

INFORMINING.

AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF INFORMALIZATION IN GLOBAL GOLD PRODUCTION

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Abstract

A growing body of research relies on ‘chain frameworks’ such as global commodity chains, value chains, and production networks, to make sense of trends in global production. It concludes that the global economy has witnessed a geographical expansion of production; a concentration of power in the hands of lead firms; and the rise of a flexible and irregular workforce. Despite its strengths, this research has important shortcomings, including a neglect of informal production, and of extractive industries such as mining. This project addresses both shortcomings, by investigating informalization processes in global gold production. More precisely, it analyses two mechanisms that indicate a growing reliance on informal labour: (1) outsourcing by large mining companies to local subcontractors who operate at the margins of the formal economy; and (2) the massive expansion of low-tech, labour-intensive and predominantly informal artisanal and small-scale gold mining. We first conduct a mapping of the global gold production system, to understand the global roots of informalization processes. We then conduct case studies of six mining areas in three countries (Philippines, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo) with a view to understanding how informalization processes intersect with changes in local labour markets, thus affecting who stands (not) to benefit from these informalization processes.







Keywords

1. Gold
2. Mining
3. Labour
4. Informalization

Output so far

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