



Background to the Action Dialogue on ASM in Ghana

18th-22nd January 2016

Dialogue objectives

- To **improve understanding** and challenge perspectives amongst key stakeholders in the ASM sector in Ghana
- To **facilitate new collaborations and initiatives** to implement changes across the sector and increase trust between stakeholders on how they can work together to drive change
- To **effect changes in policy and practice** in line with a roadmap identified through dialogue

Proposed outputs

- A clear **roadmap for change** in the ASM sector
- A **Ghanaian Learning and Leadership Group** tasked with keeping momentum and driving next steps following the dialogue
- A **post-dialogue paper** based on pre-dialogue research that reflects dialogue discussions and agreed next steps

Outline agenda

All participants will be staying at the Hotel de Hilda, Tarkwa.

18th January 2016: Opening dinner – programme and workshop goals, introductions

19th-20th January 2016: Understanding site-level dynamics and community priorities

Exploring the site-level dynamics of land allocation, access to formal finance and participation in national policy making for ASM amongst miners, local communities, traditional authorities and other rural actors (such as farmers)

21st-22nd January 2016: Building a roadmap from the ground up

Identifying solutions on land, licensing and financing and building consensus around a roadmap to support the formal development of Ghana's ASM sector.

Participants travelling back to Accra will depart at 14:00pm on Friday 22nd January following a closing lunch.

Roles in the dialogue

IIED – ‘Global Dialogue Convenor’

The International Institute for Environment and Development ([IIED](#)) has launched a global programme of action dialogues for ASM (see further Box 1). IIED has expertise across natural resource sectors convening, supporting local partner organisations and providing a neutral space for dialogue for multiple stakeholders (whether government, private sector, or grass roots civil society organisations).

IIED’s role in the country dialogues is to support the work of the Country Dialogue Convenor (in this case, Friends of the Nation) to implement best practice processes for action dialogues and the Country Dialogue Researcher team to provide independent advice on the research and dialogue processes, and thereby work to support positive change in line with dialogue findings.

The dialogue process and content is informed by the national context and aims to create the local ownership needed for change that is scalable, replicable and a priority for key stakeholders. The programme of action dialogues builds on best practice developed and identified by IIED (see <http://pubs.iied.org/16554IIED.html>) and others (see <http://theforestdialogue.org/publications>).

Box 1: IIED’s global programme of dialogues for ASM

IIED’s global programme of action dialogues for ASM supports national dialogues in ASM countries across the world. Our approach is to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration through dialogue which leads to better understanding, roles and relations between the key sector stakeholders. In-country dialogues will look at challenges and solutions that are locally prioritised and support a formalised, rights-based artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) within a more inclusive and responsible mining sector.

Ghana was selected as the first dialogue country as it offers a real opportunity for positive change in country. With a strong government committed to improving the ASM sector and an advanced small and large-scale mining sector, the lessons learned through this process will act as a guide to inspire and motivate dialogues in other countries.

Dialogues across multiple countries offer the opportunity for reciprocal lessons learning and global policy influence. IIED’s role as the global convenor across the programme will be to facilitate cross country lesson learning and to influence and share findings in key international fora. This is key to ensure international policy making is informed by local realities.

Friends of the Nation – ‘Country Dialogue Convenor’

Following a tender process, [Friends of the Nation](#) (FoN) were selected by IIED to be the Country Dialogue Convenor for Ghana. The Convenor’s role is to drive change and mobilise and coordinate the capacities of stakeholders in the ASM sector.

Since 2007, FoN has worked on research and advocacy on sustainable development in Ghana. Through their work they have engaged with and supported different stakeholders, including communities, NGOs, government and industry. As an independent stakeholder in Ghana, FoN will play a key role post-dialogue in continuing to provide a space for stakeholders to dialogue and drive change. This will help ensure the dialogue is locally sustained.

Over the last few months, IIED, FoN and the research team have been working together to prepare for the dialogue, including briefing and engaging with stakeholders. In November 2015, FoN convened a series of pre-dialogue workshops with key stakeholder groups to seek feedback on initial research findings, to discuss how a dialogue in Ghana should work, and to begin to identify post-dialogue needs.

