

Project Update: July 2006

Due to newly gathered information we decided to change our second site from Darina (a gold mining site in Northern Madagascar) to a new sapphire mining town in southern Madagascar called Ifanato. This will help immensely with the continuity of the project. There are great differences, many are obvious and others are more covert, between small-scale gold mining and small-scale gemstone mining. Income generated at different levels of the gold supply-chain differs greatly from that of the gemstone supply-chain. Also, Madagascar's national laws concerning gold mining and gemstone mining are different.

Additionally, gold and gemstone methods of extraction and the subsequent environmental impact are dissimilar thus requiring unique solutions. Therefore, it is in our best interest to move the second part of our project to a gemstone mining site. We chose Ifanato because we have contacts in the area and the site is near a protected area rich in biodiversity.