

The Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Against Illegal Mining Practices in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency

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Abstract

Most studies on illegal mining in Indonesia still focus on normative aspects, such as the Mineral and Coal Law and environmental regulations, while the empirical dimensions on the ground remain under-explored. Illegal mining practices in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency give rise to legal, social, and environmental issues. Activities conducted without official permits damage ecosystems, threaten public safety, and result in losses to the state due to lost revenue from the mining sector. This study employs an empirical-legal approach by analyzing regulations and conducting interviews and observations with police officers, local government officials, and affected communities. The results show that although the legal framework is clear, economic factors are the primary driver behind the community's continued engagement in illegal mining, as it is perceived to yield quicker returns. Law enforcement is primarily carried out through preventive and persuasive approaches such as legal outreach and capacity-building rather than repressive measures. The main obstacles include weak oversight, limited resources among law enforcement officials, and the community's socioeconomic conditions. This study underscores the need for a more assertive law enforcement strategy, cross-sectoral collaboration, and community empowerment to ensure that efforts to combat illegal mining are effective and sustainable.

Keywords: *Illegal Mining Practices, Law Enforcement, Socioeconomic Impacts.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Illegal mining damages ecosystems, reduces government revenue, and hinders the achievement of green development goals. Illegal mining damages ecosystems, reduces government revenue, and hinders the achievement of green

development goals. Illegal mining activities now pose a major threat to environmental sustainability in Indonesia.

As a manifestation of the eight-point vision of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Prabowo-Gibran, that illegal mining damages ecosystems, reduces state revenue, and hinders the achievement of green development goals. Illegal mining damages ecosystems, reduces state revenue, and hinders the achievement of green development goals. One of the strategic sectors that has a major impact on national economic development is the mining sector. Indonesia possesses abundant natural resources; however, despite this potential, the country faces serious problems due to the rampant spread of illegal mining activities. Mining practices that do not comply with legal regulations often have negative impacts on the environment, society, and the management of natural resources.

Illegal mining has other highly destructive impacts; potential environmental damage ranges from deforestation and river pollution to permanent changes to ecosystems. From an economic perspective, the country loses potential tax revenue, and these activities even become a source of conflict within communities (Purnomo et al., 2025). The principles of mine management should be based on the values of Pancasila as a unified whole and governed by legal norms as set forth in Article 33, Paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that “The earth, water, and natural resources contained therein are controlled by the state and utilized for the greatest prosperity of the people.”

According to data from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM), there are 1,063 illegal mining sites scattered throughout Indonesia. The

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM), Bahlil Lahadalia, emphasized that his ministry will crack down on all illegal mines in accordance with President Prabowo Subianto's directives. The President emphasized the importance of regulating and cracking down on mining activities, particularly those located in protected forest areas or on land without permits. This measure is part of the government's commitment to repairing the damage that has been done to ecosystems. (Infoenergi.id, 2025), Problems in the mining sector include a number of critical issues, such as policy uncertainty, rampant illegal mining activities, conflicts with local communities, and disputes between the mining sector and other sectors. The prevalence of unlicensed mining practices has caused many negative impacts on communities and even on the country as a whole. Therefore, clear and firm regulations are needed to govern mining activities in order to ensure legal certainty and protection for all parties involved. (Kurniawan and Darma, 2025).

Illegal mining, or unlicensed gold mining (PETI), in Gorontalo is a serious problem with legal, environmental, and social dimensions. The government's lack of action in regulating and managing existing mining permits has also impacted law enforcement efforts by the police, as these mines have been a source of livelihood for the community for decades.(Satingi, 2024). Most gold mining activities in Gorontalo are still carried out using traditional methods and outside the framework of official permits, and are therefore known as unlicensed gold mining (PETI); the use of hazardous chemicals in the gold separation process poses a high risk to public health and environmental conservation (Kasim, Akase, Andaresna, Mokodompit, and Hermawan, 2025).

In Gorontalo Province, mining activities are spread across nearly all regencies, including Pohuwato Regency, North Gorontalo Regency, and Bone Bolango Regency. In Gorontalo Regency, particularly in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, illegal mining activities are reported to be continuing despite various law enforcement efforts. This phenomenon raises critical questions regarding the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts by law enforcement officials and relevant agencies in combating these practices. In terms of institutional authority, mining regulations following Law No. 23 of 2014 place licensing and oversight authority in the hands of the central government (the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources). As a result, provincial governments often feel constrained in their ability to act.

