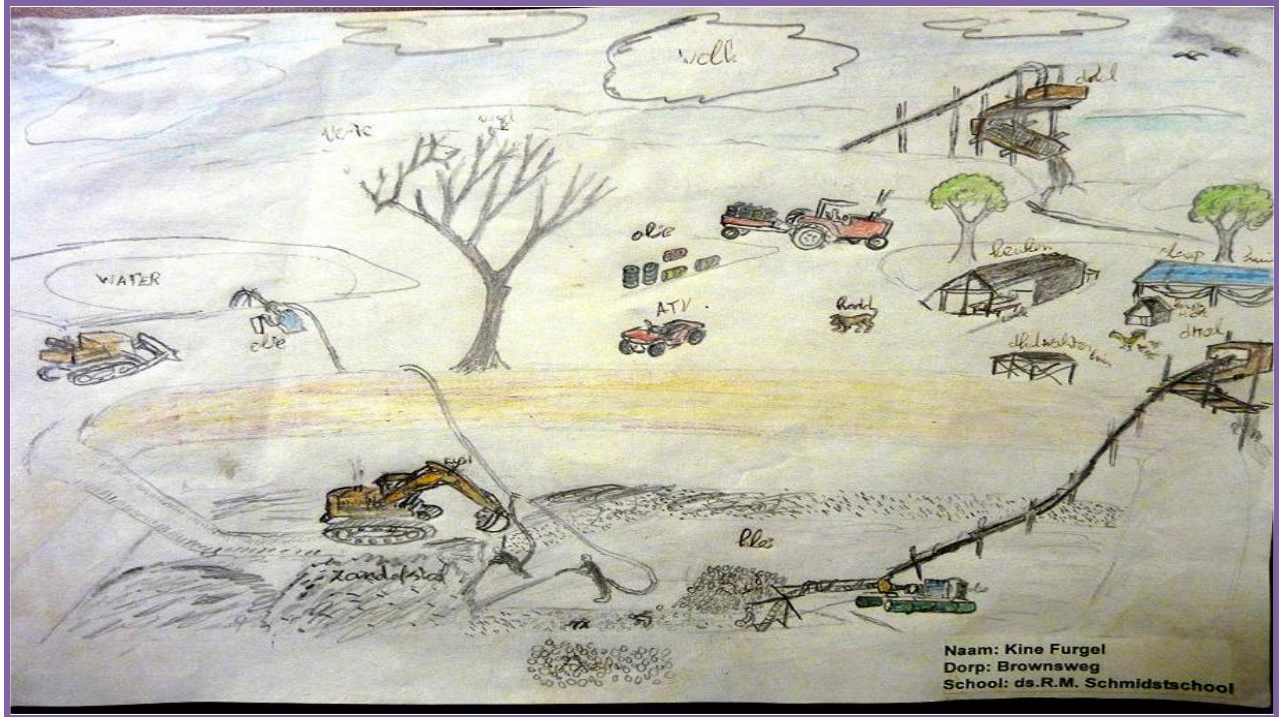
This study employs a mixed-methods methodology to capture and analyze quantitative and qualitative data on child labor in the small-scale gold mining sector in Suriname. The study addresses issues including, but not limited to, the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) in the gold mining sector, risk factors associated with and pathways into child labor, types of work performed, living and working conditions, and perceptions of the situation from those involved. Using a combination of network analysis, geomapping of the gold sector, and expert interviews, the researchers identified and conducted interviews with 167 child workers drawn from a nonprobability sample of three mining areas (Brokopondo, Meriam, and Sella Creek), and conducted direct observation of mining operations. Findings of the study demonstrate that all child gold miners are engaged in hazardous aspects of mining. Worksite and living conditions are poor and lack the most basic services, such as electricity, toilets, or clean water. At the same time, a distinction is evident between the activities of full-time workers (9.7 percent of those interviewed) and part-time workers (89.3 percent). Full-time workers typically work in the mining pits, where they use sharp tools and dangerous machinery, while the balance are more often engaged in gold panning, which exposes them to the toxic effects of mercury. Gold mining work by children occurs in isolated locations deep within Suriname's underdeveloped interior; miners come from the impoverished Maroon population, where many households are large families headed by single mothers. Child miners are mostly boys, who are often drawn into the work through the influence of a matrilineal uncle who has the cultural status of a father. Access to high-quality, native-language education is limited; virtually all the children interviewed had a low level of educational achievement partly because they had missed school for work or because they were too physically and mentally exhausted from work to focus on their studies. However, the immediate need to supplement family income or have money of their own, combined with a lack of alternatives, compels children to work in gold mining.

## Impression

### Box 1

Regilio is 15 years old. He lives with his father in a tribal village in the rural district of Brokopondo and has seven brothers and sisters. His mother died last year. He is in the fourth grade of primary school. Like many other children in the interior, he has difficulties with the basics of education, such as grammar and mathematics. His ambition is to be a technician or a mechanic. Next year, he will be removed from school because of his age. There are no other educational options available for his age and level in the area unless he moves to Paramaribo, the capital city, to continue his education. His family cannot afford his living expense in the city.

There are no sports and leisure opportunities in the area. Only a few weekend or holiday jobs are available, and the ones available pay less than SRD 5 (USD 1.5) an hour. Last year, his older brother and his uncle, who are machine owners, brought him to the mine to make some extra money. Since then he has been working in a gold mine close to his village. On Fridays after school, when he is in the mood to work, he goes to the mining field with his friends. On Sundays he comes back to the village to prepare himself for a new week at school. Each day he finds approximately 1 gram of gold, which is locally sold for approximately USD 40. He never experienced having money prior to working. Now he is able to buy fancy sneakers and pay for his own school fees. Furthermore, he is able to help support his siblings. The temptation to leave school and become a full-time worker is high.



Drawing of a small-scale mining area, by Kine Fuger, Primary school, Brownsweg.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Aims of the study

This study presents and systematizes quantitative and qualitative data on child labor in the gold mining sector in Suriname. We define the term “child labor” as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. We adopt the International Labour Organization’s (ILO’s) definition of child labor, as work that—

- Is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- Interferes with their schooling by—
  - Depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
  - Obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
  - Requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Specifically, the study seeks to address issues including but not limited to the risk factors associated with and pathways into child labor, the type of work performed by children, the living and working conditions, the perceptions of the situation by those involved, the supply chain and market demands, and the occurrence of the child labor phenomenon within the gold mining sector.

A 2006 national survey in Suriname found that approximately 6 percent of children ages 5–14 were involved in child labor activities. Differences between urban, rural coastal, and rural interior areas were considerable though, with 3 percent, 6.5 percent, and 17.8 percent respectively.<sup>1</sup> Of the 94 percent of the children ages 5–14 years of age attending school, 5.6 percent were involved in child labor activities (17.8 percent of children involved in child labor are living in rural interior areas). On the other hand, the majority of the 6 percent of children classified as child laborers were also attending school (87.7 percent nationwide and 77.5 percent in rural interior areas).<sup>2</sup>

The task of the study is to gather exploratory data on the risk factors associated with child labor and consequences of child labor in the gold mining sector in Suriname. The general objectives of the research study are—

1. To raise awareness about the issues related to child labor in the gold mining sector in Suriname.

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<sup>1</sup> General Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, UNICEF. 2006. *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006 (MICS 3)*. Available at [http://www.childinfo.org/files/MICS3\\_Suriname\\_FinalReport\\_2006\\_En.pdf](http://www.childinfo.org/files/MICS3_Suriname_FinalReport_2006_En.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



2. To contribute to international discourse on exploitive child labor.
3. To inform current and future child labor technical assistance efforts of the United States Department of Labor/Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (USDOL/OCFT).

## **1.2 Composition of the research team**

This study was commissioned by USDOL/OCFT. The activities of the OCFT include research on international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking; funding and overseeing cooperative agreements and contracts to organizations engaged in efforts to eliminate exploitive child labor around the world; and assisting in the development and implementation of U.S. Government policy on international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking issues.

OCFT has contracted ICF Macro to collect data on the characteristics, nature, and incidence of child labor in the gold mining sector in Suriname. For this project, ICF Macro worked with local consultants in Suriname who have extensive research experience in the interior, mainly in the mining areas. The design of data gathering has been done in collaboration with both parties.

The field research and data analysis was performed by the local research team. The team was led by a senior anthropologist, supported by an assistant anthropologist and three trained interviewees who are originally from the interior and are fluent in the language of the target population. The research assistants were trained on the job and coached in the field. One of the lead researchers double-checked completed surveys conducted with child gold miners.

In July 2011, a research manager from ICF Macro trained the researchers and supervised the launch of field work. During this training, the team discussed and reviewed the final research instruments and focused on becoming fully familiarized with the study's methodology, as well as the correct applications of the instruments used for interviews and observations.

A Geographic Information System (GIS) expert in Suriname processed the Global Positioning System (GPS) data and produced GIS maps with the interview locations in the interior and other relevant places.

## **1.3 Report outline**

The remainder of this report is organized as follows: Section 2 provides a general background on Suriname. In this section, particular attention is paid to the interior region of Suriname, where all gold mining takes place, and to the organization of the small-scale gold mining business. This section also discusses some of the potential factors driving child labor as indicated in other reports, such as economic conditions, as well as (the lack of) educational facilities and opportunities. Section 3 focuses on Suriname's legal and institutional framework with regard to child labor and Suriname's ratification status of relevant international treaties and conventions. This section also discusses the definitions of child labor and the WFCL, according to national laws and international agreements. Existing literature on child labor is reviewed in Section 4. From the few studies that have been conducted on this theme in Suriname, information about the demographics of child laborers, the causes of child labor, the types of work performed, the

occurrence of the hazardous labor, forced labor, and trafficking have been extracted. Section 5 of the report presents the methods that were used for research preparation, field work, and data analysis. This section also discusses the limitations of the research. Section 6 presents the research results in six areas: 1) demographics of child workers, 2) education of child workers, 3) risk factors associated with and pathways into child labor/forced child labor, 4) type of work performed, 5) living and working conditions, and 6) perceptions of the situation by those involved.

## 2. BACKGROUND

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### 2.1 Suriname and its interior region

Suriname is situated on the South American continent, north of Brazil. The country (land mass: 163,820 km<sup>2</sup>) has a relatively small yet ethnically diverse population (population: 492,829; 2009). Approximately 85 percent of the population lives in the coastal area, mostly in the capital city of Paramaribo. The densely forested interior, which covers approximately 80 percent of the country, houses and provides sustenance to the Amerindians (estimated at 10,000 people) and Maroons (estimated at 50,000 people), who are tribal people of African descent.<sup>3</sup>

Most of Suriname's interior is rather isolated from the urban zones, and in many ways, is the most marginalized area of the country. Many interior families do not have easy access to clean drinking water, electricity, decent education, high-quality health care, and other public services. The percentage of the population in the urban areas living below the national poverty line was 66 percent in 2000.<sup>4</sup> In the interior, this figure is much higher.

With a per capita Gross National Product or GNP of U.S. Dollar (USD) 6,093,<sup>5</sup> Suriname may be considered a middle-income country. For the past few decades, mining has been the cornerstone of Suriname's economy. The export of minerals—bauxite, oil, and gold—represents more than 50 percent of the gross domestic product or GDP.<sup>6</sup> Large-scale mining for gold only took off in the 1990s. In 2009, Suriname produced 28.6 tons of gold; 57.7 percent of which was produced by informal, small-scale gold miners (Table 2.1).

Both the Maroon and the indigenous populations are young populations, characterized by relatively high fertility rates, high mortality, and low life expectancies.<sup>7</sup> Children learn adult behaviors and responsibilities from an early age. Little girls look after their younger siblings and help with household chores, while boys may be involved in *hosselen*—the informal trade of goods and services. Poverty and low education rates, combined with lack of alternative employment opportunities, are causing many Maroon boys to venture into gold mining.

The educational situation in Suriname has regional disparities. The 2010 Situation Assessment and Analysis of Children's Rights concluded that on the national level, most children of primary school age (7–12) were attending school (97 percent), with no significant difference between boys and girls at this stage. However, significant geographical disparities exist. In the urban and rural coastal areas 4 percent of children of primary school age are out of school, while in the

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<sup>3</sup> General Bureau of Statistics in Suriname (ABS), 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Pan American Health Organization.

<sup>5</sup> SRD 17,059; formal and informal sector. General Bureau of Statistics in Suriname (ABS), 2010 (data from 2009).

<sup>6</sup> International Monetary Fund, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Few existing studies have compared the interior (Indigenous and Maroon) populations. The most detailed study in this regard is the 1992 Suriname Contraceptive Prevalence Survey. This study demonstrates that, compared with people from other populations groups, Maroon and Indigenous people have a younger age of first intercourse, a younger age of first pregnancy, a higher number of children, and lower levels of contraceptive use.

rural interior areas more than 14 percent of children are out of school when they are expected to be participating in school.<sup>8</sup>

One in five (21.1 percent) of the children of secondary school age are attending primary school when they should be attending secondary school, with significant disparities between urban areas (17.4 percent), rural coastal areas (21.9 percent), and rural interior districts (47.7 percent).<sup>9</sup> Of children of secondary school age (12–17 years), 18 percent are not in any school, and a difference exists between boys (20 percent) and girls (15 percent). The situation is most extreme in the rural interior districts, where nearly half (44 percent) of all children of secondary school age are out of school (they dropped out or did not attend school at all), and where almost as many girls of secondary school age (44 percent) as boys (46 percent) are out of school. Vocational training opportunities are extremely limited in the interior, and the comparatively high cost of pursuing such opportunities in Paramaribo means that few graduates or children who have left school before their education is complete (drop-outs)<sup>10</sup> can pursue these opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

## 2.2 Small-scale gold mining in Suriname

After the first gold rush in Suriname at the turn of the 19th century (1880–1910), Suriname's gold was for many decades only exploited by small numbers of artisanal gold miners. This changed in the early 1990s, which marked the onset of the second gold rush in Suriname. Various factors contributed to this second gold rush including rising gold prices, stabilization of the interior after 6 years of civil conflict, and increased poverty and worsened education opportunities for the Maroon population. In the Brokopondo area, a foreign company obtained exploration rights in a concession. This was seen as a sign by small-scale miners that there must be a large quantity of gold in this area, thus the miners came in greater numbers. The influx of Brazilian gold miners (*garimpeiros*) who were expelled from the mining areas in their own country also contributed to the gold rush.

The skyrocketing price of gold is helping the small-scale gold mining sector flourish. At present, an estimated 13–15 thousand people are working as small-scale gold miners in Suriname; at least a similar number are working in support activities as cooks, bar and hotel owners, transport providers, sex workers, gofers, and in other jobs.<sup>12</sup> Approximately three-fourths of the miners and mining service providers are Brazilian migrants. The remaining fourth consists primarily of Suriname Maroons. Suriname's gold deposits are part of the Guiana Shield, a geological greenstone formation that covers 415,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Brazil, the Guyanas, and Venezuela.<sup>13</sup> In Suriname, this geological formation surfaces in the Eastern and Central part of the country.

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<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Education and Community Development, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> General Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, UNICEF. 2006. *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006 (MICS 3)*.

<sup>10</sup> There has been discussion in Suriname about using the term "dropout," to refer to children who stop school before their education is complete, and avoid stigmatizing language. While the term "drop-out" is used, it should be noted that the responsibility for ensuring that children's right to education is fulfilled lies primarily with the Government of Suriname, and responsibility for not continuing school should not be transferred to the children who stop school before their education is complete.

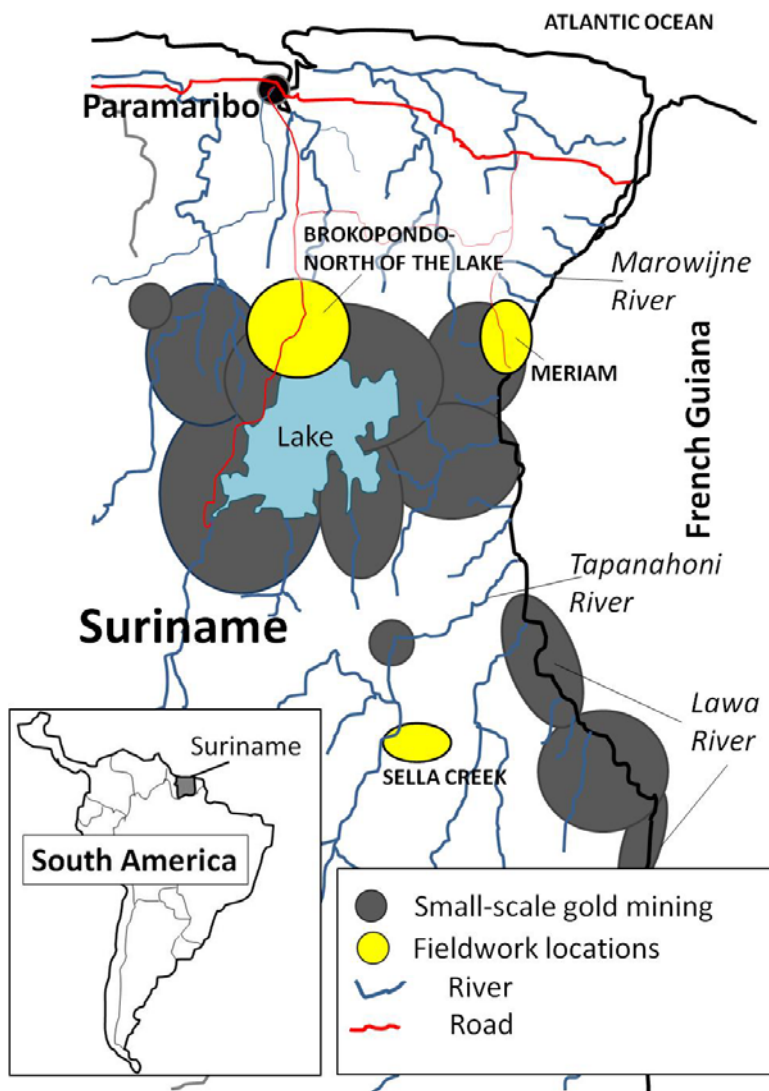
<sup>11</sup> UNICEF, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Healy and Heemskerk, 2005, and Heemskerk, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Veiga, 1997.

Small-scale gold mining takes place in these regions (Figure 2.1). A more detailed map with all GPS-recorded interview locations is provided in Annex 1.

**Figure 2.1: Small-scale gold mining areas in Suriname, with the research locations in yellow**



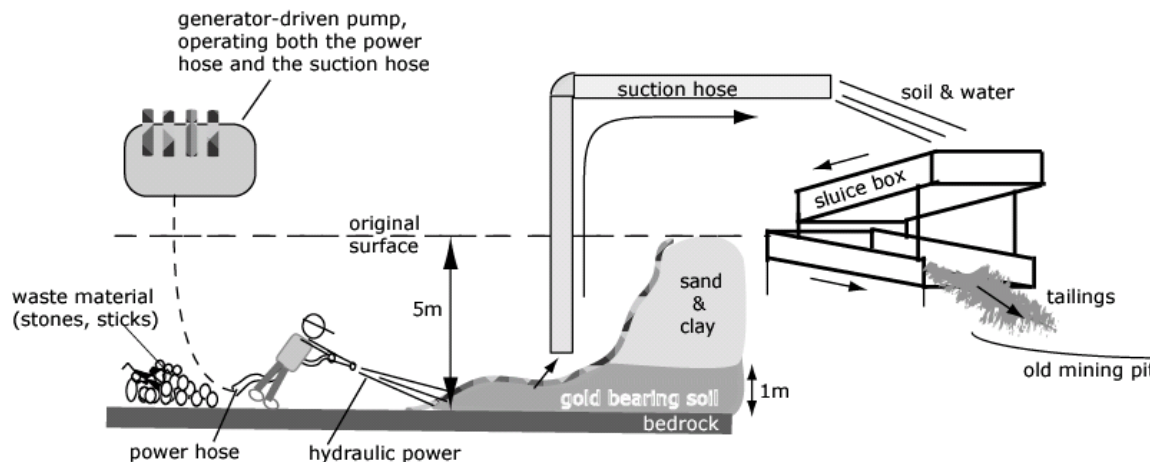
Virtually all small-scale gold miners in Suriname work with hydraulic methods on land. Hydraulic gold miners work through several stages.<sup>14</sup> They start by exploring possible sites, often near the site of another miner who is known or believed to have hit a good location, following the projected direction of the ancient streambed. Rudimentary prospecting methods consist of digging one or several holes approximately 2 meters deep. The contents are washed with a *batea*, an open conical dish, often with a small central depression. If gold is found, then a site is deemed suitable.

After site selection, a forest area of approximately 1 hectare is cleared from trees and understory. A generator-powered mining machine is placed at the prepare site, and empowers two types of

<sup>14</sup> Heemskerk and Van der Kooye, 2003.

hoses. One or two power hoses divert high-pressure water to remove first the top layer of sand and clay, and later the gold-bearing layer of soil (see Figure 2.2). The soil-water mixture is then pumped through the suction hose into a sluice box. This piece of mining equipment consists of a series of tilted wooden boxes. Gold particles and other heavy minerals are trapped behind riffles and/or a metal screen, and in the fine mat that covers the bottom of the sluice box. The mine tailings—gravel, sand, and clay from which gold has been (partly) removed—flow into either an abandoned mining pit or adjacent forest. This process is depicted in Figure 2.2. Some operations use a similar system of mining on rafts in the river.

**Figure 2.2: Terrestrial small-scale gold mining**



Source: Heemskerk and Van der Kooye, 2003

After 2 or 3 weeks of work, the sluice box is “washed.” Gold is recovered by washing the screen and the mat with water, while applying mercury that chemically binds with gold but not with the other heavy minerals that have been retained. Gold and mercury combine at a ratio of 1:1 to form an amalgam. Finally, mercury is separated from the gold by evaporation. The most cost-effective and healthiest way to burn off mercury would be to use a closed system, such as a retort, which recovers mercury for re-use. In this study, however, most miners simply heated the gold mercury amalgam in a batea, either in open air or by covering it with leaves.

Women may own a mining concession or mining machine, but they are not found in the mining pits. The work is physically demanding, and both women and men believe that women do not have the strength to perform it. For a similar reason, young children were rarely observed in the mining pits. Teenage boys between 15 and 18 years were occasionally found as workers in these systems, though the mine bosses preferred they mostly perform support jobs.

One other mining method is panning or “turning the *batea*.” The miner scoops soil in the gold pan or *batea* and adds water. With circular hand movements, the contents of the gold pan are spun. Due to centrifugal forces, the waste materials flow over the edge of the gold pan and gold with other heavy soil particles are left in the center. Panning is not an easy job; some people are admired for their particular skills in turning the *batea*. To further separate the gold from the concentrate, the miner will add a little mercury, and continue the separation process described above. Because the gains of panning are very small compared with those of hydraulic miners, different panners may combine their concentrates and later divide the earnings equally or according to a prior agreed-upon key. This is the method of choice for children because it is not

physically demanding, does not require much capital inputs (apart from the gold pan and a bit of mercury), does not involve machinery and, in places where the mines are near the villages, they can come and go as they please. Adults rarely pan for gold (other than for prospecting), because of the low earnings.

In 2009, the officially recorded production by small-scale gold miners was 16.5 tons (Table 2.1). This was more than the production from large-scale mining, which currently occurs in one gold mine in the Brokopondo district.

**Table 2.1: Total gold exports from Suriname**

Year	Export small-scale miners (kg)	Export large-scale mining (kg)	Total gold exports (kg)	Percentage official gold production by small-scale miners
2002	1,702.24		1,702.24	100
2003	11,710.65		11,710.65	100
2004	12,705.38		12,705.38	100
2005	11,655.16	1,0917.32	22,572.48	51.6
2006	11,955.67	9,455.458	21,411.13	55.8
2007	13,833.52	7,962.491	21,796.01	63.5
2008	16,222.71	10,264.15	26,486.86	61.2
2009	16,486.61	12,099.25	28,585.86	57.7

Source: Heemskerk 2010.

### 3. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK RELATED TO CHILD LABOR

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#### 3.1 National legal and institutional framework

Suriname's labor law uses the following definitions for youth and children:

- **Youth:** "Persons who have reached the age of 14, and not yet the age of 18 years."<sup>15</sup>
- **Children:** "1. In general, persons who have not yet reached the age of 14; 2. On board of fishing vessels persons who have not yet reached the age of the Fishing Decree of 1980; persons who have not yet reached the age of 15."<sup>16</sup>

In the data analysis, "child miners" and "children" refers to anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18. Only where it is important to distinguish between older and younger children, does the report refer to the age categories used in the Suriname labor laws. A board member of the Commission for Eradication of Child Labor commented that this age distinction is not consistently used in all legislations.

Article 17 of the labor law prohibits child labor. This Article dictates the following:

1. It is forbidden to have a child perform labor, whether or not against a wage or fee.
2. It also is forbidden to have children perform work activities outside of an enterprise, except—
  - a. In the family where the child is raised, at schools, workplaces, day-care centers, correctional facilities, and similar institutions, if these activities have an educational character and do not in the first place serve to pay monetary compensation; and
  - b. In agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry for the benefit of the family where the child is raised, under the condition that these activities are not performed in factories or in workplaces, or with machinery that exceeds a capacity of two horse power.

The labor law further stipulates that children older than the age for compulsory education may perform labor if their work activities—

1. Are necessary for learning a profession or are of such nature that they need to be performed by children.

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<sup>15</sup> Art. 1.h, G.B. 1965 No. 163, modified by S.B. 1983 No. 91, Decree E-41.

<sup>16</sup> Art. 1.g, G.B. 1965 No. 163, modified by S.B. 1983 No. 91, Decree E-41.



2. Do not have high physical or mental demands.
3. Do not have a dangerous character.

In exceptional cases, the Head of Labor Inspection can grant dispensation to the head of the family that raised the child, if such is in the interest of the child.<sup>17</sup>

Articles 20 and 21 of the Labor Law contain regulations with regard to labor by youth. In these regulations, it is stipulated that “It is forbidden to engage youth in labor, whether or not against a wage or fee, performed at night<sup>18</sup> or labor that is dangerous to health, morality, or life.”<sup>19</sup> Until 6 months ago, however, what constituted “hazardous work” was not defined, thus complicating practical execution of the law.

In 2010, the State Council accepted an amendment to the labor law that specifies the prohibitions on dangerous labor and allows for execution of control thereof.<sup>20</sup> In this Decree on Dangerous Labor (*Besluit Gevaarlijke Arbeid*), “dangerous labor” is defined in line with ILO Convention 182 as “any form of labor that ... can endanger the health, morality, life, safety, and moral of youthful persons ...”<sup>21</sup>

With regard to forced labor, the law dictates that “It is forbidden to make an employee perform labor: a. by using or threatening [the employee] with violence; b. by threatening with punishment; c. through any other form of coercion or the threat thereof.”<sup>22</sup>

The Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment (*Ministerie van Arbeid, Technologische Ontwikkeling en Milieu* [ATM]) is the highest political organization responsible for the development, implementation, and control of labor laws and regulations. The Division of Labor Inspection of the ATM is responsible for control of compliance with the regulations stipulated in the labor laws, including the prohibition of child labor. In addition, this office reports to the Ministry problems and cases of abuse related to child labor that are not dealt within the Labor Law. Persons who discover a case of child labor can report it to the Division of Labor Inspection. It is, however, unclear what type of actions will or can be taken by this office. A question concerning this issue was directed to the Sub-Director of Labor Inspection and board member of the Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor; it has remained unanswered.

In 2008, the President of the Republic of Suriname installed a National Commission for Eradication of Child Labor. The tasks of this commission are to—

1. Propose the formulation of policy aimed at the eradication of child labor.
2. Compose a national action plan for the eradication of child labor.

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<sup>17</sup> Art. 19.

<sup>18</sup> Night is defined as the time between 19:00 and 6:00 hrs.

