

Canadian Mining Company Underestimates Scale of Catastrophe



A Canadian company, Trevali Mining Corporation owns the Perkoa Mine in Burkina Faso that has been in the spotlight since April 16 when a flood trapped 8 workers underground. It is believed the workers have been stranded in a refuge chamber half a kilometer underground, but there has been no communication from any of the 8 missing workers. The efforts to rescue the 8 workers requires rebuilding roads and removal of floodwaters.

Trevali, which is based in Vancouver, B.C. has faced heavy criticism for its response to the emergency, and its on-site safety. Ditol Moussa Palenfo, country director of Nantou Mining, the Trevali entity that owns Perkoa admitted: 'We initially underestimated the scale of the catastrophe,' which highlights the lack of safety planning and hazard assessment.

The Prime Minister of Burkina Faso has said those in charge of the mine are to blame for their irresponsibility. Many speculators are questioning the planning and preparedness for such an event. In fact, operators and managers of the mine are blocked from leaving the country while investigations are underway.

This catastrophe should serve as a reminder to all mine operators and management to check up on their emergency response plans, on-site safety programs and hazard assessments.