

COMINAK BULLETIN

No. 3

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LAST MINUTE INFORMATION - At the time of finalizing this newsletter, a fatal accident happened on the COMINAK site resulting in the death of two people. We are deeply saddened by this tragic event and offer our sincere condolences to the families of the victims as well as to all of COMINAK's subcontractors and employees. This tragedy reminds us once again that the safety of our employees and workers is and must remain the utmost priority. An investigation is underway to determine the precise circumstances of this accident.

CONTENTS

TECHNICAL

- Mine ramp: preparatory work completed p. 2
- Dismantling of mill: 1st cut of the shears p. 3

COMMUNITY

- Concrete support for local populations p. 4
- Entrepreneurship: signature of the guarantee fund procedure p. 5

SOCIAL

- Creating a company as a reconversion option p. 6



EDITORIAL

Mahaman Sani ABDOULAYE,
COMINAK Managing Director



To begin this piece, I would like to thank the miners who left when production ended, as well as those in charge of the site's remediation, for their excellent work. I wish to congratulate all the teams for this.

Site remediation is ongoing with the demolition of the mill which began on November 30, 2021. Nigerien and French teams have since then been busy and are dedicated to their task.

This dismantling work is performed in strict compliance with the commitments jointly made with the Nigerien government. As you know, these commitments cover several areas including the environment, which the teams have been working on for almost 5 years according to a technical action plan to ensure the mine is brought to a safe, healthy state. This complies with Nigerien regulations, international standards, and Orano's standard in terms of safety, radiation protection, workplace safety, environmental stewardship, and personnel health.

In terms of social issues, there was an official consultation in 2019 of all local and national stakeholders in the remediation project, during which the closure's social impacts were mapped and the progressive social transition plan which will take 5 to 10 years was developed. This plan, which includes several aspects—economic support, health, education, transfer of infrastructures—was prepared in conjunction with the Nigerien ministries concerned (mining, environment, town planning, health, agriculture and animal husbandry, etc.) along with the administrative and local community authorities, elected representatives, civil society, and partners.

The local information committee held a meeting on November 24 during which the stakeholders discussed site remediation with COMINAK managers, notably more involvement of local companies in carrying out the site remediation work.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank local authorities, civil society, and all participants for the success of this meeting. Its objectives were reached with all this positive exchange, which enabled all stakeholders to be equally informed on the progress of the remediation of the COMINAK site.

I wish you all health and happiness for this new year.

Thank you.

DATES

- **September 30, 2021:**
Launch of workshops on the social and economic impacts of COMINAK's shutdown in Niamey
- **November 24, 2021:**
Local information committee met in Arlit with stakeholders
- **November 26, 2021:**
3rd session of the committee for orienting the process of COMINAK's shutdown



Find all the news at:
<https://www.orano.group/reamenagement-cominak/en/home>





Mine ramp: preparatory work completed

On October 31, the preparatory phase for the remediation of the underground mine ramp was completed.

Since the month of April, the last of COMINAK’s miners have secured the underground facilities, draining all the tanks and recovering the hydrocarbons which were brought to the surface. The electrical transformers and two thirds of the mining machinery has also been brought up.

The blocking off of the surface-to-bottom connecting structures, called the “large holes,” began, and the securing of the two worksites preceding placement of concrete plugs along the ramp was completed.

This step marks the effective transfer of works to the subcontractors who will produce these complex structures in reinforced concrete. This will involve two pairs of low walls at depths of 200 m and 120 m to return the water tables traversed by the ramp to a state close to their natural interconnection.

Finally, during the first semester of 2022, the last wall at the entrance to the ramp will be built, marking the end of the mine remediation works.

A FEW FIGURES

- Ramp = two drifts **1,300 m** in length with a **20%** slope
- Almost **105** “large hole” ventilation shafts **2.4 m** in diameter
- To block off the large holes:
 - Nearly **12,000 m³** of sandstone blocks
 - Around **13,000 m³** of cemented backfill
 - **120,000 m³** of argillite

INTERVIEW



Daniele VALENTINO

Head of the Underground Mining Sector

We were supported by COMINAK’s competent, reliable, and lucid miners

« When we stopped production, we took on an important mission; that is, supporting the Akokan mine as it was brought to a proper and safe end point with the objective of transferring it to the remediation project team of the site for the final part of its life. Because this was a complex phase, we relied on COMINAK’s competent, reliable, and lucid miners. »



Dismantling of mill: 1st cut of the shears



Worksite divided into 2 packages

The COMINAK mill is a large facility with several areas called production units, each with its own specific features and characteristics.

