

GHANA ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTISTS

IN CASE OF REPLY THE NUMBER AND
DATE OF THIS LETTER SHOULD BE QUOTED

Our Ref...GAMLS/NS/GALAMSEY/9/24

Your Ref.....



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PRESS RELEASE

HEALTH AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF GALAMSEY: A CALL TO ACTION

The Ghana Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists (GAMLS) is deeply concerned about the devastating health impacts of illegal mining, known as Galamsey, on communities and the environment. Despite the severe health risks, we are dismayed by the lack of government interest in stopping these illegal activities, which threaten our existence and destroy essential resources like water bodies and farmlands.

Prolonged exposure to toxic chemicals like mercury and arsenic used in Galamsey has been linked to severe health problems, including vision defects, skin defects, cardiovascular challenges, liver and kidney damage, respiratory diseases, cancer, birth defects, and neurological disorders as well as death. The economic implications are equally alarming, with increasing health budgets to address emerging health conditions, decreased productivity, pollution, and loss of family income. It is important to note that the government is struggling to meet the minimum 15 percent health budget allocation per the Abuja declaration. Inaction by the government will further negatively impact the health sector.

The pollution of water sources and soil poses significant health risks to nearby communities, that rely on these resources for drinking, farming, and domestic use. The Ghana Water Company's concerns about water loss and processing costs are particularly worrying.

GAMLS urges the government, stakeholders, and the public to take immediate action to address the health impacts of Galamsey. We recommend an immediate suspension of small-scale mining activities for a broad stakeholder engagement on the Wayford.

We also call on civil society organizations, associations, and the General public to pressure the government to end the threat using all available legal and socially acceptable means.

We call on the government to show leadership in protecting the lives of citizens and future generations. GAMLS stands ready to support efforts to address this critical issue.

We declare our solidarity with like-minded bodies and unions committed to exerting pressure on the government to address the devastating health impacts of Galamsey. We are prepared to support and participate in industrial actions and other legal measures to ensure that our concerns are heard and addressed.

Dr. Solomon D.Y. Kwashie, MLS

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