

Evidence audit and correction log

Audit date: 2 October 2026

Purpose: record the checks made before converting the research archive into a FERN presentation. This is a quality-control document, not another synthesis.

1. Audit scope

The review covered the foundation extraction, comparative extraction, priority-gap supplement, livelihood-centred conclusions, cross-sector policy-package note, reading guide and actor map. High-impact claims were checked against complete full texts where available. Current Ghana programmes were checked separately against official sources and were not treated as evaluated effects.

Claims were prioritised when they could change one of five decisions: whether to restrict mining; which livelihoods require protection; whether formalisation or purchasing should be treated as success; which groups could be excluded; and what FERN should advocate.

2. Main corrections and decisions

Issue checked	Audit finding	Correction or use rule
Ghanaian research leadership	The earlier core reading route under-promoted Ghana-based scholarship. Osei et al. is entirely affiliated with the University of Ghana and KNUST; Baddianaah et al. is led from the University for Development Studies; Obiri et al. brings together the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, University of Cape Coast, Central University and EPA.	Promote these studies in the reading route and label institutional affiliation. Affiliation does not upgrade study design or make findings nationally representative.
Adranyi et al. (2023) as a livelihood “trajectory” study	The study combines a 2021 cross-section with retrospective oral histories covering 1992–2021. It is not a longitudinal panel. Its three groups are constructed from 12 livelihood indicators and then compared on related indicators.	Use it for locally grounded pathways, mixed portfolios and unequal opportunity structures. Do not describe it as a causal estimate of long-run welfare or national prevalence.
Adranyi et al. (2024) participation percentage	The paper reports “31%” and a count of 55 among 219 farmers. The count equals 25.1%.	Do not repeat the percentage. Preserve the inconsistency in the extraction.
Independence of the two Adranyi papers	Both use the same 2021 field project and 360-household sample.	Treat them as two analyses of one evidence base, not independent confirmation.
Barenblitt et al. (2021) artisanal/industrial shares	Reported areas of 42,395.4 and 5,018.6 hectares imply 89.4% and 10.6% of the 47,414-hectare total, whereas the article labels them 85.7% and 14.3%.	Use the total footprint and validation statistics. Do not use the disputed percentage split.
Osei et al. (2021) ban effects	The 58 interviewees were purposively selected because the ban affected their mining. There is no comparison group, baseline or environmental outcome. One quotation is dated after the stated data-collection period.	Use for experienced livelihood loss, coping and perceived futures among selected former young miners. Do not infer the national net effect of the ban, job-loss totals or environmental benefit.
Baddianaah et al. (2021) income comparison	Mining and other-income means use different denominators and are not adjusted for time, capital, risk, debt or selection. Mining income is also a component of total income in a reported correlation.	Use as local evidence that mining supplies important cash and coexists with farming. Do not present the figures as comparable returns or causal income gains.
Arthur et al. (2016) sample size	The total of 151 combines 72 focus-group participants and 79 survey respondents. Percentages in the survey tables apply to 79, not 151.	Keep this study outside the core causal route and label denominators precisely if used.

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Pereira and Pucci buyer-accountability estimate	The preferred difference-in-differences estimate is about 11 additional homicides per 100,000 in more-exposed municipalities, not merely “roughly 10.” Exposure is a geological/spatial proxy, not observed purchases.	Use “about 11” and retain the indirect-mechanism caveat.
Jayachandran et al. access effect	The Ugandan trial measured forest-owner enrolment and deforestation. The claim that poorer neighbours lost firewood access is a reported behavioural mechanism and a likely regressive effect, not a measured welfare loss.	Use conditional language: owners curtailed some neighbour access, which may have imposed costs.
GEF mercury evaluation	Some post-project mercury reductions and sustained practices are based on project records and stakeholder recall. Cyanide adoption in Ecuador was not promoted by the evaluated project.	Describe toxin substitution as a contextual risk observed after intervention, not as a project-caused outcome.
GoldBod traceability	GoldBod announced a pilot with about 600 operations in January 2026 and reported in April 2026 that procurement of a national system was under way.	Label as announced/pilot/procurement status. Do not imply that a national system was operational or that purchased gold had verified responsible origins.
NAELP and rCOMSDEP	Official sources describe NAELP's six-module, five-year design and the August 2025 decision to transition CMS/NAELP into rCOMSDEP. No retained independent evaluation establishes livelihood, distributional or environmental effects.	Present the programme architecture and the unanswered evaluation questions separately. Do not call it a success or failure without outcome evidence.
Cross-sector package	No study evaluates the proposed Ghana package as a whole. Yeung et al. and Gather et al. support a configurational logic, while component reviews test narrower mechanisms in other contexts.	Present the nine functions as an architecture to test, not a proven policy recipe.

