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De Beers shares progress on GemFair initiatives

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GemFair is working on its Forward Purchase program which empowers miners to grow and formalize their businesses. Image credit: De Beers Group

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Diamond company **De Beers Group** is sharing progress on the GemFair program which helps formalize the artisanal and small-scale diamond mining sector.

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Last year served strongly for the program, as the group supported its members and communities who were adversely affected by the pandemic while actively working on De Beers Group's sustainability goals. There are now 211 mine sites participating in GemFair, as De Beers has also provided training to more than 500 people.

Community framework

Throughout the pandemic, GemFair has provided more than 4,700 food parcels to the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) community in the Kono District of Sierra Leone.

In 2021, the leadership team wanted to focus on a more sustainable solution in combating long-term food insecurity. The reclamation and sustainable agriculture program consists of bringing abandoned mined pits back to productive use for growing crops which ultimately creates local employment, increases food security and enables local communities to generate income from selling crops.



More than 200 mines participate in GemFair. Image credit: De Beers Group

The GemFair team is also implementing a pilot program to better understand the specifics of reclaiming these previously abandoned mining areas. They are partnering with neighboring villages, 80 percent of whom are women, to cultivate the land.

The crops produced are for the villagers to keep and GemFair is paying their daily wage. The program has already seen success, recording 1,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries thus far with more planned for 2022.

Among additional initiatives, GemFair is also working on its Forward Purchase program which empowers miners to grow and formalize their businesses.

De Beers has announced 12 sizeable Building Forever sustainability goals to reach by 2030, with one goal being to deliver scalable solutions to improve the livelihoods of artisanal miners, which GemFair will play a pivotal role in. The program will also help in reaching other group sustainability goals with a focus on ethical practices, protecting natural resources, promoting equal opportunities and partnering with communities.

The 12 goals are part of De Beers' Building Forever framework, a sustainability approach embedded in the business's commercial strategy and focused on maximizing the positive impact of diamonds on their journey from discovery to retail. Over the next decade, De Beers plans to work towards gender equality throughout its workforce, supporting women entrepreneurs and becoming carbon neutral with its operations ([see story](#)).

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