The research team – ‘Country Dialogue Researcher’

IIED appointed a research team as Country Dialogue Research team following a tender process. The team, comprising lead researchers [Gavin Hilson](#) and [James McQuilken](#) and supported by Eunice Adu-Darko, Stephen Okyere and Emmanuel Essel, all have significant experience in the Ghanaian ASM context. Over the last few months, their research has sought to identify local priorities, key contextual issues and policies, and the major stakeholders that should be engaged in a dialogue in order to drive change. Country-specific research is crucial to ensure that the dialogue is grounded in local realities and based on evidence that is independently gathered and reviewed.

Participating in dialogue – what that means

A 4-day dialogue

The four-day dialogue will involve two days in the field and two days in a workshop.

During the two field trip days, participants will visit licensed and certified ASM mine sites to engage with miners, communities, elders and chiefs. This will include trips to the Baako akohunu and Dakete mine and the Nsuaem Top mine and adjacent Kanyonko community. Each site brings a unique context to form the basis of a targeted and solutions-oriented discussion on issues of land, licensing and financing for ASM. The field days are critical in bringing a more nuanced view to policy development and implementation, and ensures and proposal or solutions are built from the ground up.

The two-day workshop will begin by looking at what we learned from the field visits to explore the site-level dynamics and implementation challenges of formalisation policy. During the workshop, participants will be split into multi-stakeholder working groups to collectively develop a comprehensive proposal for change. Groups will scope potential solutions to key issues collectively identified following the field dialogue and background research undertaken by the research team. Over the course of the two days, each group will be given the opportunity to scope solutions and work on the proposal at different stages of their respective evolution. It is our ambition that this proposal will form the basis for a roadmap for change for the ASM sector in Ghana.

Participant’s role

ASM is a complex and multi-faceted developmental opportunity that requires a collaborative approach for any change process to be effective. Effective formalisation processes require the buy-in of a multitude of different stakeholders from different sectors, with the influence and credibility to make a sustained impact in Ghana’s ASM sector. Participants in the dialogue have been selected on the basis of their experience and ability to influence positive change on priority issues in the ASM sector in Ghana.

Participants will be asked to engage constructively in dialogue across the four days and to share their experiences of what works to identify replicable and scalable solutions for ASM. We ask that all participants come to the dialogue with an open mind and focused on the opportunities for collaborative, practical and implementable change.

Box 2: What will make dialogue a success?

Since 2014, IIED has been speaking to ASM stakeholders across the world to understand how dialogue can contribute to and bring about much needed change in the ASM sector. From this we have developed a number of pointers, which will guide the dialogue process and discussions in Ghana.

- **Move beyond talking shops** and address how to implement solutions
- **Make sure the right people are at the table**, to enable shared solutions to be implemented with clear roles and responsibilities
- **Focus dialogue at the local level**, so global dialogue is informed and driven by local realities
- **Don't replicate good work already done**, but collaborate with those with scalable and replicable solutions
- **Focus on common hopes, fears and approaches**, and thus break stalemates
- **But offer the space to challenge widely held worldviews** on the ASM sector that have hindered progress in the past
- **Bring new voices into the debate** – especially the marginalised and excluded – in ways that work best for them.

Through the dialogue process, a Ghanaian Learning and Leadership Group (LLG) is set to emerge. This group will be tasked with driving forward the priority actions identified during the dialogue event. They will continue to work together to collectively influence change, show leadership and encourage ongoing learning following the dialogue event. The LLG will be key to ensure the dialogue is not a one-off event but an ongoing process of learning, influence and change. Dialogue participants will be asked to suggest possible LLG members through the 4-day event and support the IIED team in defining their mandate and priorities.

Expected dialogue outcomes and outputs

Over the last few months we have spoken to many Ghanaian stakeholders who have pointed to the need to move beyond a 'talking shop' towards convening a dialogue that is active and solutions-oriented. Stakeholders called for a dialogue that identifies **a clear roadmap for change in the sector**. This will be the primary outcome of the dialogue process.

The dialogue will aim to facilitate discussions and learning so participants come away with a **clearer understanding** of what solutions are needed to tackle the priority ASM challenges in Ghana. **New and improved relationships** between key stakeholder groups and individuals will be key to bringing about this change and will be supported through the dialogue.

The **LLG** will be tasked with keeping momentum and driving next steps following the dialogue. Agreeing the composition and mandate of this group during the dialogue will be a key outcome of the process. **IIED and FoN** will continue to support this group to support, monitor and evaluate activities in line with the roadmap identified through the dialogue.

