

Full-fledged Status Awarded to an Artisanal Mining Cooperative in Weasua



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Achieving common goals by working with fellow miners has been a dream for artisanal diamond miners in Weasua, Gbarpolu County, the oldest diamond mining community in Liberia. Their history of diamond mining in Weasua goes back to 1956. However, the community members of Weasua including miners claim that they have not been benefitted from diamond mining.

Artisanal diamond miners in Weasua organized themselves in 2018 by encouragement of NGO Diamonds for Peace Liberia*, and then received a pre-cooperative training and status in 2019 by the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA), the supervising agency for all the cooperatives in Liberia.

Artisanal miners in several communities in Weasua received the pre-cooperative training in 2019 under the initiative of Ministry of Mines and Energy to formalize the artisanal mining sector. Among them, Weasua Clan Mining & Agricultural Cooperative Society (WECMACOS) is the first to receive the full-fledged status after the members' hard working for two years to satisfy the conditions set by CDA.

The certification ceremony was convened on 4th August 2021 in Weasua with attendance of the cooperative members, the officials from CDA, the magistrate, the mining agent, the community leaders, the diggers' association members, the women's group members, and NGO Diamonds for Peace Liberia.

Morris Kromah, the chairperson of WECMACOS, expressed his gratitude to the partners for their support to the progress of the cooperative. The cooperative currently has 39 members, 13 women and 26 men, and is working on honey farming project and fish pond project. He encouraged his fellow miners and citizens to join the cooperative whose arms are open to everyone to become a part of it. He concluded by saying "if you want development for this community, please join the boat, and this boat is WECMACOS."

Hon. Regina Sokan Teah, the Registrar General for CDA started with singing a song which has a message to let both men and women walk side by side so that they can all see what's happening. In her speech, she stressed "nothing is for us without us." "As community people and members of the cooperative we should not be selfish, we need to do things for the common good for us and the community. Working together is something we are not used to, we are just getting into it, and gradually we will understand it." Her speech was full of encouragement and advice.



She administered the cooperative leaders taking oath, and then presented the certificate to the chairperson of the cooperative.

The members of WECMACOS will continue working hard to make their dream come true. Their dream is to have development in the community by becoming self-sustainable through artisanal mining and agricultural work in the cooperative.

*Diamonds for Peace Liberia is an NGO working towards a world in which diamonds are mined, cut and processed with humanitarian and environmental considerations. It has been providing Weasua with technical assistance since 2018.

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