Given the specificities of the different units, two packages were defined in order to divide the worksite between the two Nigerien-French companies MIGAS – AD and CMA – VALGO. Both were able to meet the selection criteria used for the call for bids.

According to Brice LEBRASSEUR, head of the remediation project, « *The challenge was to divide the worksite as optimally as possible between the 2 partners that would be selected. The decision to make two packages was in part motivated by the desire to launch balanced, large-scale calls for tenders so that local*

companies take a secure position. The packages were made so as to group the various production units by 'technical' family based on the type of structure, the dismantling techniques to be applied, and similarities in the areas of the hygiene, security, and environment risks. »

Worksite safety: an essential parameter

While the subcontractors were chosen based on their technical and financial capacity to carry out the commissioned work, safety also plays an important role.

According to most "turnkey" contracts, subcontractors are independent regarding HSE in their field of expertise. Throughout the project, COMINAK agents monitor compliance with the HSE standards defined jointly by COMINAK and the subcontractors prior to project launch.



Amadou MARAYE
Head of HSE for
COMINAK

« *COMINAK's activities have totally changed in a very brief time. We have switched from mining jobs and mechanical and chemical ore processing to building, construction, and dismantling jobs. The cultural change is very significant. We had to adapt our HSE standards to these new activities and establish specific standards. Since COMINAK's personnel followed the curve of production shutdown, our local service providers, also our partners, were all the more engaged in the shutdown, cleaning, and closing phases for our facilities. We have supported them in this cultural change through training and supervision in the field.* »

Environmental monitoring

Environmental monitoring is an integral part of the remediation project. Throughout the work, analyses were performed to monitor air, water, and food quality.

This monitoring carried out by COMINAK's HSE teams will continue for several years after the work ends and before the site is transferred to the Nigerien government.

- Air: monthly sampling
- Water: quarterly sampling
- Food (fruits and vegetables): yearly sampling

All analyses are performed by the Algade laboratory. All the results are presented in the activity reports and at the annual Local Information Committee (CLI) meetings.

Materials from dismantling

All products from mill dismantling are stored according to type (scrap, rubble, etc.) and contamination. All products exhibiting radiological contamination will be stored in a specific storage area before being covered over as part of operations to reprofile the pile.



DID YOU KNOW?

A network of 150 piezometers is installed on and around the site

A piezometer consists of a shaft or borehole for accessing the water table to measure it, record its level, and take samples.

Concrete support for local populations

Scholarship program

Through its support of the school system, COMINAK has made education one of the major areas of its societal transition plan in relation to its commitment to local development. The objective: maintain and strengthen the quality of teaching in Arlit.

Five scholarships per year will be awarded under the scholarship program for students in primary and secondary schools in the departments of Arlit and Iferouane. The program will last 10 years from the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

165
million CFA francs
will be allocated for all aspects of the scholarship program.

After the first call for applicants launched in September, 5 students who completed their secondary studies, including 3 young women, were selected based on the criteria in the convention signed with the Nigerien agency for awarding scholarship.

Four of the scholarship winners started healthcare training, 3 in medicine and 1 as a midwife; the 5th will enter the agriculture/animal husbandry field.



Criteria for scholarship winners; they must:

- Be a student in one of the teaching establishments in the Arlit or Iferouane departments;
- Hold a general secondary school diploma from the July and August 2021 session with a grade of "satisfactory" or above;
- Hold a primary school diploma (BEPC) with a minimum grade of "satisfactory";
- Have the best school orientation average as defined by the Nigerien ministry of secondary and tertiary education, research, and technology;
- Select one of the training programs defined in the convention:
 - Agriculture/animal husbandry
 - Environment/waste management
 - Health
 - Energy/renewable energies.

Sustaining school, cultural and sports grants

As part of its community transition plan, COMINAK will continue its donations to local schools for 10 years. In line with its commitments, COMINAK will also maintain cultural and sports grants, with the amount tapering over a period of 5 years.

Under this donation scheme, for instance, last September COMINAK provided several establishments with IT, cooling, and laboratory equipment.

The IT equipment provided to the heads of the Tagora and Azzourou schools will reduce the digital divide by giving students the possibility to become familiar with computer tools and receive training.

The Air engineering school (EMAÏR) received laboratory equipment enabling students access to high-quality instruments.



Outreach caravan for inhabitants of Akokan

From December 22 to 26, COMINAK teams went out to meet the population of Akokan with a "caravan" tour.

