

Youth, Artisanal Mining, and Gender Gaps: Perceptions of Young Miners in Alto Molino, Arequipa (Peru)

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Abstract

This qualitative research explores the perceptions, aspirations, and challenges faced by young miners in Alto Molino, Arequipa, within the framework of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Using semi-structured interviews and field observations, the study captures youth perspectives on employment, development, and gender inequality. By addressing a knowledge gap in Peruvian academic and policy literature, the paper contributes to ongoing debates about youth inclusion, sustainable rural livelihoods, and formalization of the ASM sector. The findings suggest that while ASM offers a critical livelihood for rural youth, it is also shaped by structural disadvantages, especially for young women. Policy recommendations emphasize the integration of gender-sensitive and youth-focused approaches in rural development agendas.

Keywords: Youth employment, Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), Rural livelihoods