The research team will prepare a **final version of the research paper** which will reflect dialogue discussions and act as a key resource for both national and global stakeholders wanting to understand and learn lessons from the Ghana process.

Introductory thoughts for the dialogue

Based on the research to date and discussions with key stakeholders during the pre-dialogue workshops, we have prepared a short overview of what may be achieved through dialogue for an improved ASM sector. This summary does not preclude different approaches and solutions being brought to the table in January but is intended only as a spur for discussion and dialogue. Following the field trips, participants will come together to share their perspectives and define the agenda for the following two days in workshop. We very much look forward to hearing your views and priorities on what is needed to bring about positive change in the ASM sector.

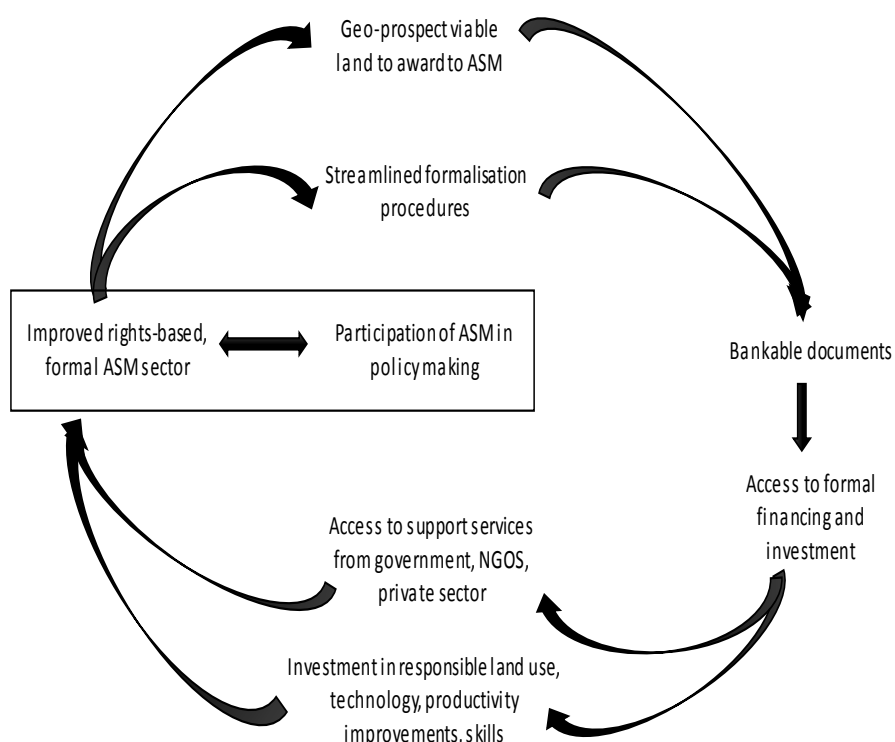
Some of current challenges are:

- **Poor policy-making based on limited geological information** has meant that huge tracts of land are under the control of large-scale mining companies and insufficient amounts of viable land has been set aside for ASM.
- Complicated **bureaucratic procedures to secure licences** mean many ASM miners operate informally.
- Without formal documents (on land or licensing), most ASM miners are **unable to access formal financing** for investment in their operations.
- This is **exacerbated by poverty** – while not all ASM are poor, most lack the skills and resources needed to invest in improving technology, productivity or efficient use of resources.

With better policy-making and investment in:

- Geo-prospecting and the **identification of viable land for ASM**;
- **Streamlined procedures** for attaining a ASM licence to mine;
- **Access to sustainable and formal sources of financing** for ASM;
- **Stronger voice** for ASM miners in decision making and policy;

We can support a virtuous circle towards an improved, rights based and formal ASM sector:



What a Roadmap for ASM in Ghana might look like

Based on research and extensive consultations, the following table highlights potential avenues for collaboration and entry points for participants to co-create a roadmap to towards productive, sustainable and equitable ASM that contributes to local sustainable development and forms part of an inclusive mining sector.