This tour, organized in conjunction with the NGO AGHIR IN'MAN and neighborhood leaders, offered an opportunity to reach out to the residents of the eight quarters of Akokan to inform them about the social and environmental issues related to the closure of COMINAK.

This initiative, as a complement to the work done by the information office, was a means of establishing a more favorable framework for exchanging views, answering the questions of the inhabitants, gathering suggestions and helping inform the development aspirations of these communities.

Entrepreneurship: signature of the guarantee fund procedure

The company creation aid program launched by COMINAK in December 2020, which is supporting 56 projects in the region, has just entered a new phase, with the signature of the convention to define the conditions for making available a guarantee fund.

This program also includes a training allocation provided by the governmental enterprise organization Maison de l'Entreprise which is partnering with COMINAK.

Some projects have already begun.



TESTIMONIES OF TWO WINNERS



Cheffou NABIRNI
Former technical maintenance referent
at COMINAK

« After 35 years of service in mill, mine and workshop maintenance at COMINAK, an area both exciting and exhausting, I decided to go in a new direction after COMINAK shut down. I had to find a way to overcome the job insecurity in Niger, especially for older people, and with significant family responsibilities, and so forth. After thinking things over for several months before the shutdown, I decided to move into a new area, specifically making bread and pastries.

Presentation of the new company: My project was to create a modern bakery/pastry shop referred to as "the reference". The aim of this bakery is to set the standard for Niger's modern bakeries and more specifically in the capital city of Niamey. With 12 experienced employees, the bakery will serve customers from Niamey and the surrounding areas, providing a new variety of very nutritious breads that are good for health.

Because the market for whole-grain bread is expanding rapidly in many countries around the world, "the reference" bakery has every chance of carving out a strong niche position in Niger.

Would you have launched this project without COMINAK's help? No, I would never have launched this project without assistance from COMINAK even if I had the means to do so. I believe that the support and training COMINAK provided were the key to my project's success.

Without them, it would have been like flying an airplane without any training. What I do know is that no one would have agreed to fly with me, for obvious reasons that I don't need to go into here. »



Mohamed MOUCHÉ
Resident of Akokan

Draft: Develop his sewing shop, Attri Couture, in Arlit

« I have been working in the area of sewing/tailoring since I was a child, apprenticing in Niger and Algeria. In 2002, I opened up my own shop in Arlit, more specifically at Carré SNTN.

Presentation of the new company: I have been my own boss in the area of embroidering for nearly 10 years. By creating my company, I ensured my economic independence to earn my own living but also to help young people acquire knowledge in the area of making clothing. I have trained some fifty young people, most of whom were young women. Nearly all of them went on to work in sewing/tailoring. Today I want to give my business a new lease of life.

Would you have launched this project without COMINAK's help? COMINAK's help is very welcome and will allow me to have a broader view and more streamlined approach to managing my company. The advice and supervision from the Maison de l'Entreprise organization is also providing me with a more 360° approach to my business. This has been my aim for a long time. »

Creating a company as a reconversion option

Among the possibilities for professional reorientation, entrepreneurship is a pathway that some former COMINAK employees have chosen by creating companies that leverage their skill set.

On November 5, 2020, the reclassification unit was created. It offers training programs to support COMINAK employees in their professional reorientation.

Among these programs, training in how to create a company was aimed at helping employees understand the various aspects of entrepreneurship with the goal of giving them the opportunity to start their projects in the best possible conditions.

242 employees enrolled in the company creation training program

Reclassification KPIs:
Number of solutions recorded (early retirement, retirement, self-employment, outplacement, mobility within the Group, or solution proposed and turned down)

RESULTS AS OF DECEMBER 15, 2021

77%
of solutions implemented

OBJECTIVE FOR 31 DECEMBER 2021

90%
of solutions implemented



Abdoul Salam AMOUMOUNE

Business owner
Employee of COMINAK for 15 years -
Head of the mining machinery maintenance department

« I created my company, 2AI Sarl, at Akokan Arlit and opened for business on June 28, 2021. I now have 8 permanent employees and 20 employees with short-term contracts. Our main activity is maintenance of all the vehicles used for security purposes at the COMINAK site.

We have also started machinery maintenance as part of the remediation work. All my employees are former COMINAK employees or subcontractors. We have recently started working with SOMAÏR on repairing heavy-duty trucks.

Before launching my company, I completed the company creation training program in its entirety, which helped me understand the subtleties of an entrepreneur's job. These range from choosing a location to following the procedures to comply with fiscal requirements, not to mention selecting and hiring personnel. As a result, things are going very well. »



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