

Press Release

## Rough Diamond Grading and Valuation Training Conducted in Bopolu, Liberia

25 artisanal diamond miners and diggers from 17 mining communities in Bomi and Gbarpolu Counties in Liberia participated in the basic training on rough diamond grading and valuation in Bopolu on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

This training was conducted under the project title “Basic Training on Rough Diamond Grading and Valuation in Liberia”, implemented by Empowerment Works, Inc. and [Diamonds for Peace](#) in collaboration with [International Gemmological Institute \(IGI\)](#) funded by [the Extractives Global Programmatic Support \(EGPS\)](#) at the World Bank, and observed by the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA).



(Photo courtesy of Tomo)

The trainer for the workshop on site was Beth West, a diamond specialist from the United Kingdom. Hitindra Mistry, a rough diamond expert from IGI, India supported the workshop online.

After the opening ceremony, the trainer started with what diamond is, why it is valuable and how diamonds are formed. She went on to describe the differences between rough and polished diamonds, and the 4C's (Cut, Carat, Clarity, Color) of diamond quality. The theory was complimented by practical sessions, during which participants learnt how to use a 10 x loupe. The afternoon session concentrated on the rough grading process. On the second day, participants learned how to work out the approximate price of rough diamonds. Though it is not easy and entails a lot of calculation, most of the participants understood the process and some mastered it. This workshop scheduled in a lot of time for questions and answer sessions. Participants asked the trainer a variety of questions, such as “does lightening make the cracks bigger?” The trainer answered all the questions and explained thoroughly.



(Photo courtesy of Tomo)

As way forward, the project team introduced the idea of a responsible supply chain of diamonds, and talked about the importance of record keeping, organizing themselves into cooperatives, and having a valid mining license. Amongst the 17 communities, only one has a cooperative with full-fledged status, and another has pre-cooperative status. Some participants told the team that they would encourage miners/diggers in his/her community to organize themselves.

The project team handed over a tool kit to each community, specifying that each of the participant should hand it over to the community so that all the miners/diggers have access to it. A tool kit has a laminated manual, a ruler, a calculator, a 10 x loupe, a digital scale, a pack of AAA batteries, a cubic zirconia round brilliant cut, and a UV torch. The provision of tool kits is sponsored by [the Gemmological Association of Great Britain](#) and [Tokyo Pearl Co., Ltd.](#)



(Photo © Diamonds for Peace)

Many participants told the project team that before the training they did not know anything about diamonds, including their potential value. This two-day workshop has given them a sufficient level of knowledge to assist these miners and diggers towards receiving a fair price for their diamonds – a right that they have long been deprived of.

All the participants will hold knowledge sharing sessions upon their return to the communities to share what they have learned with other miners and diggers, and the project team will monitor them.



(Photo courtesy of Tomo)

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