<sup>19</sup> Art. 20, Par. 1. Exemptions to Article 20 of the Labor Law are possible in certain circumstances and under to-be-defined preconditions, if so indicated by State decree (Art. 21, Lid 1) or as decided by the Head of Labor Inspection (Art. 21, Lid 2).

<sup>20</sup> S.B. 2010 No. 175, 13 December 2010.

<sup>21</sup> S.B. 2010 No. 175. Art. 1.

<sup>22</sup> G.B. 1965 No. 33, modified by S.B. 1983 No. 91 Decree E-41; Art. 20a.

3. Coordinate and monitor the implementation of the mentioned action plan.
4. Initiate specific development programs for Indigenous and Maroon children.
5. Conduct research on the socioeconomic situation of children involved in child labor.
6. Prepare proposals for and advise the Minister and relevant actors with regard to the eradication of child labor.
7. Advise the Minister with regard to the socio-economic reintegration of children involved in child labor.
8. Monitor compliance with international commitments that result from the ratification of international standards with regard to child labor.
9. Present proposals for modifications of the law with regard to child labor.<sup>23</sup>

To date, the Commission has been active with—

1. Preparation of a law that defines hazardous work by young persons.<sup>24</sup>
2. Preparing the national child labor study.
3. Ratifying ILO Convention 138.

The Secretary of the Commission reported that at present, the priority of the Commission is the national study on child labor in Suriname, which is planned for the beginning of 2012.

In the State Decision that forms the legal basis for the Commission, it is explicitly stated that, “in accordance with ILO Convention 182, certain groups of children in society must especially be protected against the worst forms of child labor.”<sup>25</sup> Among these groups are children of tribal societies, such as the Maroons. Furthermore, it is stipulated in the State Decision that among Indigenous and Maroon peoples, children are commonly performing labor activities as part of their socialization process. Therefore, policy decisions and regulations should not interrupt the specific cultural and living conditions of Indigenous and Maroon peoples.<sup>26</sup>

The Compulsory School Attendance Act makes it obligatory for children to attend school until they are at least 12 years of age. There is a discrepancy between this Act and the Labor Law, which states that a minor may only perform labor starting at the age of 14. The Secretary of the Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor emphasized the need to rectify the compulsory school age and the age at which one is allowed to work. She revealed that the Ministry of Education and Community Development (*Ministerie van Onderwijs en Volksontwikkeling*

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<sup>23</sup> S.B. 2008 No. 115.

<sup>24</sup> No. 174, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> S.B. 2008 No. 115: 18.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

[*MINOV*]) will change both ages to 16 years; which means that in the near future children will be obliged to attend school and cannot leave school until they turn 17 years old.

A national children's action plan 2009–2013 has been developed, which gives an insight into what the contribution of the various ministries should be concerning children. The plan is waiting for approval at the Council of Ministers, but the Ministry of Social Affairs, Department of the Rights of the Child, reported that discussions with other ministries are taking place. As far as the research team could ascertain, no actual activities or interventions related to the action plan have been carried out as of yet. The Department of the Rights of the Child is tasked with monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In early 2012 a national study of child labor in Suriname will start; it will take approximately 1 year. This research should give an insight on the child labor situation in Suriname. Until now, no minimum age has been defined concerning children who work in mines; however, working in a fishing boat is allowed from 15 years of age.

In 2010, the Government of Suriname implemented a new law that defined dangerous labor.<sup>27</sup> Two types of dangerous labor definitions were created: 1) labor that is dangerous because of the nature of the activities that are executed; and 2) labor that is dangerous because of working conditions.

Dangers caused by the nature of the activities include (Art. 2):

1. Accident dangers: Activities that involve a high risk of experiencing serious bodily harm.
2. Biological dangers: Activities that contain a risk of exposure to sick animals, insects, poisonous plants, bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi.
3. Chemical dangers: Work with dangerous chemical substances with a risky character, which under certain conditions can be dangerous for safety (fire or explosion) and health (toxic nature).
4. Ergonomic dangers: Work in places that have not been adapted to the physical conditions of persons who have not reached the age of 18 and are still growing.
5. Physical dangers: Activities that may cause exposure to extreme temperatures, noise, vibration, or radiation.
6. Psychosocial dangers: activities that can lead to diverse symptoms such as stress.

Working conditions that can be dangerous include—

1. Not following safety regulations;
2. An unhealthy working environment; and
3. Climatic conditions.

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<sup>27</sup> S.B. 2010 No. 175.

Gold mining activities contain all of the components of both of these types of dangerous labor as defined by the Government of Suriname.

It is noteworthy that neither this decree nor any other law contains a list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children under age 18. It only provides a list of the types of work that are considered dangerous (see Art. 2).

### 3.2 International treaties and conventions on child labor

Suriname signed and ratified various international conventions and treaties that are directly or indirectly related to the protection of children against hazardous labor. The various relevant international agreements, as well as Suriname’s ratification status, are listed in Table 3.1.

In considering international agreements, it is important to note that Suriname’s national age limit of 14 years for child labor does not follow the CRC. Further, Suriname has not yet ratified ILO Convention 138 concerning the minimum age of work.

**Table 3.1: Treaties and conventions directly and indirectly related to child labor and forced labor, and year of ratification by Suriname**

Name	Year	Ratification
<b>International Labour Organization</b>		
ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	1999	2006
ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work	1973	Not ratified
<b>UN</b>		
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child—CRC	1989	1993
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict—CRC-OPAC	2000	Signed (2002) but not ratified
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography—CRC-OPSC	2000	Signed (2002) but not ratified
UN Convention Against Transnational Crime	2000	Accession 2007
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime—the Palermo Protocol	2000	Accession 2007

### 3.3 Definitions used in this report

The Secretary of Suriname’s national Commission for Eradication of Child Labor has indicated that Suriname uses the ILO definitions of child labor. In this report, we will also use the ILO definitions of child, child labor, worst forms of child labor (WFCL), and hazardous labor.

#### 3.3.1 Child

The ILO Conventions 138 and 182, the United Nations CRC, and the Suriname Labor Law define a child as any person under the age of 18 years. These various laws and conventions determine that children have the right to special protection.

### 3.3.2 Child labor

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labor to be targeted for elimination. The participation of children or adolescents in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded positively.<sup>28</sup>

Also in Suriname, children are accustomed to performing domestic and productive activities in and around their own home or at the house of a family member. Examples of such activities include cleaning, dishwashing, looking after younger siblings, doing yard work, fishing, and collecting firewood. These jobs contribute to the learning experience and improve social integration. In the interior, children are expected to perform heavier workload by assisting their parents in providing basic needs for the family. For example, they assist their mothers with working on the subsistence agricultural plots and join their fathers in hunting for food. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

As opposed to household work activities that teach children to become skilled adults, child labor exists in Suriname that is harmful to children. We define the term "child labor" as work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development.<sup>29</sup> It refers to work that—

- Is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- Interferes with their schooling by—
  - Depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
  - Obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
  - Requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Ordonez classified work activities carried out by children and adolescents using the following categories:<sup>30</sup>

- **The conditions, adequate or inadequate,** under which an activity is carried out, may affect children's well-being. Among inadequate labor conditions one may find the excessive length of work shifts, labor during night shifts, precarious conditions of occupational security and/or hygiene, etc. This study demonstrates that with regard to child labor in gold mines, the conditions are generally inadequate.

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<sup>28</sup> ILO website "about child labor." Available at <http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> The above classification by Ordonez has been proposed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) as a tool for the understanding of the phenomena of child work and child labor and for the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects on prevention and elimination of child labor sponsored by IADB. This classification is referred mainly to the characteristics of work/labor. It is assumed that all work under minimum legal age, except provided exemptions, should be deemed as child labor. Ordonez, 2005.

- **The character**, *formative or non-formative*, of the activities developed by children. Work activities of a formative character imply the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills related to the learning of a trade or complex labor activity. This allows children to assimilate knowledge and to develop their intellectual functions, creativity, a sense of responsibility and/or certain physical skills.
- **The nature**, *harmful or innocuous*, intrinsically associated to any activity (e.g., implicit level of risk), is classified as follows:
  - **Child work activities of non-harmful or innocuous nature:** This includes a vast set of activities, whose exercise in itself does not result in relevant risks or possible damages for those who conduct them. These activities include numerous types of work activities in the commercial sector (for example, sales of products and other items), in petty manufacturing activities (for example, pottery) or among the services sector (for example, car washers or waiters in restaurants).
  - **Child labor activities of a harmful nature** (with regards to the security or the physical or mental health status of those who conduct them): Among these activities, the two following subcategories are found:
    1. **Activities of risk**, which may *potentially* result in physical or mental damages for children—although they are not necessarily prohibited from performing those activities by international or national law (for example, the handling of a chain saw to clear the land for mining).
    2. **Dangerous or high-risk activities**, whose exercise entails an *effective, immediate, or cumulative damage*, of physical or mental health for all those who conduct them. These activities are prohibited by international legislation and by national law in many countries of the region (for example, the use of mercury in small-scale gold mining).

Different institutions and conventions use different minimum age limitations for “accepted” employment (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2: Definitions of non-acceptable child labor by different institutions**

Institution	Child work is considered non-permitted child labor if:
ILO Convention 138	<p><b>Under 13:</b> Any type of work</p> <p><b>Ages 13–15:</b> Work that is not light work, which is defined as—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not likely to be harmful to children’s health or development; and</li> <li>Not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programs approved by the competent authority, or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received consistently with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons.</li> </ol>
LO Convention 182	<p><b>Under 18:</b> Performs any type of employment or work, which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety, or morals of young persons, and thus may classified as WFCL. For the purposes of this Convention, the term “worst forms of child labor” comprises—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and serfdom and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;</li> <li>The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;</li> <li>The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;</li> <li>Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.</li> </ol>
ILO Recommendation 190	<p><b>Under 18:</b> Hazardous work, which refers to—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work that exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse;</li> <li>Work under ground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces;</li> <li>Work with dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;</li> <li>Work in an unhealthy environment, which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;</li> <li>Work under particularly difficult conditions, such as work for long hours or during the night, or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.</li> </ol>
Suriname labor law	<p><b>Under age 14:</b> Any form of labor, except for activities that have an educational character and are performed in the family where the child is raised, at schools, workplaces, day care centers, etc.; and except for activities in agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry for the benefit of the family where the child is raised.</p> <p><b>Under 15:</b> Work on fishing vessels.</p> <p><b>Ages 14–17:</b> Work performed at night or labor that is dangerous to health, morality, or life.</p>
Multiple indicator Cluster Survey	<p><b>Ages 5–11:</b> At least 1 hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.</p> <p><b>Ages 12–14:</b> At least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.</p>

This report uses the age distinctions used by the Suriname Ministry of Labor to distinguish younger children from older children.

ILO Conventions 138 (on minimum age of admission to employment) and 182 (on WFCL) dictate that the following three categories of child labor are slated for abolition:

1. Labor that is performed by a child who is under the minimum age specified for that kind of work (as defined by national legislation, in accordance with accepted international standards), and that is thus likely to impede the child's education and full development.
2. Labor that jeopardizes the physical, mental or moral well-being of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out, known as hazardous work.
3. The unconditional worst forms of child labor, which are internationally defined as slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labor, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, prostitution and pornography, and illicit activities.<sup>31</sup>

### **3.3.3 Worst forms of child labor**

ILO Convention 182, which defines WFCL, does not allow exceptions and prohibits children from being engaged in the following types of work:

1. All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
2. The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
3. The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
4. Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

In this report we specifically focus on one WFCL, namely hazardous labor. The Convention itself has not defined hazardous work, but instead allows each country to define its own "hazardous work list." Suriname does not have a list of specific jobs that are considered hazardous, but it does have a list of the types of work that are considered dangerous or hazardous.

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<sup>31</sup> ILO, 2002.



### **3.3.4 Hazardous work by children**

Following the definition stated in ILO Recommendation 190 “concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour,” we define hazardous work as work that exposes children under the age of 18 to physical, psychological, chemical, sexual, and other dangers and risks such as—

1. Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
2. Work under ground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces;
3. Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
4. Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
5. Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

As stated in Section 3.1, Suriname law does not include a list of activities and jobs that are considered hazardous.

## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW: CHILD LABOR IN SURINAME'S GOLD MINING INDUSTRY

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Not much research has been performed on child labor in Suriname's small-scale gold mining sector (Table 4.1). To date, the only study that explicitly deals with this issue is the 2003 ILO study on "the Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and other Worst Forms of Child Labor" in Suriname.<sup>32</sup> In the districts of Brokopondo and Sipaliwini, the researchers of this study encountered children working in gold mining.

Various reports published by USDOL between 2007 and 2010 indicated that children in Suriname work in mining.<sup>33</sup> Child labor in mines is internationally considered hazardous labor because of its nature and the circumstances in which it is carried out are likely harmful and hazardous to the health, safety, or morals of boys and girls under 18 years of age. The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) characterizes gold mining as "extremely dangerous work for children," employing tens of thousands of children.<sup>34</sup> The organization states the following in a recent notice:

*... [C]hildren dig, crush, mill, and haul ore—often in the hot sun. Some stand for hours in water, digging sand or silt from riverbeds and then carrying bags of mud on their heads or backs to sieving and washing sites. In all mining sites, there is risk of falling down open shafts or into pits that are scattered around the areas. Like adults, children suffer the effects of noise and vibration, poor ventilation and lighting, exhaustion and overexertion. But children are particularly vulnerable to exposure to dust and chemicals because their systems are still developing. The result can be serious respiratory conditions (such as silicosis), constant headaches, hearing and sight problems, joint disorders and various dermatological, muscular and orthopedic ailments and wounds, jeopardizing both their mental and physical long-term health.. Gold mining stands out from other forms of small-scale mining for an additional grave hazard: the mixing of mercury with the crushed ore or sediments to separate out the gold. Mercury is a highly toxic metal and is very often mishandled by small-scale miners. It can be absorbed through the skin, or through inhalation of mercury vapor. Seeping into the soil or water supply, it can contaminate food and drinking water. Prolonged exposure to mercury can lead to serious physical disorders and neurological problems. Informal gold miners often do not wear protective clothing (e.g., hardhats) ...<sup>35</sup>*

Employers in this sector generally do not assure work safety or provide benefits such as access to medical care to their workers. The Situation analysis of children in Suriname, commissioned by the Suriname Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing (SOZAVO) points to the general lack of statistical data on child labor; no recent studies exist that provide information about the extent

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<sup>32</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg (Geneva: ILO), 2003.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Embassy in Paramaribo reports that "children are put to work in the gold mining sector" (2007), U.S. Department of Labor annual TDA report (2009), Assessment by the U.S. Department of Labor about Suriname (2010).

<sup>34</sup> Child Labor in Gold Mining, ILO-IPEC, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

and severity of this phenomenon.<sup>36</sup> A 2002 rapid assessment on the WFCL in Suriname conducted by the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Institute for Training and Research in Suriname (NIKOS) is the only known study on child labor in Suriname that pays attention to children in mining. For that study, only six child miners were interviewed and data on child gold miners was limited to a general description of causes and context. A 2010 survey among 192 commercial sex workers in small-scale gold mining areas found that 30 percent of surveyed commercial sex workers had started this type of work at age 15–19 (Nieuwendam 2010). The youngest commercial sex worker interviewed for the study was 14 years old. The study suggests that commercial sex workers age 15–17 are common in the gold mining camps. Those very young commercial sex workers are mostly local Maroons<sup>37</sup> and sometimes Brazilians (ibid).

A 2007 update of the WFCL by the U.S. Embassy in Suriname reported that “there are ... indications that ... children are put to work in the gold mining sector.”<sup>38</sup> This update also cited the general lack of statistical data regarding the child labor situation in Suriname. The purpose of the current study is to fill the urgent gaps in existing data and to provide more insight into the WFCL.

Other general reports on child labor include a 1998 national study by the ATM and several theses by students from Dutch and Suriname Universities for their master’s and bachelor’s degrees. In addition, relevant statistics on child labor were found in several studies, such as the 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS),<sup>39</sup> two studies on child rights by the United Nations’ Children Fund (UNICEF) and the Government of Suriname 2010, and perceptions of child rights.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, a study about dropouts in the district of Brokopondo described labor involvement and expectations among children who have prematurely terminated their education.<sup>41</sup> Dropout rates were also discussed in the 2010 “Situation Assessment and Analysis of Child Rights in Suriname” by UNICEF and the Government of Suriname 2010.

No specific investigations have been conducted on forced labor and trafficking of children. However, the latest presentation by the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) unit to the International Organization for Migration provided useful information about the situation of trafficking in general, including the trafficking of legal minors.

Table 4.1 contains an overview of the different studies on child labor and related topics in Suriname. The remainder of this section discusses what these studies have reported about different aspects of child labor.

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<sup>36</sup> *Situation analysis of children in Suriname*, Suriname Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing (SOZAVO), 2001, p. 54.

<sup>37</sup> Maroons are tribal people of African descent who live in the interior of Suriname, closest to the mining areas.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Embassy in Suriname, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> ABS, et al., 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Gooding and Playfair, 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Vereniging voor Gemeenschap Ontwikkeling en Verzelfstandiging and A. Wolf, 2011.

## 4.1 Numbers and ages of working children

Few studies provide reliable figures on the number of child laborers. In 1999, the ATM found that of the children interviewed in a national survey, 3.6 percent of the boys reported having worked at some point, while 2.9 percent of the girls responded similarly. When the same question was asked about whether they had current jobs, 2.1 percent of the boys and 1.8 percent of the girls replied positively. The report concluded that 2 percent of the children between ages 4 and 14 were economically active in Suriname.<sup>42</sup>

In 2003, Schalkwijk and Van den Berg<sup>43</sup> established the cutoff value for “child labor” as children working for a minimum of 5 hours a day. Based on the results of that study, the total number of “child laborers” in Suriname is approximately 400. Of these children, approximately 18.5 percent may be involved in WFCL.<sup>44</sup> The sample, however, was not taken randomly and hence extrapolation to the population at large appears inappropriate.

In 2010, Nieuwendam conducted a survey among commercial sex workers in seven small-scale gold mining areas in Suriname. The youngest commercial sex worker interviewed for this study was 14 years old. Nieuwendam reports that commercial sex workers ages 15–17 are common in the gold mining camps. Those very young commercial sex workers are mostly Maroons and sometimes Brazilians.

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<sup>42</sup> ATM, 1999.

<sup>43</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003, p. 89.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, pp. 90-91.

**Table 4.1: Existing studies on child labor in Suriname and related issues, and particularly in the gold mining industry**

Author(s)	Title	Publisher/ Year	Topic
Defares, S.	Kinderarbeid in Suriname	1981, University of Amsterdam	Masters' thesis in cultural anthropology, on child labor; general literature review and interviews with 20 working children (ages 8–16) in Paramaribo
Dennen, K.	<i>Een terreinverkennd onderzoek met betrekking tot kinderarbeid in Paramaribo</i>	1990	Masters' thesis; interviews with 60 working children (ages 7–15) in low-income neighborhoods in Paramaribo
Gooding, N. Playfair, P.	Don't Forget Children's Rights. <i>Een onderzoek naar de kennis over en beleving van kinderrechten in Suriname</i>	SOZAVO & UNICEF 2009	Knowledge and perceptions of child rights among Suriname children and adults; small sections deal with the right of children to not perform labor
Interdepartementale Commissie Kinderarbeid (ICK)	<i>Adviesrapport met betrekking tot kinderarbeid</i>	1985	Ministry of Labor report on the legal, policy, and institutional context of child labor in Suriname
International Labour Organization	Children in Hazardous Work: What we know, what we need to know	2011, ILO	This report reviews the current state of knowledge concerning children in hazardous work and presents the case for a new focus on the issue as part of the wider global effort to eliminate WFCL.
Bose-O'Reilly, S., Lettmeier, B., Gothe, R., Beinhoff, C., Siebert, U., and Drasch, G.	Mercury as a serious health hazard for children in gold mining areas	2008, Environmental Research	In many developing countries, mercury is used to extract gold from ore in small-scale mining areas. Exposure through mercury in these small-scale mining communities is a serious health hazard, especially to the children living and working there
ATM	Draft report of the survey on child labor in Suriname	1998 (1999)	General survey on child labor (ages 8–15), in 1660 households in all districts except for Sipaliwini and rural Para
Nieuwendam, J.	Commercial sex workers in the gold mining areas of Suriname: An enumeration study	2010	Data from a survey among commercial sex workers in 7 small-scale gold mining areas in Suriname, including interviews with under-18 commercial sex workers.
Orie, A.	Child labor, a survey into the care taking and counseling of children	2002	BA thesis on child labor; research was conducted among 50 children (ages 7–15) in two lower-income neighborhoods in Paramaribo
Redan, L. and Wijngaarde, V.	Trafficking situation in Suriname (PowerPoint presentation)	Ministry of Justice and Police 2010	Situation of trafficking in persons in Suriname: Kinds of trafficking, figures, severity, work of the TIP unit
Schalkwijk, M. and Van den Berg, W.	The situation of children in mining, agriculture and other worst forms of child labour: A rapid assessment	ILO, 2003	Child labor in general; small sections specifically deal with children working in small mines

Author(s)	Title	Publisher/ Year	Topic
UNICEF and Government of Suriname	Situation assessment and analysis of children's rights in Suriname	2010	Statistical and qualitative data on child rights in Suriname
USDOL	Suriname (USDOL TDA Report)	2009	Overview of child labor regulations, institutions, policies, and social programs
USDOL	Suriname (USDOL TDA Report)	2010	Overview of child labor regulations and institutions, and the occurrence of WFCL and child trafficking
Van den Berghe, L.	<i>Kinderarbeid in Paramaribo, een explorerend onderzoek naar de factoren die bijdragen tot de verklaring van het voorkomen van kinderarbeid in Paramaribo</i>	1990	Masters' thesis on the causes of child labor; interviews with 80 working children (ages 8–16) and 131 school children (5th–6th grade)
Vereniging voor Gemeenschap Ontwikkeling en Verzelfstandiging. A. Wolf	<i>Afgehaakt maar niet afgeschreven: Schoolverlaters in Brokopondo</i>	2011	Dropouts in the district of Brokopondo; the study primarily discusses expectations about employment among children who left school prior to obtaining their diploma

Based on a random sample, the 2006 MICS reported that nationally 6 percent of children ages 5–14 were involved in child labor.<sup>45</sup> In the interior parts of Suriname, the percentage was three times as high: 17.8 percent of Maroon and Indigenous children were found to be performing child labor. Some of the disparity between these statistics may be attributed to the differences in the definitions used in these studies.

With regard to age, the various studies concluded that child labor in Suriname was found primarily among children age 10 and older, while children under the age of 12 were unlikely to be found in hazardous labor.<sup>46</sup>

## 4.2 Causes of child labor

Previous studies have indicated that poverty is a major driver of child labor, though there are various intervening factors that play a role. According to a 1996 report by the ILO-IPEC, “poverty is the greatest single force which creates the flow of children into the workplace. It forces many children to work full-time for their own and their families’ survival.”<sup>47</sup> The ATM’s survey on child labor in Suriname concluded that poverty is the number one reason for child labor. Particularly in the districts of Saramacca, Marowijne, and Para, relatively more children were working to help relieve the economic pressure on the families. In addition, the ATM study found that children from larger families<sup>48</sup> and in single-parent families<sup>49</sup> were relatively more likely to work, compared with others in their age group. Ferrier’s 1997 study also indicated that socio-economic problems were an important force driving participation in child labor. Yet, in exploring root causes, Ferrier’s study attributed particular relevance to the Internal War of 1986–1991, which disrupted much of the social, educational, and developmental infrastructure in the interior of Suriname. Van den Berghe also identified poverty as the most important factor in explaining the occurrence of child labor.<sup>50</sup> In addition, the statistical analysis of Van den Berghe’s study revealed the following causal factors at the micro level:

- Poverty in the household;
- Composition of the household, whereby matrifocal households have a greater chance to produce child labor;
- Urbanization, whereby children have to work during the period of transition when parents are seeking employment;
- Attitude of parents towards education; and
- Cultural factors, (e.g., in some cultures children have to work as part of their upbringing).

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<sup>45</sup> UNICEF and the Government of Suriname, 2010, p. 70.

<sup>46</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, p. 90.

<sup>47</sup> ILO, 1996, p. 34.

<sup>48</sup> ATM, 1999, p. 63.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>50</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003.

In addition, several macro factors play a role, including—

- Limited supply of labor at the job market, which triggers children to offer their labor; and
- Friction unemployment, which caused children to work in order to supplement the family income.

In line with Van den Berg's findings, Dennen reported in his masters' thesis from the University of Suriname that working children often are children from low-income neighborhoods in families with an absent father and a working mother, thus leaving the children a lot of freedom.<sup>51</sup> Several causal factors are responsible including poverty (often coupled with the unemployment of the parents), large household size, lack of educational opportunities, dropping out of school, and demand for child work in family enterprises. The WFCL are most likely to be found in single-parent households.

Likewise, the 2010 Situation Assessment and Analysis of Children found similar factors that contributed to child labor and further found migration as a source of family stress. It concluded that—

*Children in families under stress, which might include single-parent families (whether short or long term), large families (including where children from the extended family are being cared for), unemployment, poor housing, lack of support from an extended family, are at higher risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect than stable families with an adequate income ... [These children] are less likely to continue school and are more likely to be encouraged or forced to become economically independent at an earlier age. The less mature they are and the less education they have, the harder it is for them to enter the already competitive employment market and earn a fair living wage.<sup>52</sup>*

### 4.3 Education and dropout

An important reason children started working at an early age was that they had dropped out of school. Particularly in the districts of Sipaliwini and Brokopondo, where virtually all gold mining takes place, dropout rates were high. The 2006 MICS mentions that only 39.1 percent of boys and 53 percent of girls had completed elementary school at or before reaching age 12.<sup>53</sup> The number of school children from the interior (Sipaliwini and Brokopondo districts) who had completed elementary school education was no more than 6.5 percent. In line with this finding, these districts had the highest numbers of repeaters at the level of Normal Lower Education (*Gewoon Lager Onderwijs [GLO]*) (27 percent in Sipaliwini and 25 percent in Brokopondo).<sup>54</sup>

The MINOV did not systematically collect statistical data on dropout rates, and few studies have been conducted about dropout rates and the underlying reasons. One exception was the recent study by the Zeister Zendinggenootschap, the Kersten Tourism Foundation, and the Society for

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<sup>51</sup> Dennen 1990, quoted in Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003.

<sup>52</sup> UNICEF and the Government of Suriname, 2010, p. 82.

<sup>53</sup> ABS et al, 2009.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.



Community Development and Autonomy on dropouts in the district of Brokopondo.<sup>55</sup> About half of the 200 interviewed dropouts had quit elementary school prior to completion of sixth grade, which is the highest grade in Suriname elementary school. Forty percent of these dropouts went to work immediately after leaving school. Up to 2011, there were no possibilities for vocational training in this district, as is still the case in the large district of Sipaliwini. In 2003, Schalkwijk and Van den Berg similarly observed that there are few possibilities for children who had dropped out of school.

The Brokopondo study also asked about preferred professions if the person would have a choice. The most popular professions that dropouts aspired to obtain were as follows: teaching, nursing, and engineering or a lower level of technical profession.<sup>56</sup>

The MICS reported that 87.7 percent of child laborers nationally versus 77.5 percent of child laborers in the interior were still attending school (General Bureau of Statistics [*Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek*—ABS, et al. 2009, cited in UNICEF and the Government of Suriname 2010: 70). Schalkwijk and Van den Berg (2003) also found that most working children were still in school, but reported a significant gender difference for school attendance: 98 percent of the working girls in their study were still attending school every day, while this was only 68 percent for the working boys. These figures suggest that the great majority of child laborers, particularly girls, work primarily after school, on the weekends, or during holidays. As demonstrated later in this report, small-scale gold mining is primarily performed by boys and the problem of dropout and repetitively repeating classes is considerable in this group.

