



## Going for Gold : Newsletter 2

Crawford School for Public Policy  
ANU College of Asia and The Pacific

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The Chief Investigators in *Going for Gold: Safe Livelihoods for Informal Gold Miners in South and Southeast Asia* Project are now gearing up to undertake their first joint field work in Indonesia.

The end November will see the lead Chief Investigator Dr Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt and Chief Investigator Dr Keith Barney, along with Minelab representative Martin Foran and our National Research Partner, Dr Rini Soemarwoto, travel to South Kalimantan, Indonesia to explore issues with the use of metal detectors in association with a local community of informal and artisanal miners in selected locations.

The idea behind the demonstration of metal detection technology is to investigate if this technology could be beneficial for the livelihoods of the informal miners and for the environment. It is true that the adoption of new technology by the poor is an area fraught with many pitfalls and also scholarly debates. However, it is possible that the adoption of the new ways of detecting could lead to better gold finds, leading to a reduction in the need to use mercury to amalgamate gold by these miners. Finding nuggets could also have positive impacts on incomes and the livelihoods, and a reduced use of mercury will be beneficial for the health of the individual miner as well as the environment.

Indonesia is a country where local communities have traditionally mined gold. Much of this mining is undertaken using artisanal techniques, and the mining legislation recognises 'People's mining'. However, for a number of reasons, gold mining has increased by leaps and bounds during the last few decades, and the extensive use of mercury has been a cause of concern for local environmental and human health.

### **On other news:**

- Dr Roy Maconachie, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath, UK, is pleased to share with us a short digital video on gold and diamond mining in Sierra Leone made by him. He shot the footage himself. This film provides us a realistic view of how conditions are for such informal miners across the globe. The film can be viewed at:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yw2pEcauGt8>
- The Artisanal Gold Council (AGC) is a not-for-profit organization based out of Victoria, BC, Canada dedicated to the sustainable development of artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) communities in the developing world. The Artisanal Gold Council has made the following new releases:
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L--nWTITIZs>
  - <https://docs.google.com/a/artisanalgold.org/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=YXJ0aXNhbmFsZ29sZC5vcmd8YWdjMXxneDoyYjRlMjRmZTA4ZTg3NWQz>
- The recent Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia has also affected the ASGM sector. Its consequences can be well understood in the following link:
  - <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/nov/04/ebola-sierra-leone-small-scale-mining-sector-catastrophic-consequences>