In Gorontalo Province, one instance of illegal mining in Juriya Village, Gorontalo Regency, not only causes ecosystem damage and reduces state revenue but also hinders the achievement of the green development goals as outlined in the President's *Asta Cita*. Illegal mining, or unlicensed gold mining (PETI), in Gorontalo is a serious problem with legal, environmental, and social dimensions. In December 2025, police arrested Yosi Marten Basaur, a fugitive in an illegal gold mining case, after he had been on the wanted list (DPO) for five months. Furthermore, the crackdown conducted by the Special Criminal Investigation Directorate (Ditkrimsus) of the Gorontalo Regional Police reaffirmed that gold from PETI may not be bought or sold; doing so can even result in charges of money laundering (TPPU), punishable by up to 5 years in prison.

Normatively, the practice of mining without a permit is classified as a criminal offense, in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 3 of 2020, which

amends Law No. 4 of 2009 on Mineral and Coal Mining. Article 158 of this law states that any party engaging in mining without a permit, as outlined in Article 35, is subject to a maximum prison sentence of five years and a fine of up to one hundred billion rupiah. This provision reaffirms that illegal mining activities constitute a crime subject to significant criminal penalties. Furthermore, Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management emphasizes that any individual who intentionally causes damage to the environment may be subject to criminal penalties. Nevertheless, as analyzed by Badaru, Razak, Umam, and TL (2023), Law enforcement efforts targeting illegal mining crimes in various regions have not yet achieved an adequate level of effectiveness, due to weaknesses in the legal framework and a lack of understanding among law enforcement officials regarding the elements of mining-related crimes.

The effectiveness of law enforcement against unlicensed gold mining is also influenced by the level of legal awareness among the public. Legal awareness is a crucial element in achieving voluntary compliance with legal norms. Redi and Tesi (2023) explains that the low level of legal awareness among communities near illegal mining sites is caused by limited legal outreach and the state's weak presence in providing education to residents. Communities often do not understand the distinction between legal artisanal mining (which requires an Artisanal Mining Permit, or IPR) and illegal mining conducted without an official permit. As a result, a large number of residents are involved in unlicensed gold mining without realizing the legal risks they may face. This situation is exacerbated by the presence of local figures or major financiers who act as the

masterminds behind illegal mining operations, while the community is treated merely as low-wage laborers.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is an empirical legal research method. According to Moonti (2024) Empirical legal research is a research method used to test legal theories or to find answers to legal questions by collecting data that can be measured and analyzed. This study was conducted at the Juriya Village office in Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency, because that village is the research area where illegal mining practices occur. Data collection was carried out through several methods, including interviews and documentation. The interview respondents consisted of community members, the Bilato Police Station, and the Bilato Village Government. As for the data analysis, it took the form of descriptive qualitative analysis.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Law Enforcement Strategies Against Illegal Miners in Juriya Village

Juriya Village is an administrative entity under Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency, with a total area of approximately 900 km². Historically, this area was part of Boliyohuto Subdistrict before the administrative reorganization in 2010. Geographically, Juriya Village is situated at an elevation of 30 meters above sea level, with land use dominated by residential areas and dryland.

Illegal mining activities in Juriya Village have been identified as having taken place since early 2010, even before the subdistrict was established.

Currently, the mining area is estimated to cover 10 hectares and employs approximately 60 miners. Demographic data indicates that the majority of the population in this region belongs to the lower-middle economic class, with a poverty rate of 23.44%. It is these economic constraints that have become the primary driver for residents to switch professions from agriculture to mining in pursuit of quick profits.

The study examined the effectiveness of law enforcement against illegal mining in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency. To determine the results of the study on the effectiveness of criminal law enforcement against illegal mining in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency, data had to be collected from the village government, law enforcement officials, and the community in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency, as the research subjects. During the interviews, the researcher asked questions based on the available interview guideline format (attached). For greater clarity, the researcher will now describe the research subjects and the information obtained.