The 2010 study by Nieuwendam among commercial sex workers in small-scale gold mining areas revealed that schoolgirls, namely girls of junior high up to the university level, were engaging in commercial sex work during holidays to pay for their education. The study encountered this phenomenon only among Suriname nationals, primarily among Maroon commercial sex workers. The researchers report that girls who use commercial sex work to pay for their education started very early with this activity. At age 15 and above they continue engaging in commercial sex work during their school holidays.

#### 4.4 Types of work performed by children

The various Suriname studies recorded that children were most likely found in the informal sector and seldom in formal jobs (Dennen, 1990; ATM, 1999; SOZAVO, 2001; Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003). This is consistent with international trends (UNICEF, 2001). Jobs often found to be performed by children in Suriname are the sale of newspapers and fruits such as *knippa* (a Suriname tree fruit) along the roads. In Suriname, involvement in the informal sale of goods and services—often irregularly and unrecorded; legal or illegal—is referred to as *hosselen*. In Surinamese culture, *hosselen* is perceived as an accepted way to make money for both adults and teenagers.

The 1999 ATM study found that most of the jobs performed by children involved assisting at the family agricultural plots, helping carrying vegetables and bags, and looking after younger

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<sup>55</sup> Vereniging voor Gemeenschap Ontwikkeling en Verzelfstandiging, with assistance of A. Wolf, 2011.

<sup>56</sup> Vereniging voor Gemeenschap Ontwikkeling en Verzelfstandiging, with assistance of A. Wolf, 2011.

siblings. In the district of Brokopondo, Schalkwijk, and Van den Berg (2003) found that small-scale gold mining formed the most important occupational sector for children. Because the mines were near the villages, boys traveled with their friends after school and on the weekends to “turn the *batea*” or gold pan. In the district of Sipaliwini the NIKOS team also visited gold fields, but here they did not encounter any under-18-year-olds working as miners. Minors were only found in the mining service economy; transporting goods with wheel barrows, cooking, and working as assistant shopkeepers.

Nieuwendam (2010) reports that girls under the age of 18 are working as commercial sex workers in small-scale gold mining area.

## 4.5 Child rights

In a 2010 survey by SOZAVO and the Bureau for Rights of the Child, children, adults, and social service providers were asked about their knowledge of child rights. Among adults, the right of children to not have to perform heavy or a substantial amount of work was best known (mentioned by 68.7 percent of adults). Only 1.7 percent of children and 2.8 percent of social service providers mentioned this right. Among these groups, the right to go to school was most mentioned, followed by the right to sufficient and healthy food (ibid, 40). All interviewed groups mentioned the occurrence of child labor as one of the factors that negatively affect the development of children in Suriname.

When asked explicitly whether children should be allowed to work, a considerable share of respondents approved of child labor under certain circumstances (Table 4.2),<sup>57</sup> particularly if the children did not have anyone to take care of them; many interviewees believed that such children should be allowed to work. The study found that compared with adults, children were relatively more likely to approve of child labor under certain conditions.

**Table 4.2: Conditions under which child labor is allowed, according to interviewees in the 2009 Ministry of Social Affairs study on child rights**

Child labor is prohibited, but allowed ....	Children and youth		Adults		Social service providers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
...as long as it is after school	27.3	64.8	22.6	73.7	10.6	87.2
...when it is for the children's parents or family	35.2	55.2	29.0	66.4	22.0	75.9
...if the children earn a lot of money	25.5	64.2	18.7	77.6	3.5	95.0
...if the children have no one to take care of them	53.3	37.6	49.2	44.8	31.9	63.8

Source: Adapted from Gooding and Playfair 2010: Table 27.

<sup>57</sup> Adapted from Gooding and Playfair, 2010.

## 4.6 Forced labor and trafficking

During a presentation in 2010, Redan and Wijngaarde reported that investigations and brothel checks conducted by the TIP police unit revealed that girls under age 18 were trafficked from Guyana to Suriname for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. No evidence was found that Surinamese girls and boys under age 18 were being trafficked abroad for sexual exploitation. The TIP unit has not conducted an investigation of child labor in small-scale gold mines but suspects that forced labor exploitation may have occurred.<sup>58</sup>

A recent newspaper article does suggest that, occasionally, girls are trafficked for commercial sex work in the gold fields (Starnieuws, 28 October 2011). In October 2011, in Suriname, a 13-year old girl was liberated by the police from a *cabaret* (brothel) in the gold fields where she had been forced to work as a commercial sex worker. However, there are no data that allow us to estimate the severity of this problem in Suriname gold mining areas.

## 4.7 Gender and ethnicity

Several previous studies conveyed that gender and ethnicity were important factors in understanding child labor.<sup>59</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, for example, found that overall more boys were involved in potential WFCL.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, girls were found more likely than boys to be working for their parents rather than for non-family members.<sup>61</sup> The conclusions from this study show that almost all children working in the small-scale gold mining sector are boys. Apart from very few exceptions, girls are not involved in mining activities but are active in the mining service economy, which was not part of this study.

Previous studies also pointed out that among the various ethnic groups in Suriname, Maroons were overrepresented among working children.<sup>62</sup> This observation was likely related to the fact that as an ethnic group, Maroons are among the most marginalized in Suriname, where poverty, large families, and single-parent families (all child labor risk factors) are relatively more prominent. This study focuses on the Maroons because they are the Suriname ethnic group that is most involved in small-scale gold mining. Children from other ethnic groups are seldom seen working in mining activities.

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<sup>58</sup> Redan and Wijngaarde, 2010.

<sup>59</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003; Van den Berghe, 1990; and ABS et al., 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2003, p. 90.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>62</sup> Dennen, 1990; Ministry of ATM, 1999; Schalkwijk and Van den Berg, 2002; Van den Berghe, 1990.

## 5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Methodological design

This study consists of mixed-methods research and includes quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The research techniques encompass interviews with child workers, key informant interviews (formal and informal), and direct observations.

Field work was conducted in July and August 2011. The research team collected primary and secondary data using the following six methods:

1. Collection of background materials
2. Structured interviews with nine formal experts
3. Supply Chain exercises
4. Structured interviews with 12 informal experts
5. Observations of living and working conditions of children involved in gold mining, during 1- to 5-day field visits to mine sites and communities
6. Interviews with 167 child workers in gold mining.

Table 5.1 provides insight into the methodological process of the research, according to the three phases and activities carried out in each phase.

**Table 5.1: Research process**

Pre-Phase: Development of the Terms of Reference		
Phase I Refining the research work plan and preparation for field work	Phase II Field research	Phase III Data processing and analysis
Activity 1: Collection of background materials	Activity 1: Supply Chain exercises to locate child workers	Activity I: Data entry and cleaning
Activity 2: Research instrument development	Activity 2: Interviews with formal and informal expert informants	Activity 2: Transcription of formal and informal expert interviews
Activity 3: Supply Chain Methodology and scheduling of field work	Activity 3: Worksite observations	Activity 3: Data analysis and preparation of draft report
Activity 4: Identification of organizations and institutions that have programs or participated in activities related to child labor	Activity 4: Survey interviews with child/forced child workers	Activity 4: Discussion of information with ICF Macro
Activity 5: Organization of the research team	Activity 5: Training of research assistants in the field	
Final Report		

### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Refining the research work plan

During the first phase, the Suriname research team worked with the ICF Macro team to prepare for field work, identify research locations, and refine the research instruments. This phase included the following two activities:

#### **Activity 1: Collection of background materials**

ICF Macro, along with the in-country consultants, researched published literature and studies on the gold mining industry of Suriname, and on issues related to child labor. Most background materials on small-scale gold mining in Suriname were provided by the local consultants because of their previous work in this sector. Literature and studies concerning child labor in Suriname were more difficult to find, because not much research has been done on this issue recently. The collected background materials provided a picture of what is currently known about child labor in Suriname, and on child labor in gold mines in foreign countries.

For the collection of statistical and qualitative data, the team used the following materials:

- ILO study on the “Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and other Worst Forms of Child Labor” in Suriname
- National study by the ATM
- Theses written by students from Dutch and Suriname Universities for their Masters and Bachelor’s degrees
- The 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (ABS, et al. 2009)
- Studies on child rights (UNICEF and the Government of Suriname, 2010)
- A study on perceptions of child rights (Gooding and Playfair, 2010)
- A study about dropouts in the district of Brokopondo
- Situation Assessment and Analysis of Child Rights in Suriname by UNICEF and the Government of Suriname
- Websites of international organizations such as UNDP, ILO
- Newspaper articles.

For an in-depth discussion on the various studies on child labor, see the Section 4 of this report on literature review. The literature review contains a complete list of consulted sources including books, papers, and websites.

### **Activity 2: Adjustment of the research instruments to the Suriname situation**

The research instruments that were used by ICF Macro in other countries were adapted to the Suriname situation through communication among the local consulting team, ICF Macro, and USDOL. The final research instruments are attached as Annex 2, and include the following items:

- A questionnaire to be conducted with child workers in the gold mines
- An interview guide with structured, open-ended questions for formal experts
- An interview guide with structured, open-ended questions for informal experts
- A worksite observation sheet
- The supply Chain recording sheet.

The research instruments were pilot-tested in two different mining sites in the Brokopondo district. ICF Macro gave input to finalize the appropriate questionnaires.

Before field implementation, all research instruments and filed protocols were reviewed by ICF Macro's institutional review board/Ethics Committee and the USDOL.

### **Activity 3: Supply Chain Methodology and scheduling of field work**

One of the key methods proposed in the original Terms of Reference is the Supply Chain Methodology. This research method requires requesting the input of formal experts to understand the nature, extent and location of a particular labor issue. Specifically, as an extension of the standard approach, Supply Chain Methodology is based on the observation that all forms of egregious labor conditions are still economic activities producing goods and services. All goods and services exist within a supply chain (i.e., a network that starts at the source needed for basic materials or labor and ultimately reaches consumers with the desired good or services).

The local research team had good preliminary understanding of the nature, extent, and locations of child labor in gold mining, given its considerable research experience in the small-scale gold mining sector and its familiarity with networks of the gold mining industry. The team identified locations for research based on its previous experience, information from formal experts, and input by acquainted gold miners in the various gold mining areas. Based on this Supply Chain exercise, it is concluded that child work in small-scale gold mining is most likely to occur in locations where—

- The mining population mostly of entirely consists of local Maroons, and
- The gold mining areas are relatively close to the communities.

Using these criteria and considering the time and resources available for the study, three different mining regions for research were selected: Sella Creek, Meriam, and Brokopondo District North of the Lake (various smaller mining areas). Omitted from this study are the areas dominated by

Brazilian migrant miners. This decision was made based on conversations with miners working in these areas and interviews with staff from the anti-malaria program “Looking for Gold, Finding Malaria” in the gold fields, who confirmed that Brazilian children seldom work in actual mining activities. The team decided that finding one or two Brazilian miners would not be worth the considerable costs in time and financial resources that traveling to these mining locations would entail.

Once the research locations were selected, field visits to the area were selected by contacting local key persons including boat owners, head of the villages, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) drivers, lodge owners, and others. These people were crucial in providing safe access to the communities and gold mines, arranging logistics, negotiating prices, and obtaining permission to do the research in their community.

**Activity 4: Identification of organizations and institutions that have programs or participated in activities related to child labor**

In this first research phase, the various governmental and non-governmental institutions that are working on issues related to child labor or to labor in small-scale gold mining were identified. The organizations include—

- Ministry of Labor, Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor
- Ministry of Labor, Department of Labor Inspection
- UNICEF
- Ministry of Education and Community Development, Department of Education in the Interior
- Ministry of Health, anti-malaria program for the gold mining areas “Looking for Gold, Finding Malaria”
- Ministry of Social Affairs—Department of the Rights of the Child
- Ministry of Regional Development, District commissioner of Brokopondo
- Ministry of Justice and the Police, TIP Unit
- Commission Regulation Gold Sector.

**5.1.2 Phase 2: Field research (July 16–August 6, 2011)**

During the second phase, the local consultants, with assistance from ICF Macro, conducted field work in the gold mines, and spoke with formal and informal experts about child labor in gold mining.

### **Activity 1: Supply Chain mapping exercise**

As explained above, the Supply Chain Methodology was used in the field as a supporting tool to locate child workers within the different research locations. In the mining areas, the research team looked for mining camps where workers under 18 would most likely be present. In the villages, heads of schools and local authorities provided invaluable assistance in locating this population.

### **Activity 2: Interviews with formal and informal expert informants**

Background data, qualitative information, and analytical insights were obtained through interviews with key informants. A list of consulted persons and institutions appears in Annex 3. A distinction has been made between formal and informal experts. Interviews with formal experts gave the research team more insights into the perspectives of the nature and size of the problem of child labor in gold mines. It also gave the research team a view in the participation of various local and international organizations, institutions and key persons supporting children and adolescents in the working sector. The questionnaires asked about—

- Personal and/or professional involvement on the issue
- View of the organization and general populations perception
- National regulations and policies
- Nature and characteristics of the work
- Environments of the worksites
- Forced labor or trafficking
- Affecting and influencing factors.

Most of the formal experts interviewed in this study were coordinators or key personnel of government and NGOs that had been identified in Phase I.

The informal experts recruited for this study were individuals who had worked in various activities throughout the gold mining supply chain and/or had worked with children who were in the study's target group. These experts included teachers and heads of school in communities where children were working in mining, mine bosses/operators, and village authorities. Informal and semi-structured interviews were conducted with these informal experts to gain information on the relative size and importance of child labor in the gold mining industry, on the nature of child work, and on factors that maintain this phenomenon. The interviews focused on—

- How the mining sector works;
- The nature of work done by children;
- The working conditions;



- The characteristics of child workers;
- Factors that motivate to work; and
- General view of community about the phenomenon.

When posing the questions to the formal and informal experts, the research team soon discovered that the format of the questionnaire did not suit all interviewees. Some formal experts did not have any knowledge on certain topics, while they were particularly knowledgeable on other issues that were not listed on the questionnaire. In conducting the interview the research team omitted, revised, and added questions to fully utilize the interviewees' particular areas of expertise. Information collected from formal and informal experts served to supplement findings through other research activities.

### **Activity 3: Worksite observations**

The main objectives of the worksite observations were—

- To obtain a general description of the sites including nature of work, general environment, area located in the city/community, and implications of the location.
- To gather information about the general work environment of the children including aspects of labor conditions (e.g., hazards, physically demanding work).
- To assess work and labor activities carried out by children during mining proceedings.

Concurrent with child interviews, the research team produced worksite profiles, which included observations of the chosen sites environments/conditions and activities that children performed. Several issues should be mentioned concerning this research method. It was difficult to give an insight into the general working conditions at a site through observations, because the sites were spread out and located in Suriname's tropical rainforest. From one or two observation points, the overall working conditions of the children were not visible. The estimation of the number of children at each site was similarly difficult to observe because of the large areas covered by the sites and the difficulty of estimating the age of working children—especially when they were working some distance from the observer in a mining pit and were covered with mud.

Finally, another complicating factor in applying this method was that the research team conducted many interviews in the communities at the schools (68.2 percent of interviews). These children were working in different mine sites located at some distance from the interview location. As a result of limited time and resources, it was not possible to visit all these sites. Moreover, many of these children only worked occasionally, making it difficult to observe every child who worked at the sites.

In total, three worksite observations were completed. In addition, the team visited two worksites where no workers under 18 were encountered during the site visits.

**Activity 4: Interview with child/forced child workers, using the Supply Chain Methodology**

The questionnaires for interviewing child and youth mine workers were designed for collecting information on the following items:

- Child identification and demographics, including age and gender;
- Education, including school attendance, grade and level completed, interference of gold mining with studies, how and how often work in mining affects studies (if applicable), and reasons for not going to school;
- Gold mining-related work, including engaged in gold mining-related activities in the past 12 months, child's main work activity, other activities carried out, full-time or part-time worker, number of work days and which days per week, working hours, and working at night time;
- Work conditions, health and hazards, including use of devices, consideration of the danger of the work, exposure to hazards, injuries and illnesses due to work, consequences and treatment, and punishments or reprimands;
- Earnings, including form of payment, way of payment, amount of last earnings, payment on behalf of someone else, and problems with payment;
- Family background and living conditions, including composition of people living together, and frequency of seeing parents;
- Introduction to work (including age of entry to work), reasons a child started working, working alone or for an employer, ways of finding a job, and the possibility of leaving a job;
- Mobility/migration (including being raised in the area), when and why moved to this area (if applicable).

The above themes provided the research team information on important personal characteristics of children that may be related to the risk factors associated with child and adolescent work.

In the larger mine sites of Sella Creek and Meriam, local guides proved invaluable in identifying specific locations within the larger mining areas. For example, the Sella Creek mining area is an extended location in an inhospitable environment. It would take several days of very costly travel on an ATV to visit all the mining camps in the area. The local ATV drivers, who knew each and every mining camp in this region, guided the researchers to the places where they had seen workers they suspected were under the age of 18.

In the Brokopondo area (North of the lake), another strategy was used. In this extended area, there were numerous smaller mine sites, typically pertaining to a specific community. The researchers had been informed that children and youth were working in many of these sites, but during their first visits to the mines, the research team did not encounter any workers under

the age of 18. Through conversations with local miners, the researchers discovered that the child miners usually work on the weekends and after school in the mining areas close to the village. In this district, the research team focused on the schools in the area; they conducted with visits to five schools at the primary level, and one at the secondary lower-level school. In the communities, the research team also looked for children outside of school. In this context, the school teachers and other adults served as key informants to gain access to the children.

Hence, the Supply Chain Methodology was used on two levels:

1. On a national level, to identify three research locations where child and youth workers were most likely to be encountered, among the 15–20 mining areas in the country.
2. On the mine-site level, to locate child workers within the spread out mining areas and within the communities.



**Interviewing child gold miners in the field**

In the field, adult consent was obtained for the children to be interviewed. In most cases, the parents were not available to grant the consent, so interviewers sought consent from the adults responsible for the child, such as an uncle, another guardian, or a head of school. Children, as well as their caretakers, were informed of the purpose of the interview and were requested to provide their consent before participating in the research.

During most interviews, people other than the researchers were present (78.9 percent of interviews,  $N_{total}=147$ ). Since most interviews were not conducted in the children's homes, the other people present were usually children and adults other than the children's direct family (Table 5.2). For example, when interviews took place at schools, it was not always possible to find an isolated place to speak with the child. When other children interfered with an interview with a child interviewee (such as by offering the "correct" answer), the researchers asked them to be quiet and not to influence the interviewee.

Also in the gold mining camps, child miners who were sitting among their fellow miners were not always comfortable talking with the researchers in a quiet location. There were no instances when the child miners were coached, reprimanded, or abused during the interviews. The people present other than the interviewee were usually just curious bystanders.

**Table 5.2: People present during the interviews with child miners**

Who was present during the interview? (Ntotal=145)	n	%
Children from outside the family	57	39.3%
Adults from outside of the family	49	33.8%
Other family members	5	3.4%
Parents	4	2.8%
No one was present	30	20.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

All testimonial data of children in this report was included after changing the children's identifying details, in order to protect their identity.

### **Activity 5: Training of research assistants in the field**

Three interview assistants were trained in the field to conduct interviews with child gold miners. Their completed interview forms were checked by one of the senior researchers for completion and consistency.

### **5.1.3 Phase 3: Data processing and analysis**

During Phase 3, the local consultant entered and cleaned the interview and observation data collected during Phase 2. These data were then analyzed; the findings and discussion are presented in this report.

#### **Activity 1: Data entry and cleaning**

Data from interviews with child miners were entered in SPSS. During this process, qualitative answers were translated into English and comments that had been written on the interview forms were processed. After data entry, the data set was checked for inconsistencies, errors, and missing values.

#### **Activity 2: Transcription of formal and informal expert interviews**

Interviews with key persons in the field and with officials in the city were transcribed in English. Interview excerpts were then thematically organized, following the outline provided by ICF Macro.

#### **Activity 3: Data analysis and preparation of draft report**

Numeric data were analyzed using summary statistics and bivariate statistics. The results were interpreted with qualitative information from the interviews with children, and with formal and informal experts.

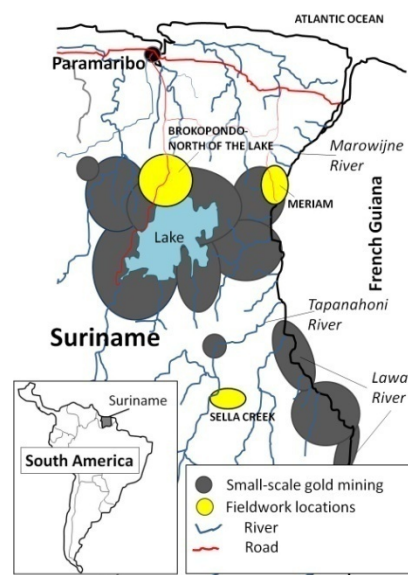
#### Activity 4: Discussion of information with ICF Macro

The consultants submitted the first draft of the report in late August 2011. ICF Macro provided comments, which were addressed promptly by the consultants.

### 5.2 Field study location

Based on the experience and input of local key persons, three mining areas/regions (marked yellow in the map) were selected as study sites (see large map in Section 1). These areas/regions are spread out over the country and differ in characteristics. The areas/regions were selected to give the research team an overview gold mining in Suriname.

1. Sella Creek is one of the most isolated mining areas in the country. It can only be accessed by a boat, across several rapids in the Tapanahony River. This area is the land of the Ndyuka Maroons, and most miners are of Ndyuka Maroon descent. Villages along the Tapanahony River do not have access to secondary education; hence, after finishing elementary school, young teenagers rapidly become young adults and start a family.
2. The Brokopondo area is a very rich gold mining area, relatively close to the capital city of Paramaribo (2- to 2 ½-hour drive). This area is home to three different Maroon groups: the Ndyuka, the Saramacca, and the Matawai. The mining sites in this region are typically near the villages, which offer an opportunity for children to find pocket money on the weekends and holidays.
3. The Meriam mining area is part of the tribal area of the Paramacca Maroons, along the Marowijne River. Villages only have access to elementary school. To continue their education children have to attend a (boarding) school in Paramaribo, which for many families is economically not feasible.



### 5.3 Sampling method and sample of child and youth laborers

Taking a random probability sample of children working in mining is impossible because neither child workers nor gold miners are registered in any place.<sup>63</sup> Finding the child workers was challenging; the research team used an “all you can get” or convenience sampling strategy to interview the maximum number of child and youth laborers possible within the field research period. As noted above, local resource persons were crucial in finding the child workers and in introducing the research team to the children, responsible adults, and/or fellow workers.

<sup>63</sup> The Commission Regulation Gold Sector is now registering small-scale gold miners in an effort to bring the activity into the formal sector; but this registration only concerns “full-time” or “professional” miners, not children panning for 1 hour on Sunday afternoons.

The sampling strategy may best be described as a combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling.

A total of 167 interviews were conducted with child workers between 7 and 17 years old in the gold mining sector (Table 5.3). This was the maximum number attainable, mostly because gold miners worked in many widely dispersed and isolated locations. Child workers were often difficult to find. In some cases, recommended locations were too far away or difficult to access; it would require additional plane rides or a day driving on an ATV to perhaps find one child worker in those areas. In the Sella Creek mining area, for example, the research team spent 5 long working days to obtain 30 completed interviews.

Almost three-fourths of the interviews with gold miners under age 18 were conducted in the Brokopondo area, North of the lake mining region (73.9 percent;  $N_{total}=167$ ). In Brokopondo, the various mine sites were often within walking, bicycle, or moped distance from the communities, giving the school children opportunity to mine for a couple of hours after school and on weekends. In Suriname, elementary school children attend school Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 13:00. Suriname schools have a 3-week holiday during Easter, a summer holiday from mid-August to the beginning of October, and a 2-week Christmas holiday at the end of the year. In addition to these holidays, there are 15 national free days throughout the year.

In the Meriam and Sella Creek areas, the villages and communities were much farther from the mining sites, making it impossible for children to access the mining areas on their own without an adult. The children would have to sleep in the mining area and—because of the travel time and expenses—stay for an extended period of time. Because of these factors, relatively fewer children from these areas were working in small-scale gold mining, and the children who were working in the mines were more difficult to locate.



**Interview with child gold miner in the Sella Creek mining area**

**Table 5.3: Number of interviews per study location**

Mining region	Village or mine site where interview was conducted	Number of boys N (%)	Number of girls N (%)
Sella Creek	Sella Creek mining area	18 (10.8%)	0
	Mooitaki	5 (3.0%)	0
	Godo-Olo	5 (3.0%)	0
	Drietabbetje	2 (1.2%)	0
	<b>Total Sella Creek</b>	<b>30 (18.0%)</b>	<b>0</b>
Meriam	Langetabbetje	2 (1.2 %)	0
	LokaLoka	5 (3.0 %)	0
	Atja	3 (1.8 %)	0
	<b>Total Meriam</b>	<b>10 (6.0 %)</b>	<b>0</b>
Brokopondo— North of the lake	Brokopondo Centrum (secondary school)	31 (18.6 %)	0
	Brownsweg	46 (27.5 %)	1 (0.6 %)
	Compagniekreek	2 (1.2 %)	0
	Klaaskreek	2 (1.2 %)	0
	Nieuw Koffiekamp	27 (16.2 %)	3 (1.8 %)
	Tapoeripa	12 (7.2 %)	0
	Bewojo mining area	3 (1.8 %)	0
	Balengsula	1 (0.6 %)	0
	<b>Total Brokopondo—North of the lake</b>	<b>123 (73.7 %)</b>	<b>4 (2.4 %)</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>163 (97.6 %)</b>	<b>4 (2.4 %)</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>167 (100%)</b>	

A total of 31 different worksites were mentioned: Afobaka (4 children), Alimoni (1), Baka Baleng (1), Bakadjari<sup>64</sup> (5), Balengsoela (2), Bewojo (11), Boslanti (1), Brownsweg km 16 (1), Depo Baka Djau (1), Ireneval (5), Klaaskreek (2), Km 11 (1), Km 9 (1), Nieuw Koffiekamp (any site around the village) (20), Kraboedoin (9), Kriki Neygi (4), Maripaston (1), Max Bergi (1), Meijou (1) Meriam (10), Mooikala (6), Roma (6), Sabana (2), Sarakreek (1), Seibi (1), Sella Creek (30), Siksi (12), Ston Kampoe (1), Tapoeripa (1) Wata Moengo (1), and Witikriki (3). Most of the names of these sites are not official (as recorded on maps) but are local names given to locations based on their physical characteristics (i.e., *Wata Moengo* means “water hill”) or location (i.e., Km 9 refers to a location near a distance marker along the main road).

The sample details demonstrate that the great majority of child and youth workers in small-scale gold mines were boys. In Section 6, the research team will discuss this phenomenon in further detail. Interestingly, two of the girl miners were Maroon children living in French Guyana who had come for the holidays to visit their relatives in Nieuw Koffiekamp. When the research

<sup>64</sup> “*Bakadjari*” literally means “on the backside of my place” and can refer to any workplace just behind the village.

activities took place, school holidays had already started in the neighboring French Guyana. Annually, numerous Maroon children attending school in French Guyana cross the border to Suriname to spend the holidays and find a holiday job. Therefore, the sample included a few children living in French Guyana, including the two girls. Suriname schools were in session during the research period, although summer holiday was a week away. Visiting schools, particularly in the Brokopondo area, gave the research team the possibility of finding a reasonable number of miners and the opportunity to speak with the children in an organized setting. During school holidays, the research team would have needed more time to locate children in the mining areas.

## 5.4 Limitations of the study

This study encountered some challenges and limitations, which are detailed below.

