

## Rewashing for Gold: Optimizing Mine Plan for Effective Closure

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**Abstract :** "Rewashing" as it is commonly called, involves the process of scooping out and washing chunks of mud from a closed alluvial gold mine site with the purpose of extracting any leftover gold deposits in the site. It is usually carried out by illegal miners who infiltrate closed mine sites with the goal of scavenging for any leftover gold deposits. Expectedly, the practice gives little or no regard for environmental protection. This paper examines the process of "rewashing" in a mining community in Nigeria. It then discusses the looming danger it portends for health, safety, and the environment. The study draws lessons from these occurrences to examine and discuss fit-for-purpose mine closure plans that could be adopted by gold mines in Nigeria and other sub-Saharan African countries.

**Keywords :** mine planning, mine closure, illegal mining, artisanal mining, environmental sustainability

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