Law enforcement is the concrete process of translating legal norms into tangible actions through the mechanisms of investigation, inquiry, prosecution, and sentencing. In the context of illegal mining, law enforcement is not only repressive in nature but must also include a preventive dimension. Effective law enforcement requires the integrity of law enforcement officials, consistent application of regulations, and coordination among relevant agencies. Without integrity and effective coordination, the law will lose its legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

In the case of the Tana Izin Gold Mine, law enforcement has already been addressed by the village government and police authorities. As stated in an interview with Mr. Marten Abubakar, the head of Juriya Village:

“Alhamdulillah As for the current situation in Juriya Village, there have never been any cases, and no sensitive incidents have occurred. I’ve been trying to reach out to the miners. I invited them to the village office and provided them with guidance. Even as Ramadan began, I distributed a circular from the central government. Criminal law enforcement against illegal mining is proceeding as it should. Since I am also part of the subdistrict government, the mines in Juriya Village previously had issues. But, Alhamdulillah, they have been successfully resolved.” (Interview on April 12, 2026, at the Juriya Village Office)

From the information above, it is evident that the enforcement of criminal law against perpetrators of illegal mining in Juriya Village has been handled effectively by the Juriya village government, as stated by Village Head Marten Abubakar, who has made efforts to address illegal mining in Juriya Village. However, the enforcement of criminal law against illegal mining falls under the authority of law enforcement agencies (the National Police, PPNS, and the Attorney General’s Office), not the village government, as stipulated in Law No. 4 of 2009 on Mineral and Coal Mining (Minerba) in conjunction with Law No. 3 of 2020, Article 158, which stipulates that any person engaging in mining operations without a permit is subject to criminal penalties. Consequently, the village government has only limited authority to maintain public order and report illegal activities.

The same sentiment was expressed by Iptu Krisboy Joe Valentino Purba, Chief of the Boliyohuto Police Station, who stated that:

“As law enforcement officers, we always provide guidance, and we already have a schedule in place to enforce regulations among the miners. We are also working to form community or worker groups in Juriya Village so

that it will be easier for us to guide them or provide them with training.” (Interview on April 12, 2026, at the Boliyohuto police station)

Based on the informant’s statement above, the researcher concluded that the miners had been given proper guidance and instructions so that they could work in an orderly manner and avoid causing disturbances or misunderstandings between miners from within the village and those from outside the village.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Sofyan S. Mula, a member of the community:

“Last year, the Biology Department at UNG held an awareness campaign regarding the impacts of illegal mining. They introduced a drum processing program, specifically an environmentally friendly drum processing method. As for law enforcement, at every meeting and gathering, whenever officials are present, they take the opportunity to remind workers to follow the rules set by the authorities.” (Interview conducted on April 14, 2026, at a resident’s home in Juriah Village)

As indicated above, residents working in unlicensed mining operations have been urged to always comply with the regulations issued by the village government and law enforcement officials. The criminal law enforcement strategies implemented by law enforcement officials at the Boliyohuto Police Station against those engaged in unlicensed mining include:

1. A Preventive Approach Through Legal Education and Outreach

One of the key strategies identified in this study is a preventive approach through education and outreach to the mining community. The Juriya Village Government, together with law enforcement officials, is actively conducting legal education efforts to raise public awareness of the legal risks and environmental impacts of unlicensed gold mining.

The interview results show that the village head directly invited the miners to the village office to provide them with guidance and training. This approach reflects a modern law enforcement paradigm that does not focus solely on criminal punishment but also on preventing legal violations through public education. This is consistent with the view that the effectiveness of the law depends heavily on the level of legal awareness among the public as subjects of the law.

In addition, the involvement of educational institutions such as Gorontalo State University in providing education on environmentally friendly mining techniques demonstrates cross-sector collaboration in preventive efforts. This strategy is important for reducing the negative impacts of mining while fostering ecological awareness among the public.

However, the effectiveness of this preventive approach still faces challenges, particularly the low level of education among the population and the strong economic dependence on illegal mining activities. Therefore, legal awareness campaigns need to be conducted on an ongoing basis and accompanied by a contextual approach tailored to local conditions.

2. A Repressive Approach Through Enforcement and Oversight

In addition to preventive measures, law enforcement officials are also implementing repressive strategies, such as crackdowns and monitoring of illegal mining activities. Based on interviews with police officials, it was revealed that regular crackdowns on miners have been scheduled.