**Time**—Given the limited resources and time at their disposal, the researchers were unable to visit all the mining areas of Suriname. They had to select three mining areas to conduct their field work. In the Brokopondo area, most of the children went to the mines on the weekends. Because of the tight work schedule, it was not possible to visit all the mining sites on the weekends. Therefore, the research team decided to interview the children at school.

**Logistics**—The field study locations the research team visited to find the target population were in isolated areas, far away from Paramaribo. The areas were spread out and located in the “middle of nowhere.” It took quite some time to reach and to move within each area. Another limitation of the spread-out character of the area was the difficulty to conduct observations. As mentioned earlier, it was not possible to observe working conditions and the number of children at each site.

**Financial issues**—Costs in the interior are very high. For example, the price of fuel was three times higher than in Paramaribo. This factor had an impact on transport costs (car, boat, ATV) and on the price of food. In gold mining areas, prices were even higher, and everything needed to be paid in gold or in USD. For example, in Paramaribo a cellular phone card costs (SRD [Surinamese dollars] 10/USD 3); in the Brokopondo mining sites it costs 0.20 gram of gold (SRD 32/USD 10); and in the more isolated areas, such as Sella Creek, prices were even higher. For this reason, the research team had to bring most of their supplies from Paramaribo, including food, water, and equipment. Consequently, the preparation of the field trips took a significant amount of time and the costs of bringing all these goods to the interior were high.

**Recent governmental regulation activities**—Some mining areas were recently evacuated by the Commission regulating the gold sector. After registration, and several weeks before the evacuation, the military and the police came to move the miners from their sites. The miners told the research team that the military and the police even brought ambulances and hearses from the city to the sites to move the miners. Suriname’s governmental developments in the gold mining sector made numerous miners suspicious; in some cases it took lengthy explanations by the researchers to convince the miners willing to participate in the research and let the research team enter their sites.



**Research focus**—It was on gold mining only. No research was performed on child workers in the service sector. To obtain an overall impression of child labor in gold mines, it would be advisable to focus on the service sector as well in future studies—for example, vending (girls who sell popsicles), restaurant work (children working in shops), transportation (children driving ATVs), etc.

**Sampling**—Because of the established methodology design, the results from the research were not meant for generating statistical extrapolations.

The research team focused on locations where primarily Maroons were working. The reason was that the team's earlier observations in the gold mines and the information obtained from experts in the field suggested that Maroon children were more likely to work in mining than were children of Brazilians—who form the largest group of adult miners. Brazilian teenagers were found in the gold fields but rarely inside the mines. They were more likely to be involved in auxiliary services, such as transportation and commerce. Because of time and budget constraints, the research team could not afford to travel too far away from mining locations where mostly Brazilians were at work; they risked finding none or very few Brazilian children at these locations.

**Research period**—Child workers were on the job in the gold mines in relatively larger numbers during school holidays. By carrying out the research during a time school was in session, the team did not have many opportunities to observe children at work.

**Observation**—It was unrealistic to collect all the listed information. One reason was the setting of the areas. All the mining areas were spread out in a densely forested and hilly environment. Therefore, it was not possible to oversee the mining area, or even a representative part of the area from an observation point. It would have been difficult to observe the features of just one pit, let alone a whole or a part of a mining area. The research team could not see where children were working and what kind of work they were doing. Hazardous conditions could not be observed either. By walking through the area and talking with miners, the research team members obtained an impression of the working conditions. In addition to the work setting, the working conditions and the appearance of the children complicated observation. From a distance, it was hard to determine if a miner who is covered with mud was a child or an adult. It was known that most children were washing *batea*; so the research team assumed that the children observed doing this job were under 18 years of age.

## 6. FINDINGS

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### 6.1 Observation results

Most of the information analyzed in this report was obtained through interviews with children and informal experts. In addition to conducting interviews, observations were made in three mining areas to obtain information on the working activities, worksite environments, and mining conditions. The first part of the observation focused on how many miners were working, how many of them were children, and whether they were injured. The children's activities were observed, as well as their emotional appearance and their treatment by employers. The second part of the observation focused on housing, how clean the site was, and on whether facilities such as an outhouse, clean drinking water, electricity, and safety equipment were available.

Seven mining areas were observed in the three field work areas, of which four smaller areas were focused on in the district of Brokopondo:

1. Koffiekamp surroundings (on the Iam Gold concession, Brokopondo)
2. Bewojo (near the village of Klaaskreek, Brokopondo area)
3. Kraboedoin (near the village of Brownsweg, Brokopondo)
4. Kriki Neygi (near the village of Brownsweg, Brokopondo)
5. Irene Vallen (Brokopondo)
6. Meriam
7. Sella Creek.

Our observations suggest that working children are mostly at least 14–15 years of age. The researchers observed children involved in washing clothes, performing kitchen work (washing dishes, cooking), working in the mining pit to remove stones and debris, and working in a shop. In addition, children were observed driving ATVs and working in the *cabarets* as commercial sex workers. The research did not include members of the mining service sector; hence they were not part of the survey. As it is difficult to estimate ages, we cannot say with certainty whether the people were children or young adults. Especially for the ATV drivers, who typically wear a cap and may drive by rapidly, it is difficult to say how many of them might have been under 18 years of age.

The research team did not observe any signs of verbal or physical abuse or maltreatment. Nor did the research team observe any indications that children were restricted in their freedom of movement. In fact, children involved in auxiliary activities such as cooking and washing clothes seemed to have a larger amount of freedom to wander around and manage their time than did the adults and children who were working as part of a mining team in the mining pit.

In some of the more permanent huts, the research team observed women who had taken their babies and toddlers with them to the gold mining fields.

Worksite environments and conditions are poor and lack the most basic services. In the Brokopondo area, there is no permanent housing in the gold mining areas. Some miners stay for a couple of days but have their own houses in a village outside the area. None of the sites has toilets, and informants instructed the research team that “toilet activities” had to be done “behind a tree.” Drinking water had to be drawn from a creek nearby and some camps collected rainwater in a large plastic bin. Electricity was provided by private generators. Safety kits could not be seen, but informants indicated that there were some first aid materials in some of the camps.

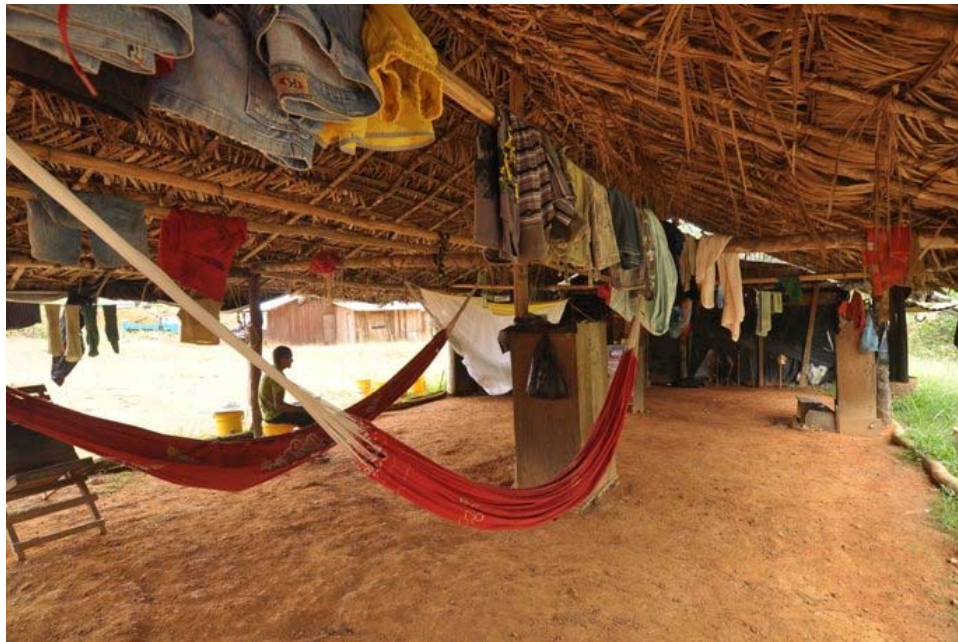
The presence of support facilities, such as cantinas and *cabarets* varies between areas. In the site visited near the village of Nieuw Koffiekamp, there were no such facilities because the miners were attempting to add a multinational mining company, which would allow the small-scale gold miners from the village to mine but not to exploit other businesses. Moreover, the mines are in walking distance from their villages and miners return daily to their homes. In Kriki Neygi, which is situated about 30 minutes from the village of Brownsweg by car, the research team observed two shops/bars/*cabarets*. Miners mostly buy their fuel and groceries in Brownsweg, which features two large supermarkets and a gas station. There is not much demand for additional shops in this mining area.

The children interviewed reported that they had worked at each of the observed Brokopondo sites, but at the times of the research team’s field visits it encountered working children in only three of these sites. In Bewojo, two to three children were panning and working *baka daal*. In the Irene Vallen and Kriki Neygi areas, the research team observed groups of gold miners under 18 years of age who were on their way home from these mining areas, where they had been panning. In none of the cases was there any sign of forced labor or of verbal or physical mistreatment.

In the Sella Creek area, Ndyuka Maroon people have been mining for more than 60 years. Because this gold mining area is located at some distance from the nearest village, miners typically stay for several months in the area before returning home. Still, the gold miners’ housing conditions are minimal. At the boat landing, which forms the main entrance into the Sella Creek mining area, more permanent structures have been erected, including a large Chinese supermarket, smaller Maroon-owned shops, bars, and restaurants. Approximately 50 persons stay permanently at the landing, while hundreds of others travel through it on their way to and from the mining camps. The Sella Creek landing has one shared outhouse and no public drinking water or electricity. Some establishments collect drinking water in large bins and have a private generator for electricity. The Sella Creek landing is the only place in the entire mining area where one has phone access by climbing on a mountain.

The places where the gold miners live, further into the forest, are mostly very basic structures. They often are little more than a roof made of palm leaves covered with plastic. Miners tie their hammock underneath those structures and hang their bags of clothing and other personal belongings from a nail in one of the poles. The camps usually have a separate kitchen hut, which contains a table and wooden benches. Usually there are no toilets or even primitive outhouses. One of the reasons why mine bosses do not invest extensively in nicer houses is that the camps

move every couple of months, when the area where they have worked is mined out. At that moment, the mining team members gathers all of their belongings, clear a new piece of forest, and build a new camp.



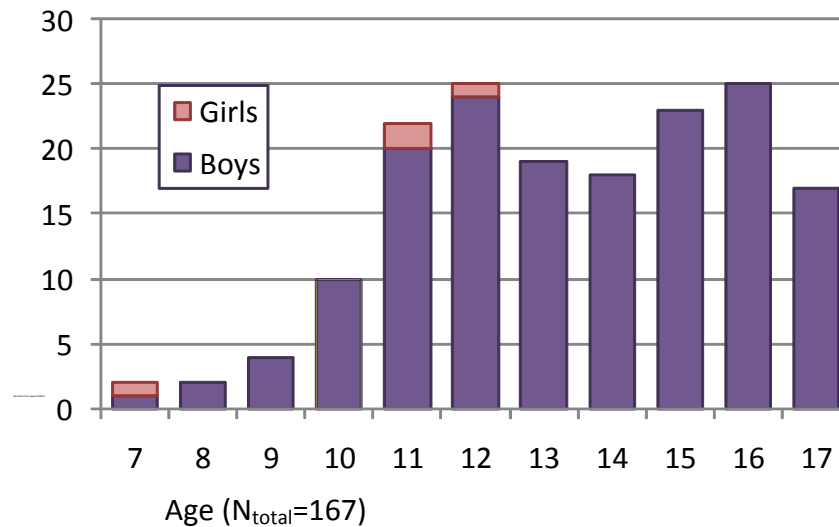
**Living and sleeping arrangements in one of the gold mining areas**

Cantinas, bars, and *cabarets* (brothels) move less frequently and are expected to provide somewhat more comfort. Hence their owners tend to invest more in their appearance. The research team counted four *cabarets* in the Sella Creek mining area, with an additional one under construction. There are approximately 20 shops.

In the Meriam area, some of the more permanent structures were recently abandoned when small-scale gold miners were evicted from an area that the U.S.-based mining giant Newmonth had obtained as a concession. The area is large, so it was not possible to visit the more remote sites. The Meriam area lacks restrooms and sanitary facilities; there also is no safe source of drinking water and no access to public electricity. Most of the area is connected to the mobile phone network.

## **6.2 Demographics of child workers**

Virtually all surveyed young gold miners were boys (97.6 percent male;  $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). The interviewed children were, on average, 13.4 of age ( $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). The youngest boy working in the gold mines (panning for gold) was 7 years old, and the oldest boy was 17 (Figure 6.1;  $N_{\text{total}}=162$ ). The four girls the research team interviewed ranged in ages from 7 to 12.

**Figure 6.1: Age distribution of interviewed boys and girls working in small-scale gold mining (N<sub>total</sub>=167)**

Following the age division used by the Suriname Ministry of Labor, the research team found that similar proportions of children (49.7 percent; N=80) and youth (50.3 percent; N=81) were working in the mines (Table 6.1). None of the children under the age of 14 that the research team had interviewed were working full time.

**Table 6.1: Number of interviewed children and youth who work full time and part time in mining**

Children who work	Children (<14); N (%)	Youth (14–17); N (%)	Total; N (%)
Full time	0 (0 %)	16 (9.6 %)	16 (9.6%)
Part time	84 (50.3%)	67 (40.1 %)	145 (86.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>80 (47.9%)</b>	<b>81 (48.5 %)</b>	<b>167 (100%)</b>

The low number of girls sampled in this study reflects the reality in the gold mining fields that few girls are involved in direct mining activities. Villagers and miners explained that “this is no work for girls” and that “the work is too heavy for girls.” Parents also keep a stricter eye on girls than on boys, who enjoy more freedom to roam around. Parents typically do not want their girls to visit the gold bush, where men are the large majority of workers.

Some girls perform service jobs such as selling food and drinks to the miners.<sup>65</sup> The head of the secondary school of Brokopondo Centrum lamented that girls may initially visit mining areas to sell popsicles. However, when they are in the gold mining fields and have not sold anything, they may be enticed to perform sexual services, for which they are very well paid.

<sup>65</sup> Girls (and boys) working in the gold mining service sector were not part of this study.

*You see girls mostly in sex work in [the] mining areas. They deny that they are under 18, but you can see they are. (Research associate, Ministry of Health malaria program for the gold sector, Paramaribo)*

The children who work part time typically work on weekends, holidays, after school, and when the mines are very close to villages. A representative of a local miners' association said:

*You find few full-time workers under the age of 18. The mine bosses are all from the community of Nieuw Koffiekamp and motivate the children to attend school. For that reason, if a dropout comes to seek for work, they typically refuse him. But if there is a boy who comes after school, they want to give the guy an opportunity to earn something so he can buy his things. In this area they work from 9 years of age, washing with batea, and from around 25 years in the pit. (Gold miner and board member of Macambo, Nieuw Koffiekamp)*

## 6.3 Education

### 6.3.1 Education results

Educational achievement among children from the sample was generally low. One child miner had never attended school (0.6 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). Another 22 children had been to school before but were no longer attending (13.2 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). Children who were not enrolled had on average enjoyed 4.4 years of formal education ( $N_{\text{total}}=22$ ). Fourteen children who were working in the mines and were no longer going to school had dropped out prior to completing elementary school (63.6 percent,  $N_{\text{total}}=22$ ). Among surveyed children who were not attending school, 18.2 percent had quit after completing elementary school.

The majority of the children interviewed were still attending school (86.8 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). The ages of the boys in school reflect that few students reach sixth grade without repeating classes. Table 6.2 indicates the projected age for entrance to a particular grade if not repeating any classes, and the actual average age of surveyed boys and girls who were attending that class. A typical student repeats about 2 years of elementary school. This finding is typical for all children in the interior, not just for children in mining.<sup>66</sup>

Most of the children (92.2 percent) who were attending school reported that in the week prior to the interview, they had attended school every day ( $N_{\text{total}}=141$ ). Eleven children, all male, had missed at least 1 day at school. On average, children who were truant had missed 2.6 days, ranging from 1 day to all 5 days of the past week ( $N=9$ ). Of the nine boys who provided a reason for having missed class, five boys said they had gone to work in the gold mines. The other ones said they had been ill and one had said he had been late for school.

<sup>66</sup> In the school year 2008–2009, nationally only 51 percent of children of primary school completion age (12 years) were attending the last grade of primary education (grade 6), and only 20 percent of the children entering secondary school had never repeated any class. (UNICEF, 2010)

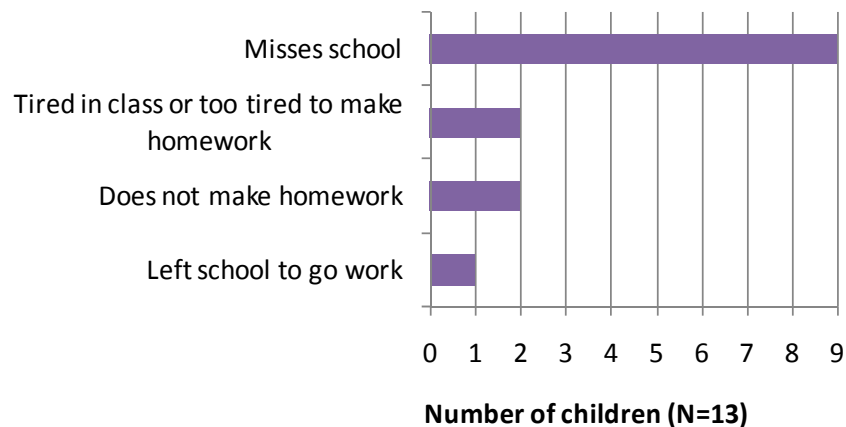
**Table 6.2: Average age of surveyed boys and girls in defined grades of elementary school, only including children who were still attending school**

Grade	Formally projected age for this year	Average age of children attending the class	N
1st Primary	6–7	7	1
2nd Primary	7–8	9.8	13
3rd Primary	8–9	11.9	19
4th Primary	9–10	12.0	23
5th Primary	10–11	13.0	27
6th Primary	11–12	13.5	28
1st Secondary school	12–13	15.4	18
2nd Secondary school	13–14	16.0	10
3rd Secondary school	14–15	16.0	3
Secondary higher level, 1st grade	16–17	16.0	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>13.1</b>	<b>143</b>

Overall, 79.4 percent of interviewed school children believed that their activities in the gold sector did not interfere with their studies ( $N_{total}=136$ ). They often added that they were only working on weekends, after school, or during holidays, and that they did not miss school to go to the mines. Among the 28 children who said that mining did interfere with their studies, 13 provided an explanation (Figure 6.2). The major consequence of children working in the gold mines is that the children miss school. Other children who worked in the mines were too tired to do their homework or pay attention in class.

The research team asked the children who said that mining activities did interfere with their school work how often they were missing school to go work in the mines. Almost half of these children reported that they never or almost never missed school to go to the mines (47.6 percent;  $N_{total}=21$ ; Table 6.4).

**Figure 6.2: How does work in mining interfere with your school attendance or school work?**



The research team asked the children who said that mining activities did interfere with their school work how often they were missing school to go work in the mines. Almost half of these children reported that they never or almost never missed school to go to the mines (47.6 percent; N<sub>total</sub>=21; Table 6.4).

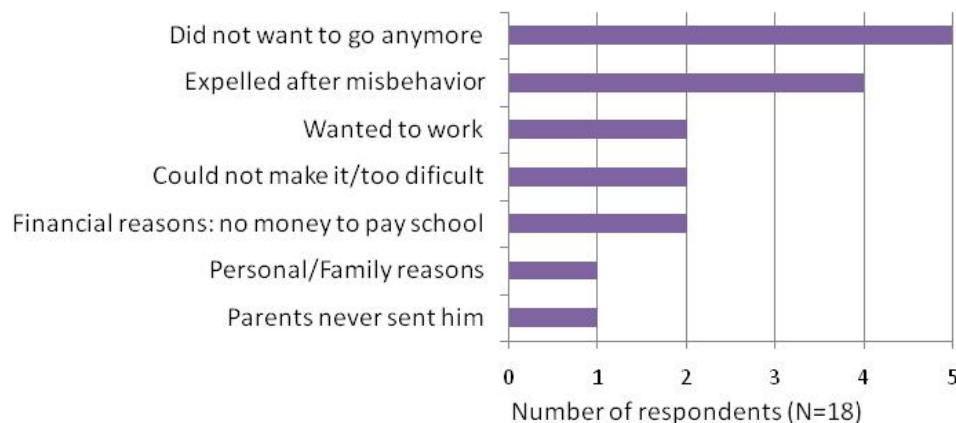
**Table 6.3: How often do you miss school to go work in the gold mines? (N<sub>total</sub>=21)**

	N	%
Once or twice a week	6	28.6%
Once or twice a month	2	9.5%
Once or twice a year	3	14.3%
Never or almost never	10	47.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>
Refused	2	
Don't know	1	
Missing	4	

Note: This table only includes children who say that mining interferes with their school attendance or achievements.

The various reasons why male child gold miners were not attending school are listed in Figure 6.3.

**Figure 6.3: Reasons for quitting school named by children working in the mining areas who were not attending school at that moment**



### 6.3.2 Discussion: The relationship between education and work in gold mining

The poor educational characteristics of the interviewees reflect the limited educational opportunities in the Suriname interior. As described in Section 2, Background, children from the Suriname interior—where all gold mining takes place—are disadvantaged in their access to quality education for structural, economic, and socio-cultural reasons. Maroon children in the interior are raised in their tribal language and often it is not possible for them to attend preschool.



Hence, when they enter first grade of elementary school, many children understand little of what is going on.

Because of the absence of educational support facilities such as preschool and afterschool homework assistance and difficult home situations, most children repeat one or several classes. While these children need extra attention at school, classes in the interior were large and there were often 40 children from different school years in one classroom. The life history of Romario in Box 2 illustrates the challenges of a young child in the interior who is attending school.

#### Box 2

**Romario (12 years old)** lives with his grandmother and an older brother in a Maroon village along the Tapanahony River, in the far interior of Suriname. Outside of school, at home and in the village, he only speaks his tribal language, Ndyuka. There is no preschool in the village. When he entered first grade in elementary school, it was the first time that he was addressed—and expected to answer—in Dutch (Suriname's national language and the official language of instruction at school). Because his grandmother has not been to school and his brother works away from home in the mining area, Romario does not have anyone to help him with his homework. He is in third grade of elementary school, which means that on average he has repeated every class at least once.

During school holidays, Romario travels with his older brother to the gold mining fields. He uses the money he earns to buy clothes, shoes, and school supplies. His grandmother's income consists of the production of her subsistence plot, the governmental elderly age pensions (~30 USD/month), and intermittent gifts from family members. The fact that Romario is able to pay his own way through school must be a relief. As Romario grows older, it will be an ever growing temptation to leave school and stay in the gold mining fields, where there is no expectation for him to speak Dutch and where he can earn the money a teenager needs to buy a mobile phone, nice clothes, and presents for a girlfriend.

For children with learning difficulties and dropouts, there are no special educational facilities; nor are there opportunities for vocational training in the interior. A Vocational Centre in Brokopondo has been built but not has yet opened and has only room for a small number of children. In addition to these barriers, the low number of children pursuing continued education may partly be attributed to the fact that opportunities for secondary school and secondary education are very limited in the interior, and non-existent in the large district of Sipaliwini. The Government of Suriname is currently actively establishing a More Extensive Lower Education/Lower Vocational Education (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs/Lager Beroepsgericht Onderwijs*) (MULO/LBGO) school in Atjoni (at the border of Brokopondo and Sipaliwini district).

In addition to these general shortcomings in the educational infrastructure, education policies pose disadvantages for children from the interior. In Suriname, children will be expelled from school when they misbehave or because they outgrow the school system. The MINOV's policy dictates that a child can repeat a grade once. Children who repeat the same class will automatically advance to the next grade despite their poor results. Children are allowed to attend primary school until they are 15 years old. When they turn 15 or older, or are in fifth grade and need to repeat the class, they will be expelled from school and sent to Easy Vocational Education (*Eenvoudig Beroeps Onderwijs [EBO]*).<sup>67</sup> This form of education cannot be found in Sipaliwini and Brokopondo districts.

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<sup>67</sup> Personal communication with head of school inspection, MINOV.

School principals can ask for dispensation at the Department of Inspection to keep a child in school, and, in most cases, this dispensation will be granted. In practice, many school principals in the interior bend the rules or provide their own interpretation of events to keep children at their school.

### Box 3

Fifteen-year-old Jovani works full-time in Sella Creek. He was raised in the city but traveled on vacation to his relatives in Drietabbetje last year. Because of a lack of money, he could not return to the city and began to attend school in Drietabbetje. He was not a bright student and had already repeated several classes. At the Drietabbetje school he got caught in a fight and felt that the teachers did not like him. His troubles with the teachers and other children caused him to quit school. A 15-year-old boy in the interior is a young adult and cannot remain at home. Jovani then stayed with his brother, who runs a store at Sella Creek—the nearest gold mining area. Now he mostly assists his brother in the store. Occasionally, he assists other relatives in their mining operations. Jovani is not certain how much he is supposed to earn, and his brother just pays him something whenever he feels necessary.

The biggest reason that students cite for dropping out of school is that they no longer wish to attend. Often multiple factors play a role, as illustrated in the case of Jovani.

There is no official data on the numbers and causes of dropouts. An official from the Suriname MINOV explains:

*There are dropouts; that's for sure. But no research has been done. When a student drops out of school, the reason for dropping out has to be written down for administrative purposes. But these descriptions are mostly general, such as "frequent absent," "domestic circumstances," "migration," and give no insight if [it's] work in the gold fields, or if working in general is the reason of drop out. (Director of the Department Education in the Interior, MINOV, Paramaribo)*

Another example in the Sella Creek region:

*No, they don't go to school; some are born in Suriname others in Brazil. Boys who are not making it to the next class come with their father. Most of the Brazilian boys who come with their mother don't speak Dutch and can't go to school. If they are older and not doing well at school, they go to the gold mining areas. (Machine owner)*

Schoolteachers in the various visited mining areas did express their concerns about the draw of the gold bush, especially now that the price of gold is so high. In the Brokopondo area, a head of school told the researchers:

*School children work 2 [to] 3 hrs a day. And if they don't go to school they work the whole day. They often don't finish primary school. There are children who cannot finish school because they are slow. Parents say: why am I paying for your school if you can't learn, it's for nothing. Then you better go work. (School principal, Nieuw Koffiekamp)*

A mining boss in the Sella Creek area similarly notes that parents actively send their children to the gold mines if they fail at school:

*Most of the times, if the boy doesn't want to go to school anymore, they sent him out to work. He can't sit at home and do nothing; they are stubborn, they don't want to learn. With girls, there are not so many problems. Parents want their boys to go to school, but if the boys don't want to go then they have to go to work. (Shop owner, Godo-Olo)*

The interviews with the children confirmed that some adult caretakers endorse the children being absent from school to work the mines if the boys do not perform well at school. Two boys who had missed class in the week prior to the interview to work in the gold mining fields reported that they had gone to the mines with an uncle. When the team asked children in general terms whether their work in mining interfered with their school work, various children explicitly mentioned that they sometimes missed school to go work with their father or uncle in the mines.

Like the principal quoted above, various teachers and principals of schools in the interior suggested that the draw of the gold bush must be evaluated in relation to the quality of and possibilities for education in the interior:

*If there was good education, the children won't go to work at an early age. (School principal, Godo-Olo)*

*Because of the high level of repeating grades, children are often too old for school, they want to earn money, buy expensive jeans, Blackberry, Nikes and their family has no money to afford these purchases. (School principal, Brownsweg)*

The results suggest that for a small group of the 167 surveyed children, the work in small-scale mining is severely affecting the children's school attendance and school work. There is a chance that some of the boys interviewed will drop out of school to go work permanently in the mines.