From...	...To	How?
1. ASM miners are insecure and disincentivised	ASM miners' rights are clear and resources are available to them	Licensing procedures streamlined, based on natural resource capability, economic potential, livelihood need Financing schemes available to ASM Business development support to ASM
2. ASM invisible to the government, or illegal	Well-represented, formalised ASM sector that works well with all government bodies	Ghana National Association of Small-scale Miners (GNASSM) and local authority capabilities developed
3. Limited ASM knowledge and skills	More capable ASM sector, informed government, with up-to-date information flowing between	Working with the University of Mines of Technology, agricultural extension agents etc. Business development support
4. Most ASM is poverty-driven, but there are many players who make significant profits too...	More inclusive and sustainable deals for ASM resources and land	Support to geological prospecting and awarding viable land to ASM 'Robin Hood' tax Transparent data and decision making Business support
5. Siloed institutions compete and produce clashing results	Better coordinated institutions realise synergies in ASM, land, gender...	Roles mapped and agreed Integrated ASM strategy Clear institutional mandates Clearer decentralised implementation of licensing procedures LLG advising/monitoring process
6. Poor land/ resource management leads to negative environmental and social impacts	Participatory and sustainable land use planning leads to more efficient and sustainable/responsible use of natural resources	Community participation across sectors in defining land use plans ASM mainstreamed across government policy making

Annex 1: Agenda

An Action Dialogue on ASM in Ghana: “Land, policy and representation”

18 January 2016: Pre-Dialogue Dinner and Opening
19:30 at Staff Club House, Goldfields Ghana Ltd

19 January 2016: Field Day One
Kanyanko Community and Nsuaem Top
Western Region
Ghana

20 January 2016: Field Day Two
Baako akohunu and Dakete Mine
Teberebie Junction, Tarkwa
Western Region, Ghana

21-22 January 2016: Workshop
Hotel de Hilda
Tarkwa, Western Region
Ghana

18 January 2016: Pre-Dialogue Dinner and Opening

19h30 **An Opening Dinner and introductions**
A summary of dialogue objectives and participant introductions.

19 January 2016: Field Day One

A note on proceedings: The structure of field days will split participants into smaller groups for interactions with the miners and community members. We ask that participants be open, polite and welcoming to ensure a positive and fruitful discussion and please note that each group will have two leaders to direct questioning and discussions. To compensate miners for their time, we have prepared a gift box that we will leave with the mine manager of each site. Please refer to the attached Information Sheet for additional ground rules and information on weather, health and safety and appropriate dress.

07h30 **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilde.

08h30 **Depart from Hotel de Hilda, Tarkwa**

09h30 **Arrival at the Kanyanko community and Nsuaem Top mine site**
Site introduction with the landowners, mine manager and gang leaders.

11h00 **Tour of Nsuaem Top**
Group interactions with miners at different gang sites.

12h45 **Travel to Kanyonko community**

13h00 **LUNCH with the Kanyonko Community Chief and Village Elders**
An opportunity to interact with leaders from the mining community.

14h20 **Informal group interaction with a mix of Kanyonko Community members**
An opportunity to explore the surrounding livelihood activities at the mining community.

16h00 **Depart for Tarkwa**

- 17h15** **Arrival at Hotel de Hilda and Group Debrief**
A plenary discussion on key themes and insights from the day.
- 18h30** **DINNER**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilde.

20 January 2016: Field Day Two

- 07h30** **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilde.

Field Group 1	Field Group 2
08h30 Depart for Dakete Mine	09h00 Depart for Baako akohunu
09h30 Arrival at Dakete Mine <i>Site introduction with the landowners, mine manager and gang leaders</i>	09h30 Arrival at Baako akohunu <i>Site introduction with the landowners, mine manager and gang leaders</i>
10h15 Group Discussion & Tour of Dakete Mine <i>Informal tour of the mine-site with the mine manager, concession owner and different gang leaders.</i>	10h30 Group Discussion & Tour of Baako akohunu <i>Informal tour of the mine-site with the mine manager, concession owner and different gang leaders.</i>
12h00 Depart for Hotel	12h30 Depart for Hotel

- 13h00** **LUNCH**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda.
- 14h15** **Group Debrief**
A plenary discussion on what participants learned from the field visits.
- 15h30** **Workshop Opening: Designing a Roadmap for Ghana**
A plenary discussion on how to design and structure a common change agenda for Ghana's ASM sector.
- 17h30** **DINNER**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilde.