This repressive law enforcement is a manifestation of the function of criminal law as an instrument of social control (*social control*). In this

context, the police have the authority to conduct investigations into perpetrators of unauthorized gold mining, as stipulated in Law No. 2 of 2002 on the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia.

However, in practice, the repressive approach in Juriya Village is not applied rigidly. Law enforcement officials tend to prioritize a persuasive approach before taking more stringent legal action. This demonstrates the existence of discretionary power in law enforcement that takes into account the social aspects of the community. The legal provisions regarding police discretion, as set forth in Article 18(1) of Law No. 2 of 2002 on the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, state that “For the public interest, officials of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, in carrying out their duties and authorities, may act according to their own judgment.” This means that the police have the authority to make decisions based on specific situations, including choosing a persuasive approach over a repressive one. As outlined in the Theory of Law Enforcement Effectiveness (Soerjono Soekanto), societal factors and legal culture significantly influence the effectiveness of law enforcement. Through a persuasive approach, the police strive to foster legal awareness among the public so that enforcement not only instills fear but also promotes compliance.

According to Past (2025), effective law enforcement must be carried out in a proportionate and non-discriminatory manner. In the context of Juriya Village, a selective repressive approach is aimed at avoiding social conflict and maintaining social stability. On the other hand, however, an

approach that is too lenient risks creating the perception that the law lacks strong enforcement power.

3. A Persuasive Approach Through Partnerships with the Community

Another notable strategy in law enforcement in Juriya Village is a persuasive approach through the formation of partnerships between law enforcement officials and the community. Police officers are working to organize groups of local miners to facilitate guidance and oversight.

This approach is consistent with the concept of *community policing*, which views the community as a partner in law enforcement. From this perspective, the community is not merely the object of the law, but also a subject that plays an active role in maintaining order and ensuring compliance with the law.

The research findings indicate that the public is relatively receptive to this approach because it is non-repressive and emphasizes dialogue. This is important for building legal legitimacy at the local level, as noted by Safa'at, Ramdhani, and Kurniawan (2023), that the success of law enforcement depends heavily on the level of public trust in law enforcement officials.

However, the effectiveness of this persuasive approach remains limited to educational efforts and has not yet been fully capable of significantly changing public behavior. This is due to economic factors, which continue to be the primary driver of illegal gold mining activities.

4. A Structural Approach Through Inter-Agency Coordination

Law enforcement against unlicensed gold mining cannot be carried out in isolation; rather, it requires coordination among various institutions, such as village governments, the police, and other relevant agencies. In Juriya Village, this coordination has begun to take shape, although it is not yet optimal.

The involvement of village governments in law enforcement demonstrates the synergy between formal and informal structures within the legal system. Village heads serve as mediators between the community and law enforcement officials, thereby reducing the potential for conflict.

However, the results of the study indicate that interagency coordination still faces various obstacles, such as limited resources, overlapping jurisdictions, and a lack of policy integration. This is consistent with the findings Aminah, Nurlisa, Ubaidullah, and Hasan (2022), which states that poor coordination among agencies is one of the main factors contributing to the low effectiveness of law enforcement in the mining sector.

5. The Humanistic Approach as the Dominant Strategy

One of the key findings of this study is the predominance of a humanistic approach in law enforcement regarding unlicensed gold mining in Juriya Village. This approach is evident in the efforts of the village government and police officials, who prioritize guidance over enforcement.

This humanistic approach is based on the consideration that most of those engaged in illegal gold mining are local residents who depend on the mines as a source of livelihood. Therefore, overly repressive law

enforcement could actually create new social problems, such as unemployment and horizontal conflicts.

From the perspective of progressive legal theory, this approach can be seen as an effort to make the law more responsive to the needs of society. The law serves not only as a tool of coercion, but also as a means of achieving social welfare.

However, this humanistic approach must be balanced with firm law enforcement against the main perpetrators or masterminds behind illegal gold mining activities. Without firm law enforcement, illegal mining practices will continue to recur.

In my analysis, the phenomenon of illegal mining in Juriya Village is a multidimensional issue, as it is not only related to criminal law but is also closely linked to the social, economic, and cultural conditions of the local community.

First, from a socio-economic perspective, the researchers concluded that economic factors are the primary determinants driving communities to engage in illegal mining activities. This is evident from the conditions in Juriya Village, where the majority of residents fall into the lower-middle economic category, with a poverty rate of 23.44%. These conditions lead residents to choose work as miners, as it is seen as a way to earn quick income compared to the agricultural sector, which was previously their primary source of livelihood. Thus, illegal mining is not merely a violation of the law but also a survival strategy for the community.