#### Box 4

Ten-year-old Dion grew up in Paramaribo city. His mother originally is from the Brokopondo area, and last year he and his mother moved back to his mother's village to live with an aunt. The main reason was that people in the city had tried to bewitch his mother. Dion attends second grade of elementary school, which means that he has already repeated 2 years in school. His mother, who works in the gold fields near the village, introduced him to gold mining when he was 8 years old. Now he lives near the gold fields and pans for gold during most weekends. Dion gives a share of the money to his mom, and the rest he keeps and mostly invests in calling cards. He admits that this work interferes with his studies. When he is tired he fails to do or finish his homework.

The research team suspect that in asking about ways that mining interferes with school work, there is some underreporting. In some cases, children may not want to admit that mining interferes with their school attendance or results. In other cases, children themselves may not realize that they are too tired to pay attention in class. Nevertheless, while there is certainly a risk of children being lured by the "easy money" the gold fields offer, the data do not indicate that this problem is affecting a large number of students as of yet.

The mines have absorbed some young teenagers who dropped out of school as permanent workers. In a few cases these children left school to go work in the gold field; sometimes even at the suggestion of their parents.

Very often there are multiple reasons that have led students to expulsion or dropout including lack of money for school, learning difficulties, and misbehavior at school. For young Maroon men with little education in the interior of Suriname, the gold mining areas are an option to earn a living that does not require a school diploma or advanced skills in speaking Dutch. If gold prices continue to rise and if the national school graduation results continues to worsen—particularly in the interior—it is likely that more and more children who drop out or have difficulties at school will choose the adventurous life as a gold miner. The health and economic risks inherent to such a life are discussed further below.

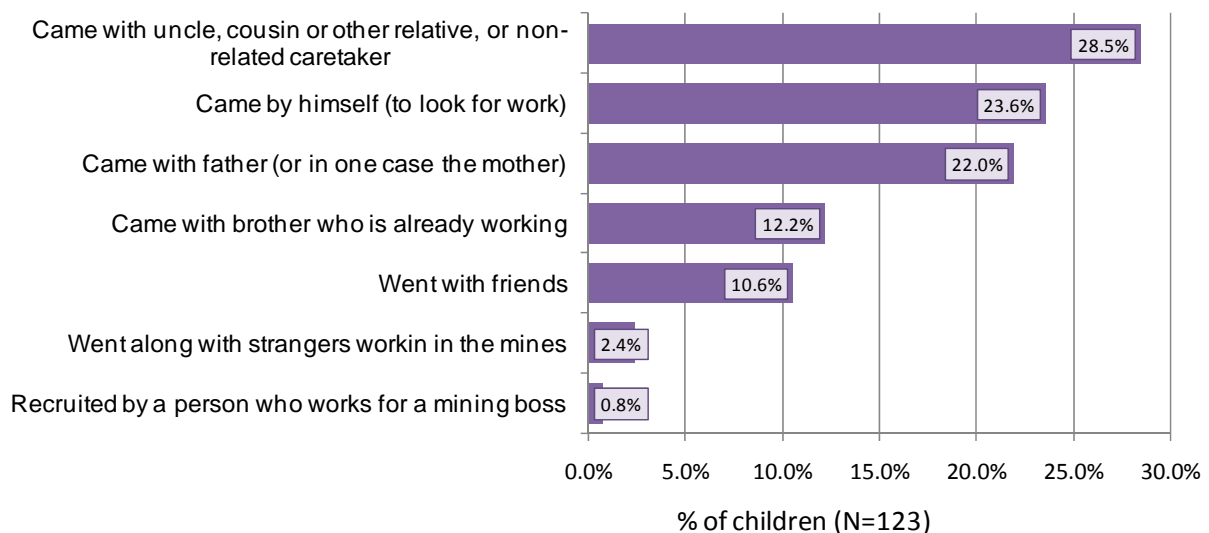
## 6.4 Risk factors associated with and pathways into child labor/forced child labor

### 6.4.1 Results for risk factors associated with and pathways into child labor

The median age of surveyed children when they began mining is 12 years, with the youngest age of entry being 6 and the oldest 17. On average, the children were 11.4 years of age when they started to perform mining activities (N<sub>total</sub>=167).

Children were asked how they first entered mining more specifically what or who affected their decision. Figure 6.4 displays the answers. The responses demonstrate that the majority of children came with relatives; often an uncle, a father, or a brother. Among the children who came on their own account (29 children; 23.6 percent), three had been sent by their parents or grandparents.

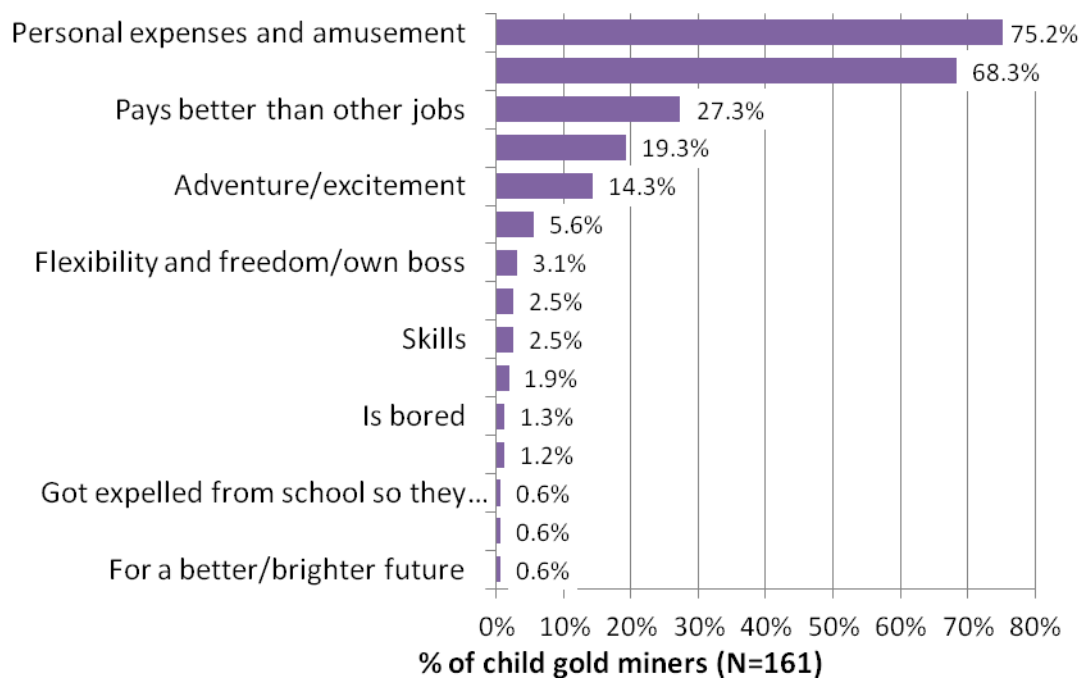
**Figure 6.4: Entry routes into mining: who took the children to the gold mines (N<sub>total</sub>=123)**



The survey results suggest that the reason for working in the gold mines is primarily a combination of workers helping their family in the village, and buying personal necessities (Figure 6.5).

The fact that there are no other opportunities for work (including weekend and holiday-jobs), and the low wages in alternative jobs, motivates their choice for gold mining rather than other income generating activities (named by 27.3 percent). In addition, some children are attracted by the adventure and status that accompanies life as a gold miner.

**Figure 6.5: Reasons to work in small-scale gold mining (N<sub>total</sub>=167)**



#### 6.4.2 Discussion: Why and how children enter into gold mining

The research team found that most child gold miners are introduced to work in the mines by a close family member. In traditional Maroon culture, the mother’s brother (an uncle) is considered a father to the mother’s children. Particularly in the life of boys, matrilineal uncles play an important role. These uncles are tasked with the responsibility of teaching their nephews everything they need to know about becoming a man. Even though such traditions have somewhat withered, uncles (from the mother’s lineage) remain important, especially because fathers are often absent from the family, minimally involved in the upbringing of the children, or unknown. In this cultural context we find that half of the gold miners under age 18 were introduced to mining by their father or a father-figure (49.2 percent; N<sub>total</sub>=121).

Particularly in the Brokopondo area, many children first entered the mines together with their school friends. In the village of Nieuw Koffiekamp, for example, different gold mines are located at a distance of between five and 30 minutes from the village. This proximity makes the entrance barrier very low and carrying a gold pan has become a pastime for boys roaming the village.

Only one person was formally recruited by a mining boss. He explained that someone requested he work and brought him directly to the mine boss. According to the boy, this recruiter was paid for recruiting the boy. Among the few children who had been introduced by strangers was a boy from Paramaribo city who had traveled with some Brazilians to a mining area near Afobaka (see Box 5). The data show that this kind of entrance into mining is exceptional. Most young people enter mining because they go along with relatives or friends. These results are in line with commentaries from informal experts in the field.

*During holidays a lot of children go to help their father in the woods to find gold. The money will be used to help parents with school supplies, clothes. (Shop owner, Godo-Olo)*

*They work only during holidays, for an uncle or older family member and help them in the field with cleaning, picking stones and wash batea. (School principal, Langetabbetje)*

Three-fourths of child workers said they used the money—partly—to buy things for themselves. They often mentioned clothing, sneakers, a phone, calling cards, and food or snacks. In part, these expenditures are luxury expenditures. Perhaps their mother is willing to buy cheap shoes and a no-name pair of jeans. The popularity or “coolness” of a teenage Maroon boy, however, is closely related to wearing the newest brand-name sneakers and fancy clothing. Work in the mines permits him to buy such items.

In part, however, the money is spent on real basic needs such as clothing to go to school (the dress-code forbids flip-flops and prescribes long pants) and food for the day. In addition, one out of every five children said they were using the money they earned to pay school fees and buy school supplies. School fees for public schools are SRD 10 (USD 3) a year. At special denomination schools (Moravian Church, Roman Catholic or other) the fees range between SRD 80–120 (USD 24–36). When a family has more children in one school they receive a discount. Nevertheless, for a single mother of five or six without a regular income, it is a relief or even a requirement for her boy(s) to pay their own way through school.

The second most mentioned destination of child miners’ earnings is a contribution to the household income or, as they say it, they “give a part of the money to mom.” This answer again illustrates the fact that many Maroon mothers have social support from their female relatives who are mostly or solely responsible for the upbringing of their children. One boy said he had been sent by his mother because she does not have any money. This is an exceptional case. Most children make their own decision to work because they want to earn pocket money or an income, and as they start earning, voluntarily contribute some of their earnings to their mother. A headmaster of a primary school comments;

*Children work in the gold mining sector because they want to earn money to buy expensive jeans and a Blackberry. (School principal, Brownsweg)*

Another principal says:

*Sometimes the mother isn’t poor, but the child wants to work. Parents not always want their children to go to work, but if warnings don’t help, they cannot do anything. (School principal, Nieuw Koffiekamp)*

Many children said they want to perform the work because they like it, they want to earn money during the holidays, the job pays well, and it staves off boredom. Apart from occasional soccer matches there are few leisure activities in the villages. Especially during the long Easter and summer holidays (3 and 6 weeks, respectively), many young boys are roaming aimlessly around the village. They see earning fast money in the mines as a good alternative.

The fact that boys reported that they buy rice, bread, and other basic food stuffs for their mother suggest that their families are poor and that the money they earn is direly needed in the households. Two boys even explicitly mentioned that they needed to mine to survive, because their parents failed to provide them with their daily necessities. Once again, many children grow up in large, single-parent households, headed by women without a stable job or regular income. Any contribution the children make is warmly welcomed.

## 6.5 Type of work performed

### 6.5.1 Results: Mining activities and payment

In order to assess the physical and emotional burdens of child work in mining, the research team asked the young gold miners what specific tasks they were doing in mining, when they worked, and how long they worked. In Section 6.1, the research team demonstrated that nine out of every 10 child workers from this study are working part time (90.1 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). Because the research team did not take a random sample of children working in mining, the research team cannot extrapolate this finding to the national population of under 18 gold miners. However, based on the research team's observations and conversations with informal experts, it is believed that *the large majority* of gold miners under the age of 18 could be working part time or occasionally.

The specific jobs young mine workers perform are shown in Figure 6.6, which distinguishes between legal children (<14 years of age), and youngsters (14–17 years).

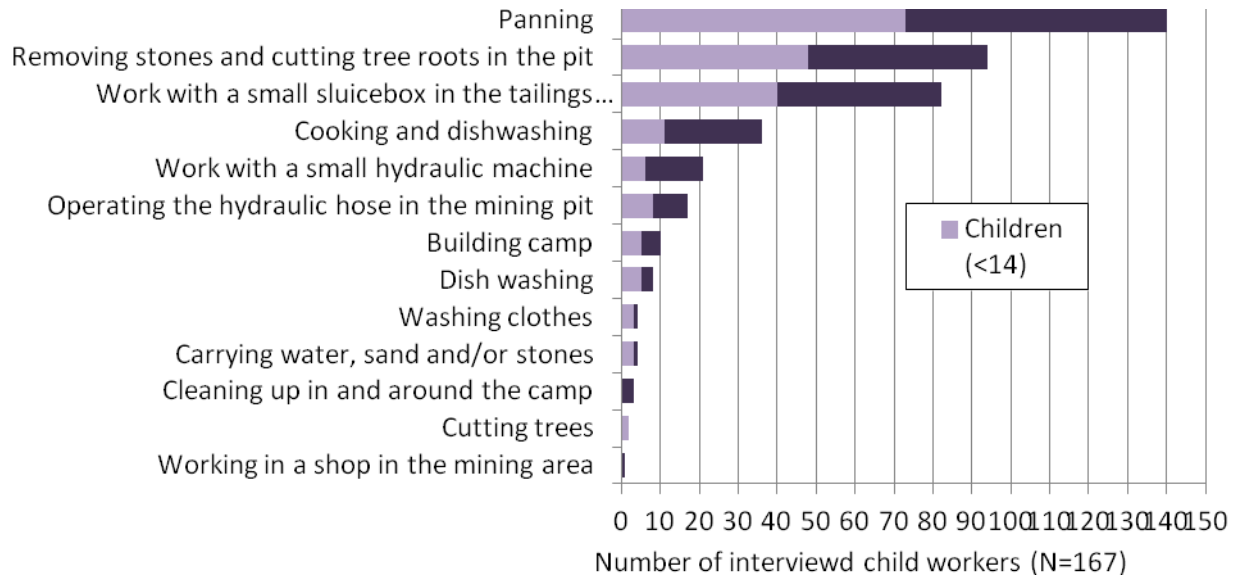
The largest share of the children (83.2 percent) pan for gold or “turn the *batea*,” sometimes in combination with other work. Similar numbers of children (<14 years) and youth (14–17 years) are involved in this type of mining work ( $N_{\text{total}}=167$ ). The second most common job is removing stones and cutting tree roots in the mining pit (56.3 percent). The third most common mining method among child workers is working with a small sluice box in the tailings of others (49.1 percent). Seventeen children operate the hydraulic hose in the mining pit (10.2 percent).

**Table 6.4: Differences between different mining methods performed by children**

	Gold panning	Removing stones, debris, and branches/tree roots from the mining pit	<i>Baka daal</i>	Working with the hydraulic hose in the mining pit
Who are involved	School children and teenagers, including a few girls.	Adults, youngsters, a few school children; only men.	Young men and boys.	Older teenagers and adults; only men.
Full-time or part-time	Part-time.	Both full time and part time.	Part time.	Mostly full time.
Workers' organization	Individuals and small (2- to 4-person) groups with often equal members.	Work in teams with a hierarchical structure; a boss, a foreman, and laborers	Individuals and small (2- to 6-person) groups with often equal members. One person is the owner of the box ( <i>daal</i> ).	Work in teams with a hierarchical structure; a boss, a foreman, and laborers.
Payment system	Individuals keep everything they find; members of groups most often share equally.	Pit workers in a team together earn 20–30 percent of earnings. Full-time workers receive an equal worker's share. Part-time "assistants" get a smaller share.	Individuals keep everything they find. The daal owner(s) obtains a relatively larger share and other members of group share equally.	3.5–5 percent of the gold found.
Payment schedule	By the end of the day or day-share, the earnings are counted and divided.	Miners work for up to 2–3 weeks before washing the sluice box and obtaining the gold. At that moment the percentage shares are being paid out.	Gold is washed, counted, and divided by the end of the day or after a couple of days. Sometimes baka daal workers synchronize their work with that of the larger operation.	When the pit is "finished" and the sluice box is washed.
Work day	Panners decide themselves when they come and go. They usually work between 1 and 4 hours on a day. They may work a few days in a row or skip a couple of weeks.	As a member of a team, the pit worker cannot come and go as he pleases. A typical working schedule is 12 hours (include a 1-hour lunch break and 1–2 brief breaks), 6 days a week.	A couple of hours up to the day. Miners working with the "baka daal" may work a few days in a row or skip a couple of days.	As a member of a team, the pit worker cannot come and go as he pleases. A typical working schedule is 12 hours (includes a 1-hour lunch break and 1–2 brief breaks), 6 days a week.
Status	Children's job to make some pocket money.	Professional job; a means to support a family.	Semi-professional; a serious job.	Professional job; a means to support a family.



**Figure 6.6: Activities in the gold mines performed by children (<14 yr; N<sub>total</sub>=84) and youth (14–17 yr; N<sub>total</sub>=83)\***



\*The numbers of children performing specific jobs add up to more than 167 (complete sample) because many children were performing more than one job. We emphasize that all the surveyed children were involved in the actual mining process, sometimes in addition to performing other activities, such as dishwashing or cooking.

**Table 6.5: Activities performed by child workers (<18 yr) in the gold mines (N<sub>total</sub>=167)\***

Activity	%	N
Panning	83.8%	140
Removing stones and cutting tree roots in the pit	56.3%	94
Work with a small sluice box in the tailings ( <i>baka-daal</i> )	49.1%	82
Cooking	21.6%	36
Work with a small hydraulic machine	12.6%	21
Operating the hydraulic hose in the mining pit	10.2%	17
Building camp	6.0%	10
Dish washing	4.8%	8
Carrying water, sand, and/or stones	2.4%	4
Washing clothes	2.4%	4
Cleaning up in and around the camp	1.8%	3
Cutting trees	1.2%	2
Working in a shop in the mining area	0.6%	1
<b>Total number of interviewed child workers</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>167</b>

\*The numbers of respondents per activity add up to more than 167 (N<sub>total</sub>) because many (young) miners perform different kinds of jobs. We emphasize that all surveyed children were involved in the actual mining process, sometimes in addition to performing other activities such as dish washing or cooking.

Child miners were asked about the activities they most performed. Two-thirds of them (67.5 percent) reported that panning was their most performed activity in the gold fields ( $N_{\text{total}}=154$ ; Figure 6.5). The second most performed activity that they reported performing was removing stones, debris, and tree roots from the mining pit to facilitate the suction process and to prevent the suction hose from clogging up. This work was the most important job for 19.3 percent of interviewed child gold miners. The remaining activities were performed by fewer children. These jobs included working in the mining camp kitchen including tasks such as cooking and dishwashing (respectively, 3.7 percent and 3.1 percent), and work with a small sluice box (*daal*) behind the larger operations to re-wash their tailings (1.9 percent). For 3.1 percent of children (4 children), working in the mining pit with the hydraulic hose was their most performed job.



Small-scale gold miners with a gold pan



**Small-scale gold miners using hydraulic methods**

**Figure 6.7: Percentage of child miners who spend the most time on selected activities in the mining areas (N<sub>total</sub>=160)**



With regard to the payment that children receive for their work in gold mining, the research team found that 94.4 percent of child miners receive payment in gold (Figure 6.8). A few child miners obtained cash for their work. These were usually cases where children who were assisting a brother or an uncle for a couple of hours were given a small amount of cash, the amount of which was not decided in advance. Three-fourths of miners also received food. This is a standard arrangement for everyone working for a boss. The equipment owner or mining boss also provided shelter for gold miners sleeping in the mining area.

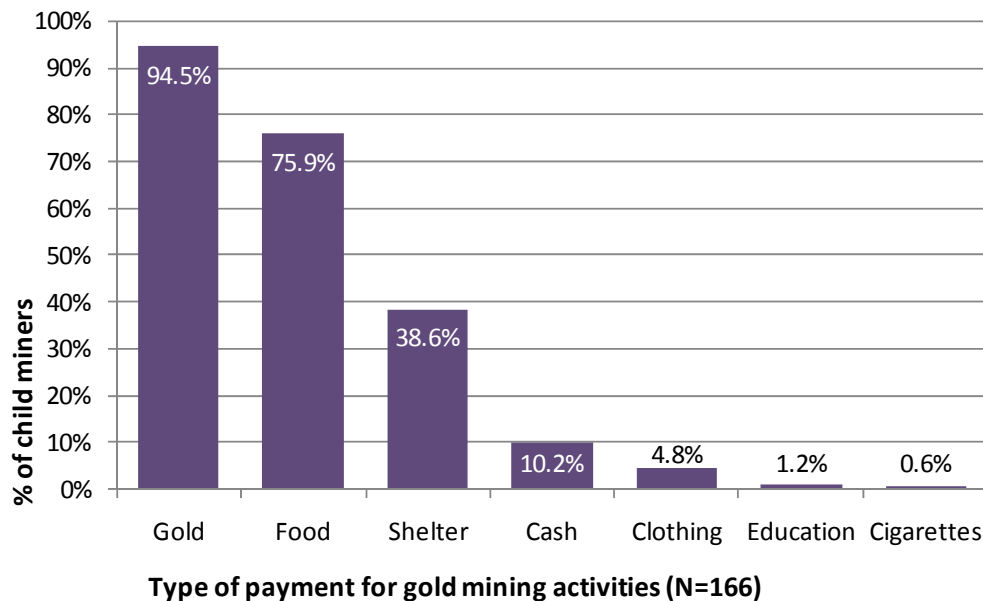
**Figure 6.8: Type of payment received by child gold miners**

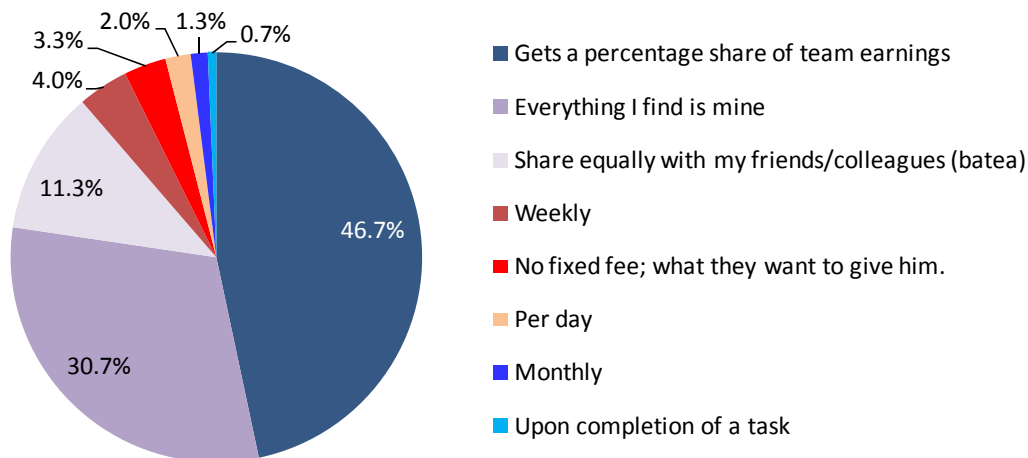
Figure 6.8 shows the answers to the question: “How is your payment determined?”<sup>68</sup> It must be noted that these answers are not mutually exclusive. For example, if a person works with three friends and they share the pay equally, the person may also acknowledge receiving a 25 percent share. If the team washes the gold every week, the person is not only paid “weekly,” but also receives a percentage share. It is safe to say that typically all workers in gold mining activities receive a share of the earnings rather than a fixed wage. The few exceptions are cases where a boy is helping a brother, a father, or an uncle in an operation and just gets “something.” Fixed wages are paid for most auxiliary jobs, including but not limited to cooking and/or dishwashing, washing clothes, transportation, and sex work.

How much can child workers earn? For full-time workers, the median income was 0.87 g of gold per day (Mean= 1.4 g/day; Standard Deviation=1.1;  $N_{total}=14$ ). At the time of research, gold was worth USD 60.03 per gram—an all-time record high. In Paramaribo, gold sold for USD 51.69/g (SRD 168/g). Based on these gold prices, the typical full-time worker in the gold fields earns about 45 USD/day. The minimum reported daily wage was 0.42 g of gold/day, which is the equivalent of USD 22/day. The highest reported daily wage was 3.57 g of gold/day, or USD 184/day, which is likely an overestimation.

The median day-yield of part-time gold miners interviewed is 0.67 g of gold (Mean=1.3 g;<sup>69</sup>  $N_{total}=133$ ), which translates to approximately USD 35/day (at local urban gold prices).

<sup>68</sup> In the field, we would get an answer by asking several different questions such as: “With how many people do you work together when you do x or y? If you all together find 100g, how much is for you? Does everyone get the same or do some workers earn more? Etc.”

<sup>69</sup> Excludes three outliers with unrealistically high reported earnings. Still we suspect that some of the high values may be erroneous values and hence the median value gives a better idea of earnings than the medium.

Figure 6.9: How is the payment determined (N<sub>total</sub>=150)

### 6.5.2 Discussion: Activities performed by children in the gold mines

The data demonstrates that there is little differentiation in the work that child and young miners perform. The difference lies in the intensity of the work, as only young miners of 14 years and older were observed performing full-time work in the mines. The various jobs that child mine workers perform are very different in nature and earnings. Table 6.4 summarizes the differences between panning, working in the mining pit to remove stones and tree roots, working *baka daal*, and operating with the hydraulic hose in the mining pit.

The most popular job among child gold miners is panning or “turning the *batea*.” Panning may be characterized as a more occasional and opportunistic job, performed by individuals or groups that either travel together to the mines or assemble on the spot. When gold panners work in groups, some children dig and collect gold holding materials and others wash the gold. The proceeds are typically divided equally between the group members, with the child most skilled in panning in charge. Panning is not perceived as a serious mining job and is rarely performed by adults. All four interviewed girls reported having earned their money from panning. None of the panners performed this job full time. A machine owner confirms what the research team heard from the children:

*Older children 16–17 [years old] are more likely to do heavy work in the pit for example during school holidays. Children working batea are self-employed. They work with 2–3 boys and share earnings equally. Boys working in a pit work for a boss. (Gold machine owner, Brokopondo district)*

The second most performed job for children is removing stones and debris, and cutting tree roots. This job is performed as part of a team, and is physically much more demanding than panning. Usually teams who conduct hydraulic land-based mining consist of a mine boss or equipment owner, five to six workers, a foreman, and a cook. The equipment owner is responsible for all investment costs (fuel, food for the team, materials, camp structures, etc.), and in exchange the owner receives 70 percent of the earnings. The laborers and foreman equally divide the remaining gold. The cook typically receives a fixed monthly wage. Occasionally, young boys who visit the mines on weekends or holidays with an older brother or an uncle and

assist with the tasks in the pit for the day or a couple of hours. In these instances of short work periods, children usually receive some previously undetermined form of payment in cash or kind.

Similarly to operating the hydraulic hose, removing stones and debris from the mining pit typically involves long work hours because the team only functions optimally with all the workers present. Therefore, workers on the team cannot arrive and depart whenever they please—as panners do—but must work altogether according to the team schedule. A typical team works 12 hours a day or in 12 hour-shifts. Work in the pit is very dangerous, as the miners may get caught under landslides, suffer injury from the hydropower hoses, or sustain cuts and bruises from other activities. On one occasion in 2010, seven gold miners died when they were caught underneath a collapsed sand wall of their mining pit.