21 January 2016: Workshop Day One

Hotel de Hilda

Tarkwa, Western Region
Ghana

A note on proceedings: The structure of dialogue days will split participants into multi-stakeholder working groups to collectively develop a comprehensive proposal for change. Groups will scope potential solutions to key issues collectively identified following the field dialogue. Discussions will also be informed by research conducted over previous months, to be shared with participants in advance. Over the course of the day, groups will rotate throughout each session to give everyone the opportunity to scope solutions and work on each proposal at different stages of their respective evolution.

- 08h00** **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda.
- 08h45** **Designing a Roadmap: Scoping Solutions**
Concurrent working group sessions on key issues for ASM, as identified through the field trip discussion and informed by the background research.
- 11h45** **LUNCH**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda.
- 12h45** **Designing a Roadmap: Developing a Proposal**
Concurrent working group sessions on developing an inclusive proposal that addresses the issues scoped in the morning session.
- 15h45** **COFFEE BREAK**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda.
- 15h15** **Designing a Roadmap: Targeting, Refining and Validating**
A plenary discussion to refine and target an agenda for change.
- 17h15** **DINNER**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilde.

22 January 2016: Workshop Day Two

Hotel de Hilda

Tarkwa, Western Region
Ghana

- 08h00** **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Second floor restaurant at the Hotel de Hilda.
- 08h30** **Finalising a Roadmap: Participation, Roles and Responsibilities**
A discussion on next steps to drive forward the solutions identified.
- 10h30** **COFFEE BREAK**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda.
- 10h45** **Finalising a Roadmap: Next Steps**
A discussion on next steps to drive forward the solutions identified.
- 12h00** **Summary and Close**
A summary of the workshop and next steps. Adjourn by Friends of the Nation and IIED.
- 12h30** **LUNCH & DEPART**
Second floor restaurant of the Hotel de Hilda. Bus departs for Takoradi airport at 14h00 sharp.

Thank you for your participation

Invitees

NAME	ORGANISATION
Richard Amankwah	University of Mines and Technology
Gavin Hilson	University of Surrey
James McQuilken	University of Surrey
Caroline Digby	University of the Witwatersrand
Godwin Amarah	Ghana National Association of Small-scale Miners (GNASSM)
Collins Osei Kusi	GNASSM
Bosco	GNASSM, Tarkwa
Nana Amissah	GNASSM, Tarkwa
Amina Tahiru	GNASSM/Women in Mining
Emmanuel Quarm	Prestea miner
Joe Asare	Japa miner
Kwaku Secretary	Japa miner
Stephen Okyere	Akwatia miner
Yaw Opoku Britwum	Solidaridad
Suzan-Hermina Yemidi	Solidaridad
Solomon Kusi Ampofo	Friends of the Nation (FoN)
Hibba Adjoa Abaidoo	FoN
Donkris Mevuta	FoN
Kwesi Johnson	FoN
Theophilus Boachie-Yiadom	FoN
Kyei Kwadwo Yamoah	FoN
Nii Adjetey- Kofi Mensah	Artisanal & Small Scale Mining-Africa Network (ASMAN)
Edward Akuoku	ASMAN
Maria Luisa Villa Rodriguez	Alliance For Responsible Mining
Dr. Joe Amoako-Tuffour	African Centre for Economic Transformation (ACET)
Amani Mhinda	Haki Madini, Tanzania
Allan Lassey	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Moreno Padilla	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD)
Martin Fodor	World Bank
Akua Debra	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Bridget Mariner	The Tiffany & Co. Foundation
Charles	Dunkwa Municipal Assembly/Solar FM
Mr. Johnson	Tarkwa Municipal Assembly
Jacob Essel	Precious Minerals and Marketing Company Ltd (PMMC)
Ebenezer Sampong	Environmental Protection Agency
Emmanuel Ntiako	Forestry Commission
Robert Nana Mensah	Ghana Revenue Authority
Daniel Boamah	Geological Survey Department
Lt. Col. Wompaelogo	National Security
Franklin Ashiadey	Ghana Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (GHEITI)
Collins Oppong	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
Theophilus Osei-Owusu	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
Toni Aubynn	Minerals Commission
Richard Kofi Afenu	Minerals Commission
Kofi Tetteh	Minerals Commission
Ben Ntibrey	Minerals Commission, Tarkwa
Linda Kwao	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
Simon Attebiya	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
Georgette Barnes	Accra Mining Network/Women in Mining
Robert Siaw	Goldfields Ghana