3. Claim-status rules used in the presentation

Every decision-relevant statement is assigned one of four statuses:

1. **Evaluated effect:** a design with a defensible counterfactual estimates an intervention effect; assumptions and transfer limits remain visible.
2. **Observed mechanism:** qualitative, descriptive, spatial or implementation evidence shows how a process operated, without estimating net effect.
3. **Official design or status:** a government or institution describes what it has launched, planned or procured; this is evidence of policy content, not results.
4. **Working proposition:** an inference for a Ghana package that is consistent with several sources but has not itself been evaluated.

Legal status, licence counts, arrests, equipment distributed, export volume and traceability records are not treated as environmental or livelihood outcomes.

4. Evidence gaps that remain decision-relevant

- No retained study estimates the net environmental and livelihood effect of Ghana's 2017–2018 ban.
- No independent outcome evaluation of NAELP, CMS/rCOMSDEP or GoldBod's traceability/purchasing package was located in the reviewed corpus.
- Ghana-specific gender analysis is thin: inclusion of women in a sample rarely becomes analysis of income control, unpaid work, exposure, ownership or policy effects.
- Tenant farmers, downstream residents, migrants, children, informal service workers, injured former workers and future land users are rarely followed through an intervention.

- No retained study tests durable restoration employment as an exit pathway for Ghanaian miners.
- No evaluated ECOWAS package shows that regional coordination prevents relocation, trade diversion or origin laundering while protecting mobile livelihoods.
- No complete Ghana package has been evaluated simultaneously against absolute environmental harm, livelihood security, distribution, rights and displacement.

5. Presentation implications

- The three questions in Adranyi et al. (2023) organise the Ghana livelihood section: portfolios before/after ASGM; impacts; and differentiated opportunities/barriers.
- Ghana's current response is displayed as a policy architecture with an outcome-evidence gap, not as proof of success.
- Affected communities appear as rights-holders with direct representation, not as a subset of “stakeholders” represented automatically by chiefs, licence holders or district officials.
- Recommendations to FERN are framed around functions it can help secure—evidence, rights, accountability, finance and coordination—rather than asking one organisation to deliver the whole transition.

6. Source-link repairs

- The broken World Bank link for Mejía, Restrepo and Roza was replaced with the current document URL: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/517811468189273130/pdf/On-the-effects-of-enforcement-on-illegal-markets-evidence-from-a-quasi-experiment-in-Colombia.pdf>.
- The Toledo Orozco Cambridge PDF link with a trailing slash was replaced by the stable DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/lap.2022.5>.
- The World Bank Uganda follow-up remains linked to its official document URL. If a browser blocks the direct PDF, the title and World Bank document identifier 867301589223292444 provide a stable retrieval route.

7. Final presentation checks completed

- **Links:** 35 external presentation links were extracted and checked. Most resolved directly. The SSOAR full-text link was independently discoverable after a transient connection failure; DOI/publisher links that returned automated-access blocks were retained because the identifiers and destinations are stable. Local links resolve inside the research folder.
- **Quotation and attribution:** the deck paraphrases rather than reproducing extended source text. Direct quotation is not used as evidentiary decoration.
- **Evidence status:** decision-relevant slides distinguish evaluated effects, observed mechanisms, official design/status and working propositions. Transfer or design limits appear alongside the claims they constrain.
- **Interaction and layout:** the 34-slide deck was tested at 1440 × 900 and 390 × 844. Keyboard, button and touch-style navigation changed the URL hash and slide counter correctly; no horizontal overflow or browser-console errors were detected. Content-rich phone slides intentionally scroll vertically.
- **Second claim pass:** high-impact statements on livelihood portfolios, group trajectories, the Ghana ban, formalisation, purchasing, traceability, cross-sector transfer and FERN's proposed role were rechecked against the extraction and correction rules above.

These checks test internal accuracy, navigation and presentation behaviour. They do not convert an unevaluated programme into evidence of effect or remove the research gaps listed in section 4.