

24th February, 2026

The News Editor,

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE: FRIMPONG-MANSO INSTITUTE (FMI) DEMANDS AN END TO GALAMSEY IMPUNITY TO PROTECT RIVERS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The Frimpong-Manso Institute (FMI) is alarmed that illegal small-scale mining ("galamsey") continues to devastate rivers, farmlands and forest reserves, threatening water security, public health and livelihoods in hotspot areas across the Ashanti and Western Regions.

Community testimony and public reporting point to a recurring "raid-return" cycle and integrity failures that keep the illicit machinery, fuel and gold market moving.

FMI notes that the "raid- return cycle in which galamsey operators re- emerge, soon after enforcement actions often more organized, amplifies integrity failures including bribery and protection rackets. Raid without integrity reforms simply reset the cycle: raid today, return tomorrow.

Communities cannot drink gold. Ghana must not normalise environmental crime while communities pay the price through unsafe water, damaged livelihoods, and weakened trust in institutions.

FMI calls for visible prosecutions, consistent sanctions, and the dismantling of the networks that profit from environmental destruction.

Furthermore, the Community Mining Programme created to formalise small-scale mining, reduce galamsey, and provide regulated, community-linked mining opportunities within licensed concessions needs

strengthening. Its implementation has been uneven and often weakened by governance and capacity gaps.

FMI's position

1. Rivers and forest reserves are non-negotiable; water security and public health cannot be traded for short-term gain.
2. Integrity is the backbone - end protection networks and negotiated enforcement.
3. Communities must be protected - safe reporting, no vigilantism, and no retaliation.
4. Youth need lawful exit ramps - credible alternatives that compete with illegality.

FMI's proposal

A coordinated compact to attack the system behind galamsey and accelerate restoration in hotspots:

- **Integrity Firewall:** credible investigations and transparency on outcomes.
- **Community Stewardship (lawful, non-violent):** early warning, safe reporting, and sustained public education.
- **Youth Exit Ramps:** green skills and dignified work in reclamation, agroforestry, and sustainable agriculture.
- **Water and Public Health Emergency Action:** routine monitoring with public reporting and intensified health education.
- **Swift Justice and Supply-Chain Disruption:** faster prosecutions, asset forfeiture, and disruption of machinery, fuel, and illicit market access.

Immediate actions FMI urges

- **Government and security agencies:** sustain enforcement with integrity safeguards and publish visible legal outcomes.

- **Judiciary:** prioritise environmental crime cases and apply consistent deterrent sanctions.
- **Traditional authorities:** enforce community prohibitions and reject benefits linked to illegal mining.

FMI reiterates: Ghana's natural heritage is not disposable. Impunity must end, and the networks enabling environmental destruction must be exposed, prosecuted, and dismantled.

ISSUED BY FRIMPONG-MANSO INSTITUTE

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Spokesperson availability

FMI is available for interviews, panel discussions, and newsroom briefings.

Media Contact (FMI)

Thank you.