About half of the child gold miners work *baka daal*, which translates as “behind the sluice box (of others).” Applying this method, a small group of two to four boys place a narrow wooden box, lined with a mat that captures the gold, behind the large two- or three-piece sluice box of professional miners. Engineering tests have demonstrated that because of inefficient setups, small-scale gold mining operations lose about 40–60 percent of the gold particles with the tailings. Therefore it is more logical to allow these tailings to flow through an additional box and wash them again.

The heaviest and most immediately dangerous job in the small-scale gold mining sector is working with the hydraulic hose in the mining pit. Three child workers are all required to perform this job full time. While the hose is operating, nine children work full time in the mining pit to remove stones, debris, and branches. This is also a heavy and dangerous job. Small-scale gold mining pits can be several meters deep, and the walls are fragile. More than once, small-scale gold miners have been trapped underneath a collapsing sand wall and have lost their lives. The percentage of children working full time in the mining pit that indicated that this was their most important job comprised 7.5 percent of the research sample. These incidences may be considered among hazardous labor.

In addition to the various mining activities, children are typically involved in different sorts of auxiliary services such as cooking; washing dishes and doing the laundry; carrying water, sand, and stones; cleaning the camp area; chopping wood; and chopping down trees. Gold entrepreneurs in the Sella Creek area mentioned other activities children perform other than working with batea;

*The youngest ones are cooks, sometimes cooking for the company, sometimes cleaning, weeding the area.* (Shop owner, Godo-Olo)

*They help others, cooking, to get things, often doing small jobs like washing clothes.* (School principal, Mooitaki)

## 6.6 Living conditions

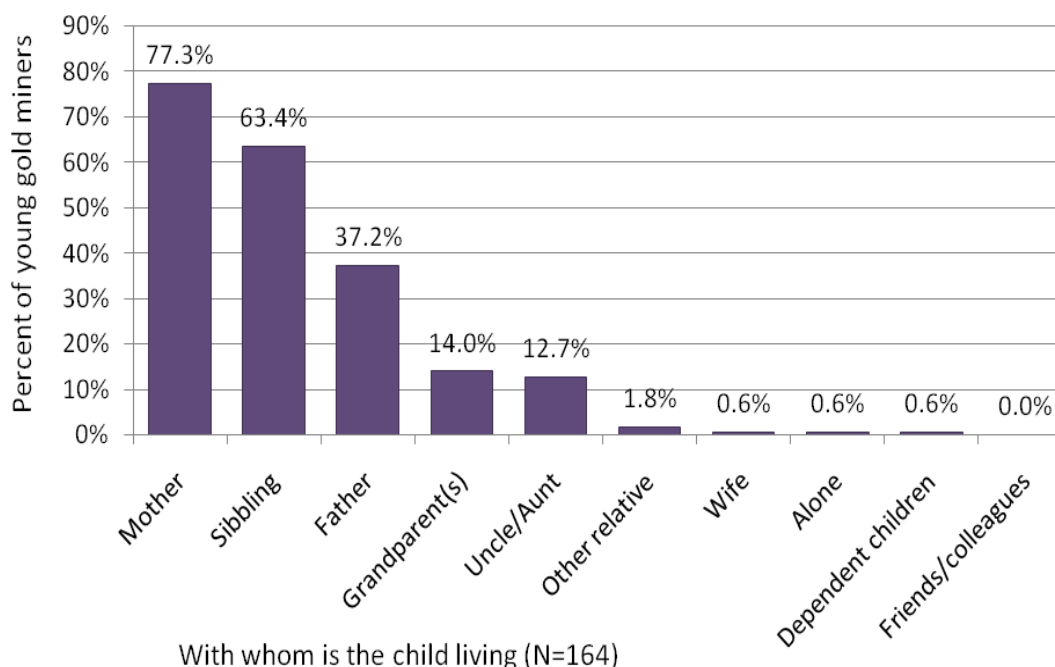
### 6.6.1 Living conditions: Results

Three-fourths of the interviewed child miners grew up in the same general area as where they were working (77.8 percent;  $N_{total}=162$ ). Three children (1.8 percent,  $N_{total}=167$ ) had been raised and were living in French Guiana, and had traveled to Suriname during their summer break from school. The other children were all born and raised in Suriname.

Of those children who had not grown up in the general area where they were living and working now ( $N=36$ ), the majority were Maroon children who had been living in the capital city of Paramaribo (58.3 percent, 21 children). Most other children had moved to another village within the same district or tribal territory (19.4 percent, seven children). These movements had taken place between 1998 and 2011, with three-fourths of children having moved in the past 5 years, 2007 through 2011 (75.0 percent,  $N_{total}=36$ ). None of the children in mining reported that someone had received money or paid an outstanding debt because of their move. Nor did the research team find any other signs of child trafficking.

When the research team asked young miners with whom they were living, no single miner mentioned their living conditions in the mining camp, even though they would spend most of their time there (Figure 6.10). One’s “living” location is understood to be the place where one is at home, which is in the village. In 51 of the 126 homes where the respondents reported living with their mother, there was also a father present in the family. In addition, 10 respondents lived with their father and without their mother. These results confirm the qualitative information according to which a significant share of Maroon children live in single-parent households (62.5 percent of children living with at least one parent).

**Figure 6.10: With whom are the young gold miners living (when at home)**



One out of every five children said they were sometimes punished when they misbehaved (20.4 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=157$ ). Most punishments consisted of a verbal reprimand being shouted at them (Table 6.6). In a few select cases, child gold miners were punished by having their payment reduced or being denied food.

**Table 6.6: Type of punishment for child miners who were punished ( $N_{\text{total}}=28$ )**

Type of punishment	N (percent)
Being shouted at	22 (78.6 %)
Withholding of wages/paying less	3 (10.7 %)
Get no food	2 (7.1 %)
Threat of being fired	1 (3.4 %)

### 6.6.2 Discussion of living conditions

The results reflected that the majority of child gold miners are local children, who were born and raised in the areas where they are living now. The children, who had moved to the area where they were living and working, typically moved in with their mothers or other caretakers. One boy stated that his father was living in the interior and his mother went to live with him. Two boys told the researchers that they had been going to boarding school in the city, but because of their poor behavior, they had been sent back to their mother in the village. The researchers only encountered one case where a child gold miner had moved from the capital city to the mining area by his own account (Box 5).

It is possible that rising gold prices, subsequent growth of the small-scale gold mining sector, and related employment opportunities have motivated the movement of families to gold mining communities. These are usually families who are traditionally from the area.

#### Box 5

Seventeen-year-old Chianis (ILO, 1999) is the only young miner who had not moved with his parents or guardians. A few years ago, Chianis dropped out of his final year of primary school because he wanted to make his own money. He grew up in Paramaribo with his grandparents, but his family is originally from the interior. When he was looking for a job in Paramaribo, Chianis met some Brazilians. They brought him to the Afobaka area, where they were working in a gold mine and where Chianis could work as a cook. They promised him a percentage of the team's earnings as a salary. Since the beginning, there was tension between Chianis and the Brazilians; after a month and a half, a fight occurred between Chianis and a fellow miner. The fight left Chianis with just some scratches, but he knew that he had to leave the mine to prevent further harm to himself. He was only paid 5 grams of gold for his 6 weeks of work. He went to the Bewojo area, which was rumored to be a mining hotspot, to see if he could find a job. A week later, when the research team met him in that area, he was still unemployed.

Full-time work in the small-scale gold mining areas usually entails working away from the place where one lives. Only in a few select locations, such as Nieuw Koffiekamp and Brownsweg, are the home villages of the gold miners located a short distance from the mining village, allowing the miners to commute to the mines on a daily basis. In most places though, the small-scale gold miners live in mining camps that have specifically been constructed for that purpose. These camps usually are temporary and consist of a few makeshift huts or shelters where the miners tie their hammocks. Drinking water is collected from rainwater and/or taken from a hand-dug well



or a creek. Bathing occurs in a nearby creek or even in abandoned mining pits. For electricity, mining camps rely on private generators. Throughout the area, one may find small shops, bars, and brothels—referred to as cabaret (Br.).

In some mining areas, such as Benzdorp along the Lawa River, primarily Brazilian gold miners have established more permanent villages with better houses and services, named *curatela* (Br.). In addition to the “usual infrastructure” of bars and brothels, in those areas one may find large Chinese supermarkets, hair salons, hotels, ATV repair shops, and even beauty salons. In these miners’ conglomerates one also finds families with small children. Because there are no schools in the mining areas, women usually move to the city when their children reach elementary school age. Alternatively, they send their children to Paramaribo and pay someone to care for their children. Outside of the larger miners’ settlements, gold mine workers rarely meet their families outside of the holiday seasons.

When the villages are relatively nearby, like in the Brokopondo district, local miners can visit their home on Sundays. However, when the villages are farther away, such as in the Tapanahony River area, the gold miners stay for several months in a row in the mining areas.

Generally, children are treated reasonably well and the research team found no signs of severe corporal punishment.

## 6.7 Working conditions: Hours and days

### 6.7.1 Working hours and days

The amount of time the gold miners under age 18 were involved in mining activities is important because it is one of the characteristics that distinguishes child labor from regular (training) activities that are part of a child’s upbringing. Among the boys who were working full-time ( $N_{\text{total}}=16$ , including 1 missing), two-thirds had worked 6 days during the week preceding the interview (10 boys; 66.7 percent,  $N_{\text{total}}=15$ ). Two boys had worked every day of the week, and one boy had not worked during that week because he had just arrived. Of the 16 full-time workers, 10 had started their last work day between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., which is a typical time to small-scale gold mining teams start work. One worker had started earlier (5:30 a.m.), and the others later in the day. Twelve of these boys ended their work day between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m.

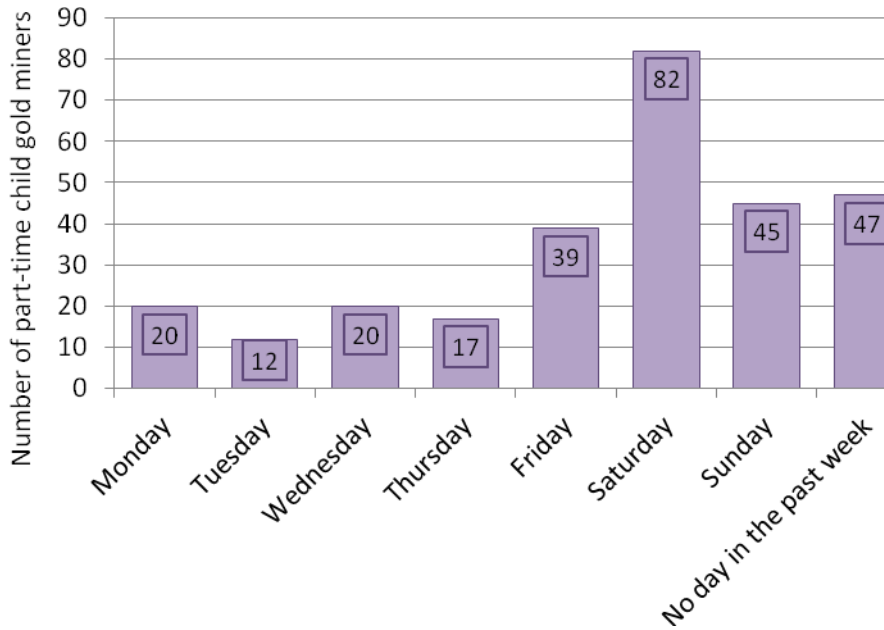
Five full-time workers had also worked at night ( $N_{\text{total}}=15$ ). Three of them had worked the entire night, and two boys had worked only part of the night. One of these boys had worked from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. and the other from 8:30 p.m. to midnight. The youth workers who had a 24-hour shift were on the clock from either 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., or from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Their duties while in the working pit include collecting stones, gathering debris, and cutting tree roots. Their work could be considered hazardous labor.

The research team asked which days of the week prior to the interview the children had worked. The responses obtained suggest that part-time workers most often work on weekends, starting on Friday afternoon (Figure 6.11). In many areas, Sunday is a day of rest, which explains the relatively low number of child workers who are active on that day. One-third of part-time miners

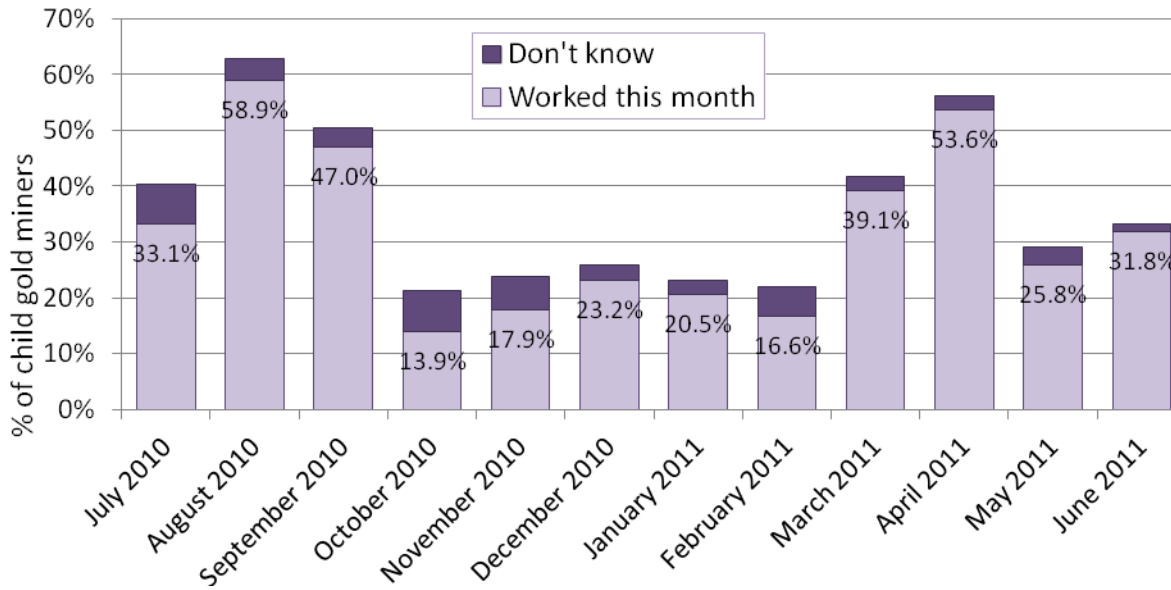
had worked on at least one weekday, most often after school (33.1 percent;  $N_{total}=151$ ). These children were mostly elementary school children from the village of Nieuw Koffiekamp, and older children attending middle school in Brokopondo Centrum. One-third of the part-time gold miners (32 percent) reported that they had not worked in the week prior to the interview.

The months in the year before the interview that part-time child gold miners reported having worked are displayed in Figure 6.12. The peak working months for part-time gold miners were August–September and March–April.

**Figure 6.11: Days that part-time child gold miners had worked during the week preceding the interview ( $N_{total}=147$ )**

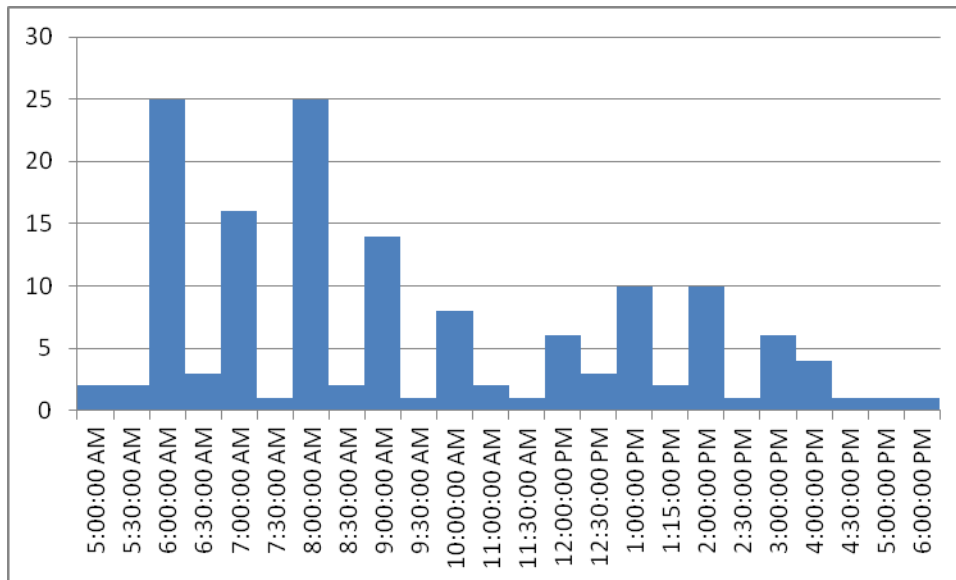


**Figure 6.12: Months in the year before the interview that part-time child miners had worked (N<sub>total</sub>=151)**



Part-time workers do not stick to regular working hours, as do full-time workers. When part-time child gold miners were asked about the exact time they started their job on the last day they had worked, they named 24 different starting times during the day (between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; see Figure 6.13). The vast majority of children began their job on the weekend and in the morning between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. In addition, a number of children started work immediately after school dismissal at 1:00 p.m.

**Figure 6.13: Starting time of work on the last day that part-time miners had worked (N<sub>total</sub>=147)**



Most school children do not visit the mine on days that they are going to school, often because the gold mines are too far away. School children who attended their mining job part time on days that they attended school, on average worked 2.9 hours on that day. (Mean=2.9; Median=3;  $N_{\text{total}}=54$ ). Few child gold miners work more than 4 hours on the days they attend school (7.4 percent;  $N_{\text{total}}=54$ ). On days that they do not attend school, part-time child gold miners may work the mines from 1 to 12 hours a day. On average, part-time child gold miners spent 5.9 hours working in gold mining on the days that they were free from school (Median=6 hr;  $N_{\text{total}}=110$ ). The research team must comment that in estimating their working hours, child gold miners often did not take work breaks into account; so 6 work hours in the mines includes breaks for eating and resting.

### 6.7.2 Discussion of hours and days of work

Work as a full-time miner is physically and emotionally demanding. The work day starts at dawn and ends when it gets dark again for 6 days a week and without free days on most national holidays.

The data suggest that the typical full-time gold miner under age 18 works 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, just like the adult miners. Nevertheless, the researchers observed that the child mine workers, compared with adult miners, were more likely to be put to work in the kitchen and in other support jobs (e.g., washing clothes) where the work is physically less demanding and there is more opportunity for rest. These observations suggest that especially in the case of younger teenagers of a smaller stature, mine bosses do take into account their age and physical strength. The children of a smaller stature often receive a lower pay than their adult colleagues do.

When the research team looked at preferred working months for part-time child gold miners, it found that children were most likely to be working in the mines during the summer break or “long vacation” in August–September, or during the 3-week Easter Holiday in March–April (Figure 6.12). Mine work also occurs in July, just before the summer holidays, when students in the highest grades take their exams and schools are out earlier, and that relatively more children frequent the mines to earn pocket money. In addition, the research team observed a small peak in December. In Suriname, December is a month for parties as well as the time of the year that everyone needs extra money.

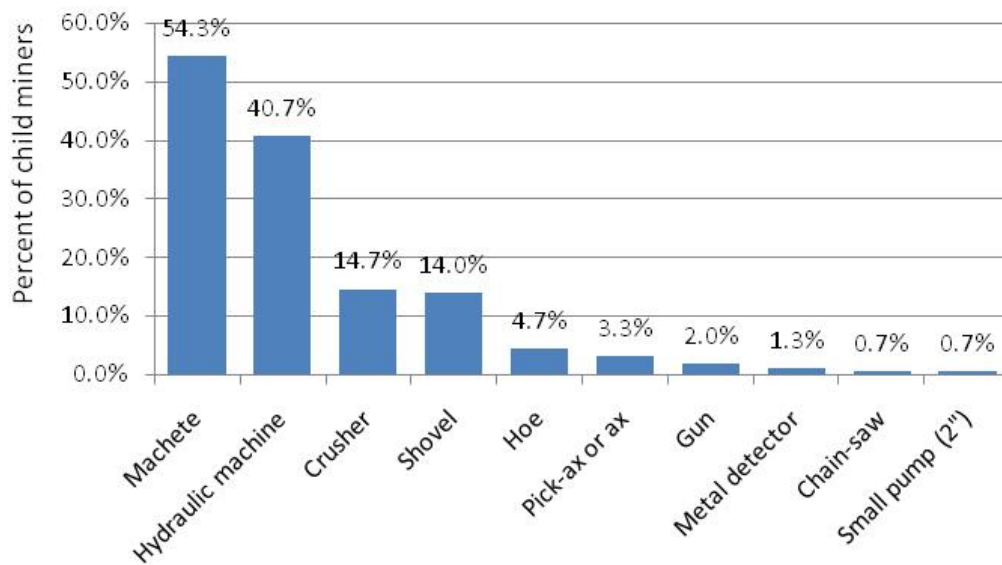
Part-time workers who worked at night ( $N_{\text{total}}=12$ ) were mostly panners ( $n=10$ ). They worked at night because they secretly collect materials from the concessions or claimed the workplaces of others. Mine bosses bear all investment costs for acquiring the machinery, clearing the land, and paying the backhoe excavator (typically about 6 g/hour if an independent operator is hired) to remove the top soil. If a backhoe excavator has piled up materials from the deeper layers, the gold-bearing layers, this forms an attractive worksite for panners. Researchers observed one young part-time miner working in the pit to remove stones and other waste materials from the mining pit, and another one reprocessing the waste materials of a professional operation (locally referred to as “*baka daal*”).

## 6.8 Working conditions: Risks, accidents, and illnesses

### 6.8.1 Risks, accidents, and illnesses

Children working in small-scale gold mining often work with sharp tools such as a machete, shovel, hoe pickaxe, and ax (Figure 6.14).

**Figure 6.14: Tools that child gold miners use to work (N<sub>total</sub>=150)**



Tools and equipment used by child workers (N=150)

Aside from the tools they are using, children working in the mine were often exposed to hazards and/or risks. In one instance, they reported having stood for long hours in dirty water (73.1 percent; N<sub>total</sub>=167). Another hazard which was often mentioned (65.3 percent, N<sub>total</sub>=167) was working with chemicals, most often mercury. The use of this chemical is almost inevitable because it isolates gold from gold ore.

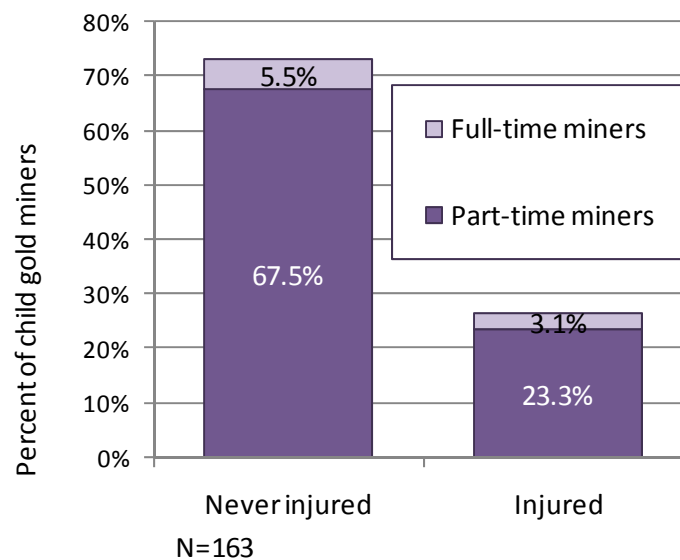
**Table 6.7: Does your work involve exposure to the following?**

Type of hazard or risk	N	%
Loud noise	103	61.7%
Extreme temperatures or humidity	108	64.7%
Work underwater	64	38.3%
Stand for long hours in dirty water	122	73.1%
Carrying heavy loads	74	44.3%
Slip, trip, or falling hazards	96	57.5%
Dangerous tools (e.g., knives)	73	43.7%
Dust	92	55.1%
Fumes and smells that are irritating	60	35.9%

Type of hazard or risk	N	%
Chemicals, such as mercury or substances that cause rash, burns/skin problems	109	65.3%
Being around weapons (e.g., guns)	63	37.7%
Being assault or robbed	41	24.6%
Falling rocks, landslide	102	61.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Child gold miners were asked how often they had been injured or ill. The majority of children (73 percent; N<sub>total</sub>=163) reported that they had never been injured due to their mining activities (Figure 6.15). Full-time workers, who spend more time in mining and are more likely to work in the mining pit, were relatively more likely to be injured than their part-time colleagues. 35.7 percent of full-time workers (N<sub>total</sub>=14) and 25.2 percent of part-time gold miners (N<sub>total</sub>=147) had been injured at work.

**Figure 6.15: Share of part-time and full-time child mine workers who had been injured as a result of their mining activities**



Of the 43 child gold miners who had been injured at the job at least once, most had been hurt by sharp stones (32.6 percent), wounded due to a fall (18.6 percent), or cut their foot as they stepped into something sharp (11.6 percent). Overall, 16.3 percent of those who had been injured suffered a broken a leg or arm (Table 6.8). The research team shares the story of Romario, a child gold miner who was injured twice (Box 6).

**Table 6.8: Injuries reported by child gold miners who had been injured on the job (Ntotal=43)**

Injury	N	%
Got hurt/cut by sharp stones	14	32.6
Wounded due to a fall	8	18.6
Broken limb	7	16.3
Cut foot on something sharp (stone, nail, etc.)	5	11.6
Fell off his bike/moped	2	4.7
Snake bite	2	4.7
Cut by iron wire	1	2.3
Got injured in a fight	1	2.3
Hit by the hydropower hose	1	2.3
Chopped himself in the foot with an ax	1	2.3
Hit his head	1	2.3
<b>N<sub>total</sub></b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

**Box 6**

The educational and social background of Romario (12 year) was discussed in Section 6.2. Romario lives in a Maroon village along the Tapanahony River. The Sella Creek gold mining area is approximately 3 hours away from the village by motorized canoe, and the trip is expensive. During school holidays, Romario travels with his older brother to help in the mining camp. He assists in the kitchen with cooking and dishwashing, washes clothes, pans for gold with the batea, but mostly he works in the mining pit to remove stones and cut grangran (entangled tree roots). For his help the miners pay him "something." His father holds his earnings. When he receives the money later from his father, he buys clothes, shoes, and school supplies. The fact that Romario is able to pay his own way through school is a relief for his grandmother.

Romario accounts that the work in the mining area is harder than he expected: "It is not easy; you have to carry heavy stones," he explains. The boy has been injured several times. One time he had a swollen leg because he had been hit by a log. He went to the clinic in his home village to be treated, and returned to the mining area when he felt better. On another occasion, the hydropower slipped from someone's hands and hit Romario's head. With an open wound in his head, he went again to the clinic in the village. In addition to these accidents, Romario has suffered from several illnesses as a result of his work in mining, including skin infections, foot fungi, and an upset stomach.

One out of every three children reported having suffered from some sort of diseases related to their gold mining activities (33.1%; N<sub>total</sub>=145). The most common illnesses reported are body aches and pains, skin disease, minor respiratory diseases, stomach complications, and malaria (Table 6.9). All other diseases had been experienced by less than 10 child gold miners during their working lives in the mines.

**Table 6.9: Types of illness experienced by children as a result of their work in small-scale gold mining (N<sub>total</sub>=167)**

Illness	N	%
Body aches/pains	39	23.4%
Skin disease	17	10.2%
Minor respiratory diseases (e.g., flu, cold)	14	8.4%
Stomach illnesses (e.g., vomiting, diarrhea)	13	7.8%
Malaria	12	7.2%
Foot fungi or infections	8	4.8%
Fever	7	4.2%
Eye strain/Eye impairment	5	3.0%
Anemia	4	2.4%
Headache	2	1.2%
Severe respiratory diseases	1	0.6%
Hearing impairment	1	0.6%
Leishmaniasis	1	0.6%
Cholera	1	0.6%
<b>N</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100%</b>

Despite the risks involved in merely being present in the gold mining areas and the overall lack of protective gear or other safety measures, just over half of child gold miners consider their work dangerous (54 percent; N<sub>total</sub>=163). Among the most important reasons for judging the children's work as dangerous is that they can get hurt or get in an accident, or that they work with mercury. These and other explanations for why child gold miners' work is dangerous are listed in Table 6.10.