Second, from a legal perspective, the researchers found that law enforcement against unlicensed gold mining in Juriya Village has not been fully effective. This is due to several factors, namely limited resources among law enforcement officials, weak coordination among agencies, and low levels of legal awareness among the community. Existing law enforcement tends to prioritize preventive and persuasive approaches over repressive ones. Although this approach helps maintain social stability, it has not yet had a significant deterrent effect on the main perpetrators of illegal mining.

Third, from the perspective of legal culture, the researcher found that the residents of Juriya Village still have a low level of legal awareness. This is reflected in the community's perception that unlicensed mining is normal and part of everyday economic activity. This situation indicates that the law is not yet fully understood as a binding norm, but rather as a formal rule that lacks social legitimacy at the local level.

B. Factors Influencing Illegal Mining in Juriya Village, Bilato Subdistrict, Gorontalo Regency

1. Economic Factors as the Primary Determinants

The research findings indicate that economic factors are the dominant driver behind communities' engagement in illegal mining activities. Economic factors are viewed as structural vulnerabilities, where limited job opportunities, unstable agricultural incomes, and a lack of economic diversification create conditions that increase the community's reliance on illegal mining. The majority of those engaged in unlicensed gold mining in

Juriya Village come from lower-middle-income groups with limited access to formal employment. Mining is viewed as a promising alternative livelihood because it can generate income relatively quickly compared to other sectors such as agriculture or fisheries, making illegal mining a survival strategy.

In interviews with local residents, it was found that mining proceeds particularly from gold can meet daily living expenses even in a short period of time. This reinforces the argument that economic pressure is a major driving factor behind legal violations. In addition, unstable fluctuations in agricultural commodity prices further exacerbate the community's economic conditions. Income uncertainty in the formal sector has led people to turn to the illegal mining sector, which is seen as more promising. Thus, unlicensed gold mining is viewed not only as a violation of the law but also as a *survival strategy* for the community.

In an interview, Mr. Melki S. Iti, Secretary of Juriya Village, stated that:

“ Some residents as many as 90% of the residents in the village of Juriya rely solely on income from illegal mining, because they believe that the profits from this illegal mining can meet their daily needs. In fact, they are able to support their families through this illegal mining.” (Interview conducted on April 14, 2026, at the Juriya Village Office)

Based on the informant's statement above, the researcher can conclude that some members of the community rely solely on illegal, unlicensed mining to meet their daily needs.

Furthermore, the lack of alternative employment opportunities has further reinforced the community's dependence on illegal mining. Juriya

Village's economic structure, which remains dominated by the traditional agricultural sector, is unable to absorb the entire labor force, which continues to grow each year. The limited presence of the industrial, service, and other productive sectors leaves the community with few options other than turning to the mining sector. This reflects the failure of local economic development to provide sustainable employment diversification. This situation often creates an "ecological poverty trap" a cycle of poverty that is actually exacerbated by the illegal exploitation of natural resources. As stated in an interview with Ms. Nesmi Salihi, the Planning Officer for Juriya Village:

"Almost everyone in the village of Juriya depends on this mine for their livelihood, because it has become their main source of income. Their children and grandchildren will grow up on the proceeds from this mine. Although the mine here in Boliyohuto isn't as large as the one in Bonebolango, they rely solely on the proceeds from the mine in this village." (Interview conducted on May 7, 2026, at a resident's home in Juriya Village)

Based on the informant's statement above, the researcher can conclude that nearly all residents of Juriyah Village work exclusively in the Juriyah Village mine.

From a legal perspective, illegal mining is a criminal offense as stipulated in Article 158 of the Mineral and Coal Law. However, from a sociological perspective, this practice can be understood as a form of "resistance to the law" because the law is perceived as failing to provide solutions to economic needs. This aligns with the Responsive Law Theory (Nonet and Selznick), which holds that the law must be able to adapt to the needs of society. If the law is merely repressive without providing economic solutions, people will continue to seek other avenues.

2. Social and Environmental Factors in the Community

In addition to economic factors, social factors also have a significant impact on the existence of unlicensed gold mining in Juriya Village. A social environment that is permissive toward illegal mining activities has led the community to view such practices as normal.

