



# OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR FUTURE

## MERCURY, THE SILENT KILLER

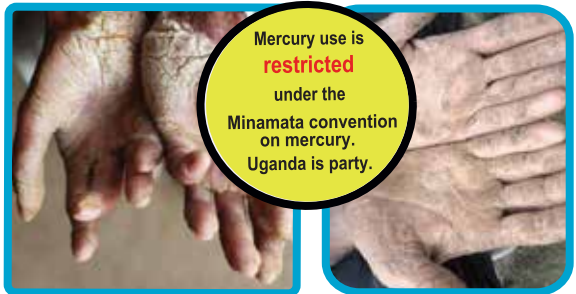
In mines, mercury is used to recover minute pieces of gold that is mixed in soil and sediments. Mercury and gold settle and combine together to form an amalgam. Gold is then extracted by vaporizing the mercury.



Direct contact with the mercury while panning

### Health effects of mercury exposure.

- Mercury has shown to cause learning problems, memory loss, numbness, loss of muscle coordination, tremors, deafness, changes in vision, shaking hands



Mercury use is **restricted** under the Minamata convention on mercury. Uganda is party.

Cracked and stiff hands as a result of using mercury in gold mining

### How one gets exposed to mercury.

- Direct contact with the mercury while panning of gold ore concentrate for amalgamation
- Inhalation of mercury vapour while burning of the amalgam
- Using water and eating aquatic food contaminated with mercury

### Alternatives to the use of mercury

- Use Gravity Concentration method with Borax (sluice boxes, shaking tables and floatation methods)



Sluicing to separate by gravity

**MERCURY FREE GOLD MINING**

Burning the liberated material with Borax