**Table 6.10: Reasons mentioned by child gold miners for why their work is dangerous (N<sub>total</sub>=88)**

Why is your work dangerous?	N
You may get hurt/get in an accident	27
Work with mercury	12
You can get buried under the sand (avalanche)	8
Heavy work	8
Big stones may fall on you	7
Can get killed	6
You may be hurt by the hydropower hose	6
Can get malaria or other illnesses	6
Can be cut by sharp stones or other sharp items (most young miners walk barefoot or in flip-flops)	5
You may drown/the water is dangerous	4
Accidents or fights with weapons	2



Why is your work dangerous?	N
You may fall in the mining pit	2
You may cut or chop yourself (machete/ax)	2
Tree can fall on you	2
You can sink away in quicksand	1
Can cut your hand on iron wire of the sluice box	1
May be bitten by a snake	1
You breathe in dust	1
Fall off ATV	1

## 6.8.2 Discussion of risks, accidents, and illnesses

The tools being used in the mines were basically the same tools used in subsistence agriculture. Most Maroon children learned how to work with these tools as part of their upbringing. Besides these basic tools, the children work with typical mining equipment such as the large (6-inch) hydraulic machines, crushers, metal detectors, and small hydraulic pumps. The work with the large hydraulic machines is especially dangerous because the hydraulic force is enormous. Gold miners get seriously injured when the hose slips from their hands or those of their colleagues and strikes them. In addition, by removing soil layers in the mining pit, sand walls may get unstable and collapse. In November 2010, seven young men died because of a collapsing sand wall that buried them alive. Three children said that they sometimes handled a gun, which presents a hazard to them.

Upon examination, researchers found the work areas full of hardworking, mostly (young) adult men. The research team could describe the atmosphere as rough and harsh. Men drink and smoke, sleep with women in the cabarets, and talk about adult matters.

Children working in the mines are also exposed to hazards and risks. Only half of the children consider their work dangerous, despite the hazardous environment and circumstances. The machines in the mining area produce loud noise, and the children are working in the sun and heat. These children are often “achievers”; they want to perform well and are inexperienced and untrained in dealing with hazards. The tools and machines used in gold mining are not made for them, and thus pose more hazards. Moreover, these children are not organized and are powerless. The hazards in gold mining work must be spelled out to be understood by the children.

Mercury was the second most common hazard reported by the children when they were asked what makes their work dangerous. It is a serious toxic hazard that can impair cognitive function and cause a number of problems to children’s health and physical development, including deformities, tremors, and respiratory failure.<sup>70</sup> Respondents reported some illnesses that are consistent with mercury poisoning; however, the study was not designed to measure either

<sup>70</sup> ILO, *Children in Hazardous Work: What we know, What we need to know*, Geneva, June 2011; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=17035>. See also S. Bose-O’Reilly, et al., “Mercury as a serious health hazard for children in gold mining areas,” *Environmental Research* (2008); available from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935108000224>. See also BBC News, “Mercury poisoning disease re-emerges,” [online], February 2, 1999; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/271598.stm>.

cognitive impairment or the level of toxin in children's bodies, so it is unclear to what extent the reported illnesses are attributable to mercury exposure. On the other hand, the health effects stemming from mining with mercury are well established. Moreover, many of the most serious symptoms may not develop until later in life. Other illnesses are not always easily traceable to the work in gold mining. For example, a young gold miner who is ill with malaria or a stomach disease may have acquired these complications in or outside the mining area. On the other hand, malaria acquired in the village is likely indirectly related to the child's proximity to gold mining activities.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Worldwide, an estimated 13 million people are working in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Among them, as many as 1 million children under the age of 18 are working.<sup>71</sup> Their participation in ASM is of concern internationally because of the severe exposure to risks, hazards, and psycho-emotional stress that this type of work entails.

In fact, the issue of child labor in mining has a long tradition within international labor standards and was already a matter of discussion at the first International Labor Conference in 1919, which included a reference to mining in the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 5).<sup>72</sup> Recognizing that mining is an occupation that would normally not be suitable for underage employment, ILO specifically addressed this issue in the 1960s through the adoption of the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123). Many countries worldwide signed this and other conventions aiming to eradicate child labor and WFCL.

Still, children continue to work in small-scale mines throughout Latin-America, Africa, and Asia. This is also the case in Suriname, where research was conducted on the participation of children in small-scale gold mining. Among the various forms of mining that children may be involved in, mining for gold is of particular concern because of the handling of mercury that is used in the gold-winning process. In this conclusion, the following topics will be discussed: the nature and severity of child labor in small-scale gold mining in Suriname, to what extent these activities must be considered as WFCL and/or forced labor, and an evaluation of the pathways into mining.

Work in small-scale gold mining involves all the dangers described by Suriname labor law as listed in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Dangers caused by the nature of the activities**

Danger (Labor Law, S.B. 2010 No. 175)	Presence in small-scale gold mining
Accident dangers: Activities that involve a high risk of experiencing serious bodily harm	Working with hydraulic machines and other "adult" equipment. A percentage of 26.4% of child miners faced injuries during work.
Biological dangers: Activities that contain a risk of exposure to sick animals, insects, poisonous plants, bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi	Because they work in the rainforest and do not wear boots, the children are exposed to snake bites, but not in a larger extent than in their normal living environment. The malaria mosquito breeds particularly well in small-scale gold mining areas.
Chemical dangers	A percentage of 65.3% of children work with mercury.
Ergonomic dangers: Work in places that have not been adapted to the physical conditions of persons who have not reached the age of 18 and are still growing	Children perform physically demanding jobs. They work in awkward and uncomfortable positions and are lifting heavy loads.

<sup>71</sup> SOHO, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Danger (Labor Law, S.B. 2010 No. 175)	Presence in small-scale gold mining
Physical dangers: Activities that may cause exposure to extreme temperatures, noise, vibration, or radiation	Child miners reported exposure to extreme temperatures (64.7 %) and noise (61.7%).
Psychosocial dangers: Activities that can lead to diverse symptoms, such as stress	Child miners reported being shouted at (78.6%), a lack of time for recreation, and the difficulties for them to combine work and school (or homework).

Children working in small-scale gold mining generally do not work underground. Nevertheless, some children were diving under water and many children worked in places where they might be caught underneath collapsing sand walls. Some children were working with hydraulic machines. Most children carried heavy loads, either when manually transporting ore or when helping transport the camp supplies (e.g., 50 kg.-bags of rice).

Because they work in the mining area, all small-scale children gold miners are working in a dangerous environment. Risks of being bitten by a snake or catching malaria are part of life in the forest and may not be much different from risks the children are exposed to in their home communities. However, the mining area does expose children to additional hazards. Virtually all children handle mercury, are working in the burning sun, and are exposed to excessive noise from mining machinery. In addition, the places where child miners work often have instable sand walls that may collapse, and abandoned mining pits with standing water and quicksand that the children may fall into. Furthermore, children are working in an environment where alcohol consumption, carrying weapons, and commercial sex work are commonplace.

The ILO-IPEC contends that almost all work performed by boys and girls in mining areas could be considered a WFCL, while other tasks not directly performed in the mines but related to mining might fall into this category too.<sup>73</sup> In Suriname, the research team finds that it is important to distinguish part-time work from full-time work, as well as the different activities performed in the gold mines. All children are exposed to hazards, but some children are exposed to more risks of being injured and are more likely to be affected in their personal and emotional development than others.

Using ILO-IPEC's classification of labor (Table 7.2) and focusing on the percentage of miners who spend the most time on selected activities in the mining areas, it was found that 9.4 percent of the children were mostly performing work activities that may be characterized as domestic activities, which generally are part of a child's upbringing (e.g., cooking, doing dishes). These children would only occasionally assist with the actual mining work. The most popular job for children was panning, an activity that takes place in a hazardous environment in the burning sun, and during which children handle mercury. Child panners tend to work with other children and close to their home, so they are not as exposed to the adult miners' environment of drinks, guns, and prostitution as those working in the mining pits. Furthermore, the work is not as physically demanding, and the children usually only work a few hours per week. Working *baka daal* can be classified in the same order, although the work is more difficult.

<sup>73</sup> SOHO, 2009.

Work in the mining pit to remove stones and cut tree roots (19.3 percent) or work with hydraulic hoses (3.1 percent) poses even more risks than the above mentioned mining jobs (panning and working *baka-daal*). The children performing this type of work are doing physically demanding work. They work long hours in the burning sun, standing in dirty water, with little time for rest. They also often work full-time: 12 hours a day, for 6 days a week. Working full-time also means that children spend their days and nights in an adult male environment. Even if these activities are performed as a holiday job and/or with family members, the particular risks involved in the work, the physical strength required for the work, and the general conditions in the mining camps are similarly demanding to those who work full time.

**Table 7.2: Classification of mining jobs**

Work	Pit work (part-time/full-time)	Working <i>baka daal</i>	Panning (part-time)
Conditions	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Character	Heavy	Less heavy	Least heavy
Nature	Dangerous or high-risk activities	Dangerous or high-risk activities	Dangerous or high-risk activities

Finally, the research team examined why children enter the small-scale gold mining sector, with a consideration of the environment where the children are coming from and the alternative options available to them.

- This study suggests that poor access to educational opportunities is a main contributor to child labor in gold mining in the Suriname interior. The failing education system in the interior is one of the reasons why children look for an alternative in the mining sector. In the interior there are no options for children with learning disabilities and children who are not capable of following secondary (LBGO/MULO) education.
- Most of the families in the interior live in poverty. They only earn a small amount of family allowance, about SRD 30 monthly.
- In addition to family poverty, other family circumstances, such as size of the family, may play a stressful role in the child's family economy as well. Children want to buy items for themselves.
- Most of the children in the interior have little options for earning their pocket money. If there are options, these jobs pay much less than the work in the gold mines. Three-fourths of child workers said they used the money they earned to buy items for themselves. They often mentioned clothing, sneakers, a phone, calling cards, and food or snacks.
- Children see their fathers, brothers, or uncles as role models; if their relatives visit the mines, the children are more than willing to join them.
- The parents' perceptions concerning the importance of education and the impact of working in the mines also play a part in the possibility of mining.

While this study provides information about child labor in gold mining, future research could expand on the findings of this report by exploring a wider variety of mining sites and by including children who work in service sectors in gold mining areas.

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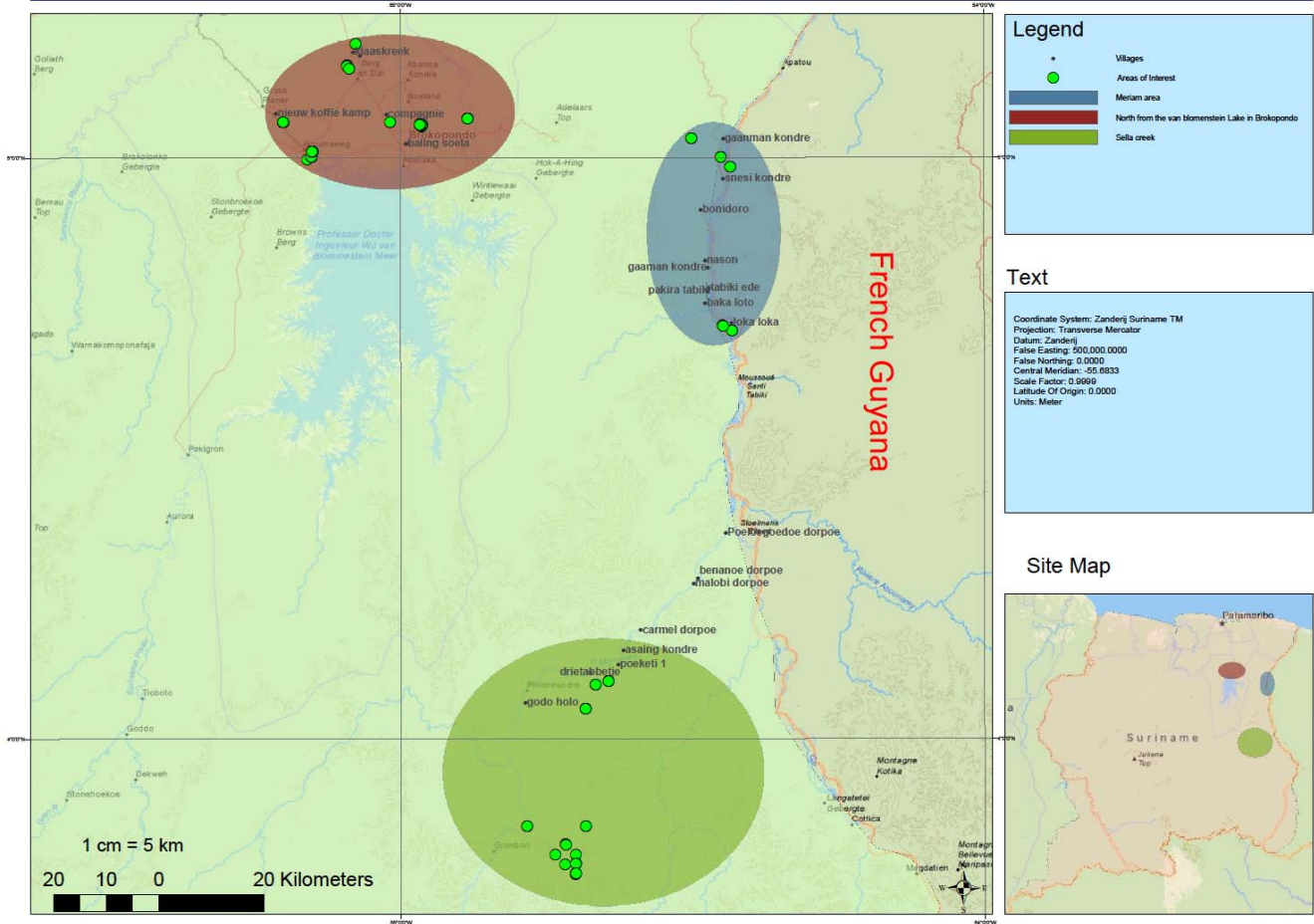
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UNDP	22/08/2011	<a href="http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SUR.html">http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SUR.html</a>
ILO-IPEC	20/08/2011	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&amp;id=4146">http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&amp;id=4146</a>

# ANNEX 1. MAPS

## Child labor in the Gold Mining sector in suriname



## ANNEX 2. FINAL RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

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### Formal expert interview

#### Formal Expert Interview Top Sheet

Interviewer:	Date (mm/dd/yy)  _ _ / _ _ / _ _	
Place of interview District: _____ Town/village: _____		
Unique ID Number for the Key Informant:  _ _ _  <i>[To be provided by supervisor. Put Unique ID in this box and on the indicated line at top of Page 3, the start of the research questions.]</i>		
Name:	Age:  _	Sex: Male/Female
Time interview started:  _ _ : _ _  (Use 24 hr. clock)		
Time interview ended:  _ _ : _ _  (Use 24 hr. clock)		
Profession:		
Position:		
Employer/Affiliated Institution/Organization:		
Contact information:		

**Instructions:** After interview is complete, remove top sheet. Place in envelope provided for top sheets only. Place interview form in separate envelope provided for interview forms only.

#### NOTE TO INTERVIEWER

- Please ask all questions in this interview guide to each person you interview. If the person doesn't have the knowledge or cannot answer the questions, you should note "N/A" or "No answer" as a response underneath each question. This way, we will be able to tell that the questions are at least asked.
- During the interviews, ask the respondents if they could provide copies of relevant materials and documents related to child labor/forced child labor in the gold mining industry in Suriname or research papers on this topic if they can recommend the sources/where you can find such documents.

- If the interviewer wishes to insert his/her own opinions/comments regarding certain responses from the respondents, please put the comment under each response with a different font color and note that it is the interviewer's note.

**Introduction Including Informed Consent Statement:**

Read the following statements to the respondent and answer any questions the individual may have. Do not begin the interview until all questions have been addressed and the individual has agreed to participate in the study.

- My name is \_\_\_\_\_ I am interviewing people about the production activities in the gold mining sector and children’s works in the industry. Employing mixed-methods research techniques, our project aims to collect exploratory data on the causes and consequences of child labor in gold mining industry in Suriname. We will collect information on children ages 5–17 working in the gold mining sector. To get a comprehensive picture, we would like to speak with knowledge informants like you. The findings from this research are meant to contribute to promoting awareness of the issues and inform future programs aiming to ameliorate the issues of child labor in the gold mining sector.
- The primary goal of research is to collect data on the characteristics, nature, and incidence of child work in the gold mining sector in Suriname. To this end, you will be asked to share your knowledge and opinions of your personal involvement and/or your organization’s work on child labor issues in Suriname, your knowledge of children’s involvement in the gold mining sector. The information will be incorporated into the final analytical report.
- Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to talk with me, you can choose to not answer some questions or end the interview at any time.
- Your answers to the questions will be kept private and no one will know what you said. Your name will not be used in any reports.
- The interview will take about 30–45 minutes.
- I will answer any questions that you have about the study before we begin. Do you have any questions about the study?
- May we start the interview?

**Interviewer Certification of Consent:**

My signature affirms that I have read the verbal informed assent statement to the respondent. I have answered any questions asked about the study, and the respondent has agreed to be interviewed.

\_\_\_ Respondent agreed to be interviewed

\_\_\_ Respondent did not agree to be interviewed

Print Interviewer’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Informant Interview Unique ID Number:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Research Questions

[FOR EACH ITEM, ASK THE GENERAL QUESTION FIRST, AND THEN PROBE THE SUB-ITEMS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED SPONTANEOUSLY.]

<b>1. What is your personal and/or professional involvement on the issues of child labor in general, and children working in gold mining industry in Suriname in particular?</b>	
<b>2. What is your organization's view or mission regarding child labor, forced child labor, and moving/trafficking of children in general, and children working in gold mining industry in particular?</b>	
<b>3. What do you think is the general population's perception and attitude towards child workers in general and children working in the gold mining sector in particular?</b>	
<b>4. What are the regulations and policies of Suriname regarding child labor?</b>	
4.1 What are the laws/policies/programs in Suriname to combat child labor and forced child labor?	
4.2 What government agencies are responsible for implementing the laws and programs?	
4.3 What non-governmental organizations and programs are in existence in what regions to assist child laborers and/or former child labor victims in the gold mining industry?	
<b>5. What is the nature of the work done by children in gold mining industry?</b>	
5.1 To your knowledge, are there children or youngsters (<18) working in gold mining sector? How many children/youngsters are engaged in the gold mining industry in Suriname? [For both occasional workers and full-timers, what is the proportion of children below 18 over total workforce in the gold mining industry?]	
5.2 For children (or youngsters) working in gold mining sector, what activities do they do? Do they (child workers) perform different tasks/works than adult workers? If yes, how are they different?	
5.3 How about the degree of physical requirements? Do they (child workers/youngsters) usually have to carry out tasks that are physically demanding?	
5.4 To your knowledge, when do youngsters or children who work part-time usually work?	
5.5 For children/youngsters working full-time, how many hours a day do they work and how many days a week?	

<p>5.6 Do children or youngsters migrate from other parts of the country or from other countries to work in gold mining?</p> <p>5.7 Who employs those child workers or youngsters in gold mining sector?</p>	
<p><b>6. What are the sources of official statistics on child labor or forced labor in Suriname? In addition to possibly National Statistics Office estimates, are there administrative data?</b></p>	
<p><b>7. What are the characteristics of the children engaged in the gold mining industry in Suriname?</b></p>	
<p>7.1 Regarding children working in gold mining sector, what are their usual ages? At what age do these children start working?</p> <p>7.2 Are there more girls or boys? Is there any difference between the work done by girls and boys?</p> <p>7.3 Do you know if children who work in gold mining go to school?</p> <p>7.4 If they go to school, do they come to work before or after school in the morning or afternoon/evening and if more of them come to work during school breaks?</p> <p>7.5 What kinds of place do child workers /youngster in gold mining sector live? <b>[Probe: In a temporary housing/dorm with other children?]</b> If children live in a temporary facility, do children live with adult workers or they are separate from adult workers?</p> <p>7.6 Do employers provide housing or do children arrange for themselves? If employers provide housing, do they deduct cost from wages?</p> <p>7.7 Are most child workers from the area? How many do you estimate are coming from other regions?</p> <p>7.8 If the children are originally from somewhere else and now live here, did they come with their families or with others? (Specify.)</p>	
<p><b>8. What are the environments of children’s worksites in gold mining sector?</b></p>	
<p>8.1 Are child workers exposed to any kind of danger/hazard? What are the dangers/hazards? <b>[Probe if necessary: Excessive noise, heavy lifting of machinery, abuse from coworkers/employers, exposure to mercury, exposure to drugs/alcohol, etc.]</b></p> <p>8.2 Where are the worksites that child workers perform their work?</p>	

<p><b>9. To what extent are children forced to work in gold mining or moved/trafficked from within the country or from other countries into forced child labor situation in gold mining industry?</b></p>	
<p>9.1 Do you know if children are forced or moved/trafficked to work in the gold mining industry? <b>[Interviewer: Explain (1) forced labor: work under the menace of any penalty for which the child does not offer him or herself voluntarily; (2) moving/trafficking in person: the transport of persons, by means of coercion, deception, or consent for the purpose of exploitation. In the case of children, coercion is not required to be considered trafficking.]</b></p> <p>9.2 If children are being moved/trafficked to work in the gold mining industry, what are the means by which children are moved/trafficked? How are they being trafficked?</p> <p>9.3 From where are children moved/trafficked?</p> <p>9.4 Could you give an example of how children get into forced labor in gold mining or being moved/trafficked to work in gold mining? (For example, are they working to paying off personal/family debt, being deceived into works in gold mining, etc.?)</p>	
<p><b>10. What factors may affect timing/seasons and locations where child labor occurs?</b></p>	
<p>10.1 Is the work in gold mining seasonal, temporary or long term? Why is it?</p> <p>10.2 Do child migrants periodically come to work and return to their place of origin? Under what circumstances do children leave mining work?</p> <p>10.3 Do you know where the children come from?</p> <p>10.4 What are the factors that may affect timing/seasons and locations where child labor occur?</p> <p>10.5 How do children learn of the work?</p>	
<p><b>11. What do you think are the factors that influence children to work in the gold mining industry?</b></p>	
<p>11.1 Why do children work in the gold mining industry? <b>[Probe the following when applicable:]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the children lack educational opportunities?</li> <li>• Due to children's family circumstances?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Poverty, recent income shocks</li> <li>b. Paying off debt</li> <li>c. Family trauma <b>[Interviewer: Ask for examples.]</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



<p>f. Are they in this situation from family intent? Specifically, do the children's families willingly let the children work in the gold mining sector?</p> <p>g. Economic disruption? <b>[Interviewer: Explain that an economic disruption is a change of the economic conditions in the area such as the increase in prices of goods.]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Other (Comment):</li></ul> <p>11.2 Are there any benefits for employers to use children in the gold mining industry?</p>	
<p><b>12. What are the other potential government and non-governmental organizations we could approach to discuss issues related to working children, particularly in the gold mining sector?</b></p>	
<p><b>13. Is there anything else you would like to add?</b></p>	

Thank you very much for your time and your valuable contribution.

## Informal Expert Interview

### Informal Expert Interview Top Sheet

Interviewer:		Date (mm/dd/yy)    _/ /     / _	
Place of interview District: _____ Town/Village: _____			
Unique ID Number for the Key Informant:  _ _ _ _  <i>[To be provided by supervisor. Put Unique ID in this box and on the indicated line at top of Page 3, the start of the research questions.]</i>			
Name:		Age:  _ _	Sex: Male/Female
Time interview started:  _ _ : _ _  (Use 24 hr. clock)			
Time interview ended:  _ _ : _ _  (Use 24 hr. clock)			
Profession:			
Position (if applicable):			
Employer:			
Contact information:			

**Instructions:** After interview is complete remove top sheet. Place in envelope provided for top sheets only. Place interview form in separate envelope provided for interview forms only.

#### Note to Interviewer

- Please ask all questions in this interview guide to each person you interview. If the person doesn't have the knowledge or cannot answer the questions, you should note "N/A" or "No answer" as a response underneath each question. This way, we will be able to tell that the questions are at least asked.
- If the interviewer wishes to insert his/her own opinions/comments regarding certain responses from the respondents, please put the comment under each response with a different font color:

## **Introduction Including Informed Consent Statement**

Read the following statements to the respondent and answer any questions the individual may have. Do not begin the interview until all questions have been addressed and the individual has agreed to participate in the study.

- Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ I am talking with people about the gold mining sector production activities and children’s involvement in the industry. The information will be incorporated into an analytical report that examines the causes and consequences of child labor in Suriname’s gold mining sector.
- Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to talk with me, you can choose to not answer some questions or end the interview at any time.
- Your answers to the questions will be kept private and no one will know what you said. Your name will not be used in any reports.
- The interview will take about 30–45 minutes.
- I will answer any questions that you have about the study before we begin. Do you have any questions about the study?
- May we start the interview?

### **Interviewer Certification of Consent:**

My signature affirms that I have read the verbal informed assent statement to the respondent. I have answered any questions asked about the study, and the respondent has agreed to be interviewed.

\_\_\_ Respondent agreed to be interviewed.

\_\_\_ Respondent did not agree to be interviewed.

Print Interviewer’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Informant Interview Unique ID Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Research Questions

[FOR EACH ITEM, ASK THE GENERAL QUESTION FIRST, AND THEN PROBE THE SUB-ITEMS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED SPONTANEOUSLY.]

<b>14. Please describe how the gold mining sector works?</b>	
14.1 What is your work/role in the gold mining community	
<b>15. What is the nature of the work done by children in the gold mining industry?</b>	
<p>15.1 Aside from adult workers, are there children or youngsters (below 18) working in the gold mining sector? If so, what is the proportion of child workers in the gold mining worksites that you are most familiar with? (both occasional workers and full-timers)</p> <p>15.2 In the gold mining sector, what activities do these children or youngsters do? How are they distributed by activities (cooking, collecting stones, washing gold with <i>batea</i>, etc.)?</p> <p>15.3 Do children or youngsters perform different tasks from the adults? If yes, how do they differ?</p> <p>15.4 When do youngsters who work part-time usually work?</p> <p>15.5 How many hours a day do full-time child workers work and how many days a week?</p> <p><b>15.6 Do children working in gold mining sector have to carry out physically demanding tasks? [Probe: Such as carrying heavy loads, moving or using heavy machinery or tools, etc.]</b></p> <p>15.7 Who employs those child workers? <b>[Probe: Do children work for themselves or mining companies, or for owners of mining machines?]</b></p>	
<b>16. I would like to talk to you more about the working conditions of gold mining workers who are under 18.</b>	
<p>16.1 Are young workers exposed to any kind of danger/hazard? What type of dangers and risks do such children face in the gold mining industry? <b>[Probe if necessary: Excessive noise, heavy lifting, abuse from coworkers/employers, exposure to mercury, exposure to drugs/alcohol, violence, snakes, etc.]</b></p> <p>16.2 Do you know if there are children or youngsters coming from other communities to work in the mining site/mining community where you work?</p> <p>16.3 Do they come here alone or with their immediate/close family?</p> <p>16.4 Are they [child workers] free to leave their jobs if they want to?</p> <p>16.5 If not, why not? <b>[Interviewer: Probe if they would be punished by either the employers or the family, and in what way; if employers hold the payment, children's identification documents, children need to work to pay off debt, etc.]</b></p>	

<b>17. What are the characteristics of child workers in gold mining sector?</b>	
<p>17.1 How old are young (&lt;18) mine workers? At what age do these children start working?</p> <p>17.2 Are there both girls and boys (&lt;18) working in the mining areas? Do boys and girls conduct different types of gold mining activities?</p> <p>17.3 Do you know if the children who work in the gold mining industry go to school?</p> <p>17.4 If they go to school, when do they come to work?  <b>[Probe: Do they come to work before or after school in the morning or afternoon/evening and if more of them come to work during school breaks?]</b></p> <p>17.5 Do young (&lt;18) mine workers live with their families and commute to work, or do they come from a distance?</p> <p>17.6 If the youngsters are from somewhere else, what kind of place do they live in (e.g., in a mining camp)? Does the employer provide the housing or does the child arrange it for themselves?</p>	
<b>18. What do you think are the factors that motivate children or youngsters to work in the gold mining sector?</b>	
<p>18.1 Why do children work in the gold mining sector?  <b>[Interviewer: Probe the following when applicable:]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the children lack educational opportunities?</li> <li>• Due to children's family circumstances?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Poverty, recent income shocks</li> <li>b. Paying off debt</li> <li>c. Family trauma <b>[Ask for examples]</b></li> <li>f. Are they in this situation from family intent? Specifically, do the children's families willingly let the children work in the gold mining sector?</li> <li>g. Economic disruption <b>[Interviewer: Explain that an economic disruption is a change of the economic conditions in the area such as the increase in prices of goods.]</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other (Comment):</li> </ul> <p>18.2 Are there any benefits for employers to use children in the gold mining industry?</p>	
<b>19. What do people in your village/community think about children working in the gold mining sector? [Probe: Do adults, including the families and employees of child laborers, consider children's work to be hazardous child labor or a beneficial development activity?]</b>	
<b>20. Is there anything else you would like to add?</b>	

Thank you very much for your time and your valuable contribution.