The results of the study show that many people engage in illegal gold mining due to the influence of their social environment, including family and peers. This phenomenon can be explained by social learning theory. Akers and Jennings (2015), which states that deviant behavior can be learned through social interaction with other individuals who have previously engaged in such behavior.

In the context of Juriya Village, illegal mining activities have been taking place for quite some time, giving rise to a local culture that is difficult to eradicate. The community tends to view unlicensed gold mining as part of daily life, rather than as a serious violation of the law. This is reinforced by a sense of social solidarity among the miners, who support and protect one another from intervention by law enforcement officials.

In addition, the community's low level of education is another factor that influences their mindset and legal behavior. A lack of understanding regarding the environmental impacts and legal consequences of unlicensed gold mining has resulted in the community lacking adequate legal awareness.

From the perspective of legal culture, this situation indicates that the public's legal awareness remains low, so compliance with the law is more instrumental than normative. People tend to obey the law only when there is

direct supervision by law enforcement officials, but will resume violating it when that supervision weakens. As stated in an interview with Mr. Ronaldo Iti, a resident of Juriya Village, who said that:

“Among us workers at the Juriyah Village mine, there are also some who are still quite young; that’s why they prefer to work at this mine rather than continue their education, because they feel the pay is quite good.” (Interview conducted on May 7, 2026, at a resident’s home in Juriyah Village)

From the information above, it can be concluded that children who are still considered minors prefer to work and earn a living from the Juriya village mine. They are easily tempted by what is right before their eyes, to the point that they are reluctant to continue their education.

That is why some members of the community oppose this illegal mining because they do not want their children to choose to work in these illegal mines. They would rather see the children of Juriya Village continue their education at the university level. As stated in an interview with Ms. Intan A. Hasawati, a resident of Juriya Village who opposes the illegal mining, she said that:

“I object to this illegal mining because I want my child and the other children in this village to prioritize their education over this job that has no future. I also feel the impact of this mining firsthand we’re always afraid of landslides or other disturbances.” (Interview conducted on May 7, 2026, at a resident’s home in the village of Juriya)

Based on the above statement, the researcher concludes that there is public concern about the possibility of a disaster occurring in the village of Juriya. This is because the mining operation is located very close to a large river that runs through the residents’ settlement. Similarly, in terms of social impacts, the villagers do not feel safe or comfortable with the presence of

outsiders coming to the village of Juriya to engage in this illegal mining activity.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Mr. Hamzah R. Tandi, the village head of Juriya, who stated that:

“Actually, I don’t agree with this illegal mining, and I don’t feel safe because of it. To me, this mining could cause disasters I can’t even imagine just like what happened before, when our village experienced landslides and floods. And personally, I deeply regret that the boys in Juriya Village are not prioritizing their education.” (Interview on April 14, 2026, at the Juriya Village office)

From the information above, it can be concluded that some residents and village officials in Juriya Village oppose this illegal mining operation because they fear a disaster might occur in their area. Similarly, regarding the education of the children in Juriya Village, they prefer to prioritize education.

The phenomenon of illegal mining in Juriya Village is a complex and multidimensional social reality. Based on the results of field research conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation, it was found that the existence of unlicensed gold mining is not influenced by a single factor but rather results from the interaction of economic, social, legal, cultural, and institutional factors. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of these factors is necessary to fully understand the root causes of the problem.

3. Factors Contributing to Weak Law Enforcement

Another factor contributing to the prevalence of unlicensed gold mining in Juriya Village is weak law enforcement. According to the research

findings, although there are clear regulations prohibiting unlicensed mining, implementation on the ground remains suboptimal.

Referring to Lawrence M. Friedman's theory, the low level of legal compliance regarding illegal mining in Gorontalo is not solely due to a lack of legal awareness, but because the community's legal culture is not aligned with the legitimacy of state regulations. Currently, legal instruments are in place namely the Mineral and Coal Law, the Criminal Code, and other regulations so the legal substance is clear. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies are in place (the National Police, the Environmental Agency, and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources), so the legal framework is clearly established. However, the legal culture is weak, as the community views the law as a threat rather than a legitimate norm.

The limited number of law enforcement officers, the vast area under surveillance, and the lack of facilities and infrastructure are the main obstacles to monitoring unlicensed gold mining activities. In addition, a law enforcement approach that tends to be persuasive and humane though well-intentioned has, in some cases, created the perception that the law lacks strong enforcement power.

The effectiveness of law enforcement is influenced by three main elements: legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. In the context of Juriya Village, weaknesses in the structural aspects (personnel and facilities)

as well as the community's low level of legal culture have prevented law enforcement from functioning optimally (Soekanto, 2018).

In addition, the alleged practice of "tolerated illegality" (*tolerated illegality*) is another factor that contributes to the existence of unlicensed gold mining. In some cases, authorities tend not to take firm action against offenders on the grounds of maintaining social stability. This highlights the dilemma between law enforcement and social considerations.

Instrumental Compliance The community complies because of the threat of sanctions or because the law is viewed as an "instrument of power." In reality, residents stop illegal mining only when police conduct raids, but resume their activities once the authorities leave. From the perspective of **Normative Compliance**, the community complies because the law is considered valid, fair, and morally legitimate. In the village of Juria, some residents have stopped mining because they are aware of the environmental impacts and believe that state regulations protect the common good.

4. Institutional Factors and Government Policy

Weaknesses in the institutional system and government policies are also key factors contributing to the existence of unlicensed gold mining. The mining permitting process, which is considered complicated and costly, discourages people from obtaining permits through legal channels.

The results of the study show that most people do not have access to information about mining permit procedures. In addition, limited capital is also an obstacle to meeting the administrative and technical requirements set by the government.

This is in line with the view that Fauziah and Ishak (2017) which states that inefficient institutions can encourage the emergence of informal and illegal economic activities. In this context, unlicensed gold mining can be viewed as a consequence of institutional failure to provide fair and easy access to economic resources.

In addition, the lack of community empowerment programs from the government has exacerbated this situation. The absence of adequate alternative employment opportunities has caused the community to remain dependent on illegal mining activities.

5. Environmental Factors and Natural Resource Potential

The village of Juriya has significant natural resource potential, particularly gold deposits. This potential is the main draw for people to engage in mining activities, both legal and illegal.

The research findings indicate that the relatively easy access to mining sites and the use of simple mining technology enable communities to engage in unlicensed gold mining without requiring specialized skills. This reinforces the argument that the abundance of natural resources can be a driving factor behind illegal exploitation.

However, exploitation carried out without a permit and without regard for environmental considerations has caused negative impacts, such as land damage, water pollution, and ecosystem degradation. Ironically, these impacts are often unrecognized by the public or viewed as unavoidable consequences.

D. CONCLUSION

Law enforcement against illegal mining in Juriya Village has not been effective because it remains piecemeal. An integrated approach that combines legal, environmental, social, and institutional aspects is needed so that enforcement not only stops illegal activities but also prevents the community from becoming dependent on mining again. Currently, the law enforcement strategy against unlicensed mining operators in Juriya Village is implemented through preventive, repressive, and persuasive approaches. The preventive approach involves legal education and outreach to the community, while the repressive approach takes the form of enforcement and monitoring by police officers. In addition, a persuasive approach through partnerships with the community has become the dominant strategy for maintaining social stability. However, overall, this strategy has not been fully effective, as it places greater emphasis on a humanistic approach and has not yet provided a significant deterrent effect on the main perpetrators of illegal mining.

Factors influencing the persistence of illegal mining in Juriya Village include economic factors as the dominant factor, followed by the community's low legal awareness, limited resources of law enforcement officials, and weak coordination among institutions. The community's lower-middle economic status drives them to continue engaging in unlicensed gold mining, as it is seen as a quick source of income. Furthermore, the community's legal culture, which remains permissive toward legal violations, also reinforces the existence of illegal mining in the area.

As a recommendation based on this study, it is deemed necessary to strengthen policies regarding local regulations; the Gorontalo Regency

Government, together with the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), should draft a specific Regional Regulation (Perda) prohibiting illegal mining, with clear administrative and criminal penalties. Regarding law enforcement, law enforcement officials should continue to prioritize persuasive discretion, but this must be accompanied by alternative economic empowerment programs. Therefore, the author suggests that future research conduct an environmental assessment to evaluate the ecological impacts of illegal mining on rivers, agricultural land, and local ecosystems, and link these findings to regional environmental policies.

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