## Child interview

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

[Respondents: All 5–17 years old]

<b>A1.</b>	Child ID Number	_ _ _		
<b>A2.</b>	District	_____		
<b>A4.</b>	Village/Mine site	_____		
<b>A5.</b>	Worksite ID	_ _ _		
<b>A6.1</b>	Latitude	N  _ _  .  _ _ _ _ _		
<b>A6.2</b>	Longitude	E  _ _  .  _ _ _ _ _		
<b>A7.</b>	Location of interview	1. Child's home 2. Other (specify) _____		
<b>A8.</b>	Sex of Interviewer	1. Male      2. Female		
<b>A9a.</b>	Interviewer's Initials	_____		
<b>A9b.</b>	Interviewer Code	_ _		
<b>A10.</b>	Date of Interview	<b>Day</b>  _ _	<b>Month</b>  _ _	<b>Year</b>  _ _ _ _
<b>A11.</b>	Interview Start Time	_ _  :  _ _  (Record time using 24-hour clock (e.g., 14:00, not 2:00 pm))		
<b>A12.</b>	Interview End Time	_ _  :  _ _  (Record time using 24-hour clock (e.g., 14:00, not 2:00 pm))		

**Introduction Including Informed Consent Statement (for children)**

Child's ID No: |\_|\_|\_|

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions to Interviewer:** This form can be used to obtain parental consent for the child to be interviewed. In the case when parents/guardians are not available for granting the consent, the interviewer is required to seek consent from adults responsible for the child, such as work supervisors. Read the following statements to the parent/guardian/responsible adult of the selected child and answer any questions the individual may have. Do not begin the interview(s) until all questions have been addressed, the parent/guardian/responsible adult has agreed to let the child/children participate in the study, and the child has agreed to be interviewed.

- Now I would like to ask some questions of [child's name].
- Your child/children does/do not have to answer the questions and he/she can stop at any time.
- Your child's answers will be kept private and no one else will know his/her answers.
- Your child's name will not be used in any reports.
- The interview with your child will take about 30 minutes.
- Do you have any questions of me before I talk with your child/children?
- May I talk with your child/children?

**Interviewer Certification of Parental Consent:**

My signature affirms that I have read the verbal informed parental consent statement to the parent/guardian, and I have answered any questions asked about the study.

\_\_\_ Parent/guardian/responsible adult gave consent for participation of selected child.

\_\_\_ Parent/guardian/responsible adult did not give consent for participation of selected child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Interviewer's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer's Signature

**Verbal Informed Consent Statement: Child Questionnaire Assent**

Child's ID No: |\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions to Interviewer:** This form is to be used to obtain assent from a respondent over the age of 12 and younger than 18 years. Read the following statements to the selected respondent and answer any questions the respondent may have. Do not begin the interview until all questions have been addressed and the respondent has agreed to participate in the study. Do not interview the respondent if he/she does not give assent even if the parent has given consent.

- Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am talking with children who work in communities like this one. The information will be used in a study about children in Suriname who work.
- Your mother/father/guardian/supervisor (or other responsible adult) has given me permission to talk with you.
- I would like to ask you some questions about the work you do.
- You do not have to answer the questions and you can stop at any time.
- Your answers to the questions will be kept private and no one else will know what you said.
- Your name will not be used in any reports.
- It will take about 30 minutes to talk with me.
- Do you have any questions about the study?
- May we begin?

**Interviewer Certification of Consent:**

My signature affirms that I have read the verbal informed assent statement to the child respondent, and I have answered any questions asked about the study, and the respondent has agreed to be interviewed.

\_\_\_ Respondent agreed to be interviewed.

\_\_\_ Respondent did not agree to be interviewed.

Print Interviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_





**Interview Results:**

Interview Completed	1
Interview incomplete/rejected	2
Child disabled/sick/cannot speak	3
Others (specify _____)	96

**SECTION B: CHILD IDENTIFICATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

**[Respondents: Age 5–17 Years]**

B1. How old are you? **(Age in Completed Years)**

1. |\_\_|\_\_| **[If aged between 5 and 17, go to B3. If not, terminate the interview.]**
2. Don't know

B2. (If age is not known) We can try to figure out your age together. Do you think that you might be around...? **[Read responses]**

1. 1–4 years **[Terminate the interview]**
2. 5–8 years
3. 9–13 years
4. 14–15 years
5. 16–17 years
6. 18 or older **[Terminate the interview]**

B3. Gender of the Respondent **[Circle One]**

1. Male
2. Female

**SECTION C: EDUCATION**

C1. Have you ever attended school?

1. Yes
2. No **[Skip to C10]**
98. DK **[Skip to C10]**
99. Refused **[Skip to C10]**

C2. What is the highest grade and level that you have completed?

0	Nursery/kindergarten	
1	Primary 1	Primary (GLO)
2	Primary 2	
3	Primary 3	
4	Primary 4	
5	Primary 5	
6	Primary 6	
7	Senior VOJ 1	Secondary lower level LBGO/MULO, ETO, ENO
8	Senior VOJ 2	
9	Senior VOJ 3	
10	Senior VOJ 4	
11	Senior VOS 1	Secondary higher-level (VOS) , i.e., NATIN, LTS, IMEAO, VWO
12	VOS 2	
11	VOS 3	
12	VOS 4	
13	Other	
98	Don't Know	
99	Refused	

C3. Are you attending school this school year?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No                   **[Skip to C10]**
- 98. DK                   **[Skip to C10]**
- 99. Refused           **[Skip to C10]**

C4. Last week, did you go to school every day school was open?

- 1. Yes                   **[Skip to C7]**
- 2. No                   **[Skip to C5]**
- 98. DK                   **[Skip to C5]**
- 99. Refused           **[Skip to C5]**

C5. How many days did you not go to school on the last week the school was in session? \_\_\_\_ days

C6. Why did you miss school on these days?

C7. Does your work in gold mining related activities interfere with your studies?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No                   **[Skip to D1]**
- 3. DK                   **[Skip to D1]**
- 99. Refused           **[Skip to D1]**

C8. **[If YES to C7]** How does your work in gold mining affect your studies?

C9. How often do you miss school for work? **[Skip to D1]**

- 1. Once or twice a week
- 2. Once or twice per month
- 3. Once or twice a year
- 4. Never or almost never
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Refused

C10. What is the reason that you don't go to school?

**SECTION D: GOLD MINING RELATED WORK**

D1. Have you engaged in any mining related activities in the past 12 months?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. DK
- 99. Refused

D2. What gold mining-related activities have you engaged in the past 12 months?

**[READ OPTIONS. Circle all that apply.]**

a. Panning/washing <i>batea</i>	1. Yes	2. No
b. Building camp	1. Yes	2. No
c. Cooking	1. Yes	2. No
d. Working in the pit (collecting stones)	1. Yes	2. No
e. Work with small hydraulic machine (2"–3" pump)	1. Yes	2. No
f. Working with own small box in " <i>baka santi</i> " (tailings)	1. Yes	2. No

g. Working in the pit with hydraulic hose	1. Yes	2. No
h. Others (Specify)_____	1. Yes	2. No

D3. On which of these activities do you spend the most time?\_\_\_\_\_ **[Insert letter from D2]**

D4. Do you work as full-time laborer or occasional gold miner?

1. Full-time, in a mining team (professional)
2. Occasionally, when there is an opportunity or need

D5. Which days did you work in the last 7 days? Did you work last\_\_\_\_\_?

**[Multiple Responses. Circle all that apply.]**

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Monday    | 4. Thursday |
| 2. Tuesday   | 5. Friday   |
| 3. Wednesday | 6. Saturday |
| 7. Sunday    | 98. DK      |
| 97. None     | 99. Refused |

D6. Last day you worked, what time did you start working and what time did you stop working?

|\_|\_| : |\_|\_|-|\_|\_| : |\_|\_|

D7. Last day you worked, what time did you start working at night?

|\_|\_| : |\_|\_|

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 97. Did not work at night | <b>[Skip to D10]</b> |
| 98. Don't know            | <b>[Skip to D9]</b>  |
| 99. Refused               | <b>[Skip to D9]</b>  |

D8. What time did you stop working at night?

|\_|\_| : |\_|\_| **[Skip to D10]**

98. Don't know
99. Refused

D9. Did you work all, some, or just a little of the night?

1. All
2. Some
3. Just a little
4. DK
5. Refused

D10. **[For children who go to school]** On days you go to school, how many hours do you normally work?

|\_|\_| : |\_|\_|

97. Not going to school
98. Don't know
99. Refused

D11. On days you do not go to school **[weekends or holidays for children who attend school, or regular weekdays for children who do not]**, how many hours do you normally work?

|\_|\_| : |\_|\_|

98. Don't know
99. Refused

D12. Did you work in mining every month in the last 12 months?

1. Yes **[Skip to D14]**
2. No
98. Don't know **[Skip to D14]**
99. Refused **[Skip to D14]**

D13. Which months did you work in mining in the last 12 months?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused
1. July 2010	1	2	98	99
2. August 2010	1	2	98	99
3. September 2010	1	2	98	99
4. October 2010	1	2	98	99
5. November 2010	1	2	98	99
6. December 2010	1	2	98	99
7. January 2011	1	2	98	99
8. February 2011	1	2	98	99
9. March 2011	1	2	98	99
10. April 2011	1	2	98	99
11. May 2011	1	2	98	99
12. June 2011	1	2	98	99

D14. (In the last month you worked), how many days did you work in that month?

98. Don't Know

99. Refused

D15. In the last week you worked, how many hours did you work?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

98. Don't know

99. Refused



**SECTION E: WORK CONDITIONS, HEALTH, AND HAZARDS**

E1. Do you use \_\_\_\_\_ in your gold mining work?

1. *Spoiti-soigi*
2. Crusher
3. Machete (*houwer*)
4. Gun
5. Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

E2. Do you consider your work dangerous? If so, why?

--

E3. Does your work often involve exposure to the following? **[Read out]**

	Yes	No
1. Loud noise	1	2
2. Extreme temperatures or humidity	1	2
3. Work underwater	1	2
4. Stand for long hours in dirty water	1	2
5. Carrying heavy loads	1	2
6. Slip, trip, or falling hazards	1	2
7. Dangerous tools (knives, etc.)	1	2
8. Dust	1	2
9. Fumes and smells that are irritating	1	2
10. Chemicals s.a. mercury or substances that cause rash, burns/skin problems	1	2
11. Being around weapons (guns)	1	2

	Yes	No
12. Being assault or robbed	1	2
13. Falling rocks, landslide	1	2
14. Other (Specify)_____	1	2

E4. We'd like to hear about any injuries you've had while working. Have you ever been hurt? What happened? **[Probe: Body part, type of injury (cut, broken bone, etc.), activity when injured.]**  
Did you have to stop working? Did you get treated?

E5. Have you ever experienced any illnesses due to work?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No                   **[Skip to E10]**
- Don't know           **[Skip to E10]**
- Refused               **[Skip to E10]**

E6. Which of the following illnesses did you suffer from?

- 1. Skin diseases (skin allergy, eczema, etc.)
- 2. Severe respiratory diseases (asthma, tuberculosis, pneumonia, etc.)
- 3. Body aches/pains (head, neck, back, wrist, joints, etc.)
- 4. Minor respiratory disease (cold/flu, etc.)
- 5. Stomach illness (vomiting, diarrhea, etc.)
- 6. Eye strain/eyesight impairment
- 7. Hearing impairment
- 8. Foot fungi or infections
- 9. Leishmaniasis
- 10. Malaria

- 11. Typhoid fever
- 12. Anemia
- 13. Cholera
- 14. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Refused

E7. How long were your normal activities restricted as a result of this illness? (Spontaneous)

- 1. No restriction
- 2. Less than 1 day
- 3. Less than 7 days
- 4. Less than 14 days
- 5. Less than 1 month
- 6. 1 month or more
- 7. Permanently disabled
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Refused

E8. (**Ask only about the last work-related illness**) Were you treated for this illness?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No                   **[Skip to E10]**
- 98. Don't know       **[Skip to E10]**
- 99. Refused           **[Skip to E10]**

E9. What type of treatment did you receive? **[Read options. Multiple responses]**

- 1. Health clinic
- 2. Traditional healer
- 3. Pharmacist
- 4. Private doctor's office

5. Public hospital
6. Self-medication
7. Medicinal herbs
8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

E10. Have you been punished or reprimanded at work?

1. Yes
2. No

E11. If yes, please tell me how you were punished or reprimanded? [**Probe: Such as being insulted, shouted at, beaten, or other.**]

**SECTION F: EARNINGS**

F1. What do you get exchange for your work in gold mining? [**Don't read out. Multiple responses.**]

1. Cash (SRD/USD)
2. Gold
3. New skill (apprenticeship)
4. Education
5. Shelter
6. Food
7. Clothing
8. Medical support
9. Cigarettes/alcohol/etc.
10. Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

96. Nothing [Skip to F4]

98. Don't Know [Skip to F4]

99. Refused [Skip to F4]

F2. How is your pay determined?

**[Do not read response categories. Interviewers should record the answer in the space below and circle appropriate response categories. Circle all that apply.]**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ % of team earnings
- 2. Everything I find is mine
- 3. Share equally with my work friends/colleagues
- 4. Weekly
- 5. Monthly
- 6. Upon completion of a task
- 96. Other: (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 99. Refused

F3. What was the amount of your earnings the last time you worked in gold mining related activities?

Amount \_\_\_\_\_ gr. Gold in \_\_\_\_\_ working days

F4. Is someone else paid on your behalf?

- 1. Yes: Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Refused

F5. Do you ever have problems with your payment, such as delays in payment, withholding of payment, or not being paid the amount promised? If yes, please describe. How often does this happen?

**SECTION G: FAMILY BACKGROUND AND LIVING CONDITIONS**

G1. Whom do you live with? **[Circle all that apply.]**

- 1. Mother **[Skip to H1]**
- 2. Father **[Skip to H1]**
- 3. Husband/Wife **[Skip to H1]**
- 4. Brother(s)/ Sister(s)
- 5. Uncle(s)/Aunt(s)
- 6. Grandparent (s)
- 7. Other relatives
- 8. With friends
- 9. Alone
- 10. Dependent children
- 96. Other: (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- 99. Refused

G2. How often do you visit your parents/home?

- 1. Never
- 2. Every month
- 3. Every 6 months
- 4. Every year
- 96. Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- 99. Refused

**SECTION H: INTRODUCTION TO WORK**

H1. At what age did you start to work in mining? \_\_\_\_\_ years

H2. Why do you work in gold mining?

**[Do not read responses. Interviewers should record the response in the space below and circle the appropriate response categories. Multiple Responses. Circle all that apply.]**

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. To help family income  | 2. To pay outstanding family debt |
| 3. To pay outstanding individual debt                           | 9. Flexibility/Freedom            |
| 4. To help in household enterprise                              | 10. You are your own boss         |
| 5. To learn skills  | 11. Adventure/Excitement          |
| 6. Cannot afford school fees                                    | 12. Status/being a 'real' man     |
| 7. To pay personal expenses, food, clothing, various amusements | 96. Other: (Specify) _____        |
| 8. Pays better than other jobs                                  | 98. Don't Know                    |
|   | 99. Refused                       |

H3. Are you working on your own or for an employer?

1. On my own      **[Skip to I1]**
2. For an employer

H4. How did you get your job? Are the work and the payment what you expected? **[Probe: Hired by a recruiter? Coercion? False promises?]**

H5. Would you be able to leave your job if you wanted to?

1. Yes              **[Skip to I1]**
2. No
99. Refused      **[Skip to I1]**

H6. **[If NO in H5]** Why can't you leave your job? **[Do not read responses; circle all that applies.]**

1. I would get a bad name
2. Because my employer owes me delayed wages/I would not be paid for work done
3. Family would lose some privileges
4. Other family members would lose their jobs
5. This employer would tell other employers in the area not to hire me
6. This employer would tell other employers in the area not to hire my relatives
7. Physical violence on me or on other family members
8. My parents couldn't get loans from employer anymore
9. I need the income from this job
10. Other
98. DK
99. Refused



H7. Does your employer do anything to keep you from stopping working for him?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No [Skip to I1]
- 98. Don't know [Skip to I1]
- 99. Refused [Skip to I1]

H8. What does your employer do to keep you from stopping working? **[Do not read responses; circle all that applies.]**

- 1. Locked in living place
- 2. Under constant surveillance
- 3. By violence and threat of violence
- 4. Working place is totally isolated
- 5. ID confiscated
- 6. Not getting paid
- 7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 98. Don't know
- 99. No response

**SECTION I: MOBILITY/ MIGRATION**

11. Were you raised in this area or elsewhere?

- 1. Here **[Got to J1]**
- 2. Elsewhere
- 98. Don't know **[Go to J1]**
- 99. Refused **[Go to J1]**

12. You mentioned that you were not raised here. Please tell me where you lived prior to coming here?

**(If from another country, specify country only. If from within this country, specify details.)**

Country (if not Surinam) \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Resort \_\_\_\_\_

Don't Know 98

Refused 99

13. When did you come here?

Month |\_\_|\_\_|

Year |\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|

14. When you moved here, did a parent, guardian or spouse move with you?

- 1. Yes **[Go to K1]**
- 2. No

15. What was the main reason you came to this village, town, or locality? **[DO NOT READ RESPONSES. Interviewers should circle those applicable.]**

1. Job transfer or found a job
2. Looking for job
3. To be closer to school
4. Marriage or divorce
5. Moved with family
96. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
98. Don't Know
99. Refused

I6. In exchange for your move here, did anyone receive any money or pay a debt? If yes, who?

**Section K. Interviewer Note**

K1. Was there anyone else present during this interview

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to K3]**

K2. If yes, who was present?

1. Parents
2. Other adult family members
3. Siblings
4. Others adults from outside the family
5. Other non-family children

K3. Did anyone coach the child's responses during the interview?

1. Yes
2. No

K4. Were there any physical signs of verbal or physical abuse to the child?

1. Yes

2. No

K5. Was the child reprimanded or abused due to participation in this interview?

1. Yes

2. No

K6. Comments:

## Worksite observation sheet

<b>Name of the observer:</b>	_____		
<b>Date of observation:</b>	Day  _ _	<b>Month</b>  _ _	<b>Year</b>  _ _ _ _
<b>Gold mining site ID number</b>	_____		
<b>Location of the mine site</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Mine site</b>	<b>(Nearest) village</b>
<b>Name of the mine site</b>	_____		
<b>Type of observation site</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. &lt; 10 mining camps in the mine site</li> <li>2. 10–30 mining camps in the site</li> <li>3. 30–50 mining camps in the site</li> <li>4. &gt; 50 camps in the site</li> </ol>		
<b>Degree of mechanization</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No backhoe excavators or other earth moving equipment (not including broken machines)</li> <li>2. 1–3 backhoe excavators</li> <li>3. 4–10 backhoe excavators</li> <li>4. &gt;10 backhoe excavators</li> </ol>		
<b>Number of stores in the mining area</b>	_____		
<b>Number of bars and/or brothels in the mining area</b>	_____		
<b>Access routes to the site. [Circle all that apply.]</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Road/car</li> <li>2. River/boat</li> <li>3. Plane/airstrip</li> </ol>		
<b>What are the coordinates of the main entrance to the worksite? (GPS reading)</b>	Latitude	<b>N</b>	_ _  .  _ _ _ _ _
	Longitude	<b>E</b>	_ _ _  .  _ _ _ _

**A. Working Activities**

<b>A1.</b>	How many mine workers are visible?	_ _ _
<b>A2.</b>	How many young (<18) mine workers are visible? <sup>1</sup>	_ _ _
<b>A3.</b>	How many child workers are apparently injured?	
<b>A4.</b>	If yes, Specify the nature of the injuries (such as bandages, insect bites, swollen limbs, etc.)	

<b>A6.</b>	<b>A6a.</b> Are workers exposed to any of the following hazards?	<b>A6b.</b> Are there safety measures? (Y/N)		<b>A6c.</b> (If YES to A6b.) Specify safety measure:
	a. Dust/dirt	1. Yes	2. No	
	b. Sharp objects	1. Yes	2. No	
	c. Toxic chemicals (cleaning agents, mercury)	1. Yes	2. No	
	d. Liquids (gasoline, etc.)	1. Yes	2. No	
	e. Smoke, fumes, etc.	1. Yes	2. No	
	f. Loud noises	1. Yes	2. No	
	g. Extreme temperature exposure (cold, ice, sun, heat, fire, etc.)	1. Yes	2. No	
	h. Machinery (such as conveyor or belt, motor engine, etc.)	1. Yes	2. No	
<b>A7.</b>	Are there any other visible hazards not listed above?	1. Yes (Specify) 2. No		
<b>A8.</b> Please describe exact tasks being carried out by children				
Please list the specific tasks performed by children and describe relevant aspects, including— The <b>series of actions</b> to perform these tasks follow:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>speed/stress</b> associated with the tasks,</li> <li>• In <b>coordination</b> with other children/adults or alone,</li> <li>• If it is "<b>non-stop</b>" from one cycle of tasks to the other,</li> <li>• If it has a <b>formative character</b> (learning of skills or it is just a repetitive task, etc.)</li> </ul>				
<b>A9.</b> Emotional appearance				
Please describe the observed psychological/emotional appearance of the children. For instance, do you see any (and how many) child appearing to be fearful, worried, outgoing, shy, alert, tired or not observable?				

<sup>1</sup> If unsure whether the individual is under 18, do NOT count here.

**A10. Treatment by employers**

Please describe any abuse against the children that you may notice while observing any particular activity, including—

- **Physical abuse:** direct blows, pushing, kicks, blows with objects
- **Verbal abuse:** shouting, insults, offensive nicknames

Try to establish if it is a separate incident occurring with a victim or a constant way of relation with a child or group of children within an activity. Put “not observable” if these conditions cannot be observed by researchers.

**B. Worksite Environments and Conditions**

<b>B2.</b>	Is there any residential housing around the mine site?	1. Yes 2. No			
<b>B3.</b>	If yes, are they permanent housing or temporary?	1. Permanent 2. Temporary 3. Mixing of permanent and temporary housing			
<b>B6.</b>	How clean is the worksite? <i>(Look for dust, tools, trash)</i>	1. Very clean 2. Somewhat clean 3. Dirty			
<b>B7.</b>	Are the following facilities available in the mine site?				
	Facility	<b>B7a.</b> Is it there? (Y/N)		<b>B7b.</b> Type? (See codes below)	<b>B7c.</b> Is it accessible? (Y/N)
	a. Outhouse	1. Yes	2. No	_ _   _____	1. Yes    2. No
	b. Clean drinking water	1. Yes	2. No	_ _   _____	1. Yes    2. No
	c. Electricity	1. Yes	2. No	_ _   _____	1. Yes    2. No
	f. Safety equipment	1. Yes	2. No	_ _   _____	1. Yes    2. No

<b>Bathroom:</b>	<b>Drinking water:</b>	<b>Electricity:</b>
1. Indoor flush toilet	1. Pipe water	1. Generator
2. Outdoor flush toilet	2. Covered well/hand pipe	2. <b>EBS (Public Electricity Net)</b>
3. Private latrine	3. Open well	96. Other (Specify)
4. Communal latrine	4. Open water	
	5. Rain water	
96. Other (Specify)	96. Other (Specify)	
96. Other (Specify)		
<b>Safety equipment:</b>		
1. First aid kit		
96. Other (Specify)		

C. Researcher’s note on children observed working in other supporting sectors on the mining site (food services, commercial sexual exploitation, etc.). Describe their work activities and work conditions.



## Supply Chain Mapping

Name of the Recorder				GPS-Unit Number	_ _		
Date of Recording	_ _  (Day)	_ _  Month)	2011	Waypoint Number	_ _ _		
Location	District	Resort	Coordinates (to main entrance)	Latitude	N/S	_ _ .  _ _ _ _ _	
				Longitude	E/W	_ _ _ .  _ _ _ _ _	
Name of the Site				Time of recording	_ _  (24 HR)  _ _  (Min)		
Type of Sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Starting point</li> <li>2. Referred site (second/third/fourth)</li> </ol>			If referred, what is the name of referring site?			

ID#	What other gold mining sites you know where youngsters/ children (<18) may be working?	What is the size of the gold mining site you mentioned?				How far is it from here (by hours by which forms of transportation)?	What is the proportion of young mine workers (children) in that site?
		Number of camps	Number of shops	Access to outside locations?	Number of brothels		
		1. <25 2. 25–50 3. 50–100 4. >100		1. Airstrip 2. River 3. Roads (car) 4. Tracks (ATV only)			
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

## ANNEX 3: LIST OF FORMAL EXPERTS

Position	Employer	Location	Date of interview
Head Department Education in the Interior	MINOV	Paramaribo	August 1st
District Commissioner	Ministry of Regional Development	Brokopoondo Centre	July 26th
Employee Department Rights of the Child	Ministry of Social Affairs	Paramaribo	August 1st
Member Commission Eliminating Child Labor	Ministry of Labor	Paramaribo	July 28th
Ass. Director Labor inspection	Ministry of Labor	Paramaribo	May 2nd by email
Senior Advisor Bureau for National Safety; Director of the Commission Regulation Gold Sector	Cabinet of the President	Paramaribo	August 16th
Research Associate with Malaria Program	Bureau of Public Health	Paramaribo	August 8th
Police Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit	Ministry of Justice and Police	Paramaribo	July 30th by email
Education Inspector	MINOV	Marowijne	Sept 2nd by phone

Position	Employer	Location	Date of interview
Head of School	MINOV	Brownsweg	July 26th
Machine Owner	Independent	Ireneval	July 17th
Machine Owner	Independent	Nw Koffiekamp	July 25th
Shop Owner	Independent	Sella Creek & Godo Olo	July 17th
Head of School	MINOV	Brokopondo Centre	July 26th
Small Entrepreneur	Independent	Nw Koffiekamp	July 25th
Machine Owner	Independent	Sara Creek & Tosso Creek	July 23rd
Head of School	MINOV	Drietabbetje	July 16th
Head of School	MINOV	Mooitaki	July 16th
Head of School	MINOV	Nw Koffiekamp	July 25th
Head of School	MINOV	Langetabbetje	July 18th
Head of School	MINOV	Godo-Olo	July 17th