NAME	ORGANISATION
Ahmed Nantogmah	Ghana Chamber of Mines
Osabarima Kwaw Entsie II	Mpohor Traditional Area
Nana Aduku Addai IV	Wassa Nsuaem Traditional Area
Steve Bass	International Institute for environment and Development (IIED)
Matthew McKernan	IIED
Gabriela Flores	IIED

Annex 2: Executive Summary of the Research

As part of the dialogue process, IIED commissioned a team of researchers to identify local challenges, priorities and solutions for a formalised, rights-based ASM sector in Ghana. The team, led by Gavin Hilson (a professor from the University of Surrey in the UK with a long history of researching ASM in Ghana), spoke to local miners, farmers, ASM communities, national and local government and civil society and consulted the large amount of academic and grey literature (including from previous meeting, conferences and workshops) on ASM in Ghana. Using this information, they have prepared a background paper to the dialogue, which has been shared with participants. Copied below is the paper's executive summary highlighting the key findings. Based on feedback received over the coming weeks and discussions at the dialogue itself, this paper will be edited and finalised in March 2016. We will share with all participants before making it publicly available.

Paper Excerpt (written by James McQuilken and Gavin Hilson)

Through a review of the existing literature, in-depth interviews and consultations with miners, communities, and key ASM stakeholders at the local, national and international level, this background paper provides an overview and explanation of the key issues, perspectives, and policy framework of the sector. It identifies the barriers, which act to inhibit and discourage, rather than incentivise, operators from formalising their activities. These fundamentally stem from a shortage of untitled and geo-prospected land for ASM activities, which, in turn, results in a lack of 'bankable' documents to for miners to access formal finance, and, is further impeded by the costly and bureaucratic licensing process.

In identifying these barriers the diagnostic, recommends that artisanal and small-scale miners be better included in policy formation and debate, and, identifies the following three 'ways forward' (or a combination thereof) for the formalisation of ASM operations and as the basis for discussion at the dialogue:

1. **Geo-prospecting:** *Dialogue to identify and unlock a sustainable source of funding (potentially through a minimal 'Robin Hood tax' on gold exports, earmarking part of the Mineral Development Fund, or other external finance) for the identification of land for ASM activities and for undertaking geo-prospecting by the Geological Survey Department. With access to land and geo-data identified, further dialogue to ensure miners fully participate in the transparent and accountable management and awarding of concessions for ASM operations.*
2. **Access to Finance:** *Dialogue to identify sources of finance for undertaking geo-prospecting and to identify what bankable documents are needed to obtain finance from formal financial and micro-finance institutions. With access to formal finance upfront, miners are able and incentivised (due to their legal standing) to legalise their activities and can subsequently afford to re-invest profits in support services to improve the efficiency and developmental impact of their operations.*
3. **Streamlined Licensing:** *Dialogue to enhance the decentralisation of governance, the ASM licensing system and consolidate the application process. The licensing process could be decentralised and a mining cadastre be implemented to support the on-going efforts of the Minerals Commission to introduce an e-licensing system and ensure that it reaches and is able to benefit impoverished ASM operators by supporting, enabling and incentivising them to obtain a license.*

Formalising ASM in Ghana is a significant developmental opportunity that must be realised

An inclusive, rights-based formalisation of Ghana's ASM sector is a significant, timely and pressing developmental opportunity that must be realised. As large-scale gold mining in Ghana continues to face significant challenges, artisanal and small-scale mining - low-tech, labour-intensive mineral extraction and processing - continues to grow in size and significance. Its contributions to wealth creation, employment and the economy of the country make it one of the most important livelihood activities. In

2014 artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) accounted for 35.4 percent of total gold production in Ghana, contributing almost 1.5 million ounces of gold.

The livelihoods of ASM in Ghana are diverse, dynamic and largely poverty-driven

Ghana's ASM sector directly employs upwards of one million people and supports at least 4.5 million more in associated service industries and markets. ASM employs a wide range of individuals, groups, and communities in operations located mainly across the west of the country. Miners undertake diverse roles from general labourers to skilled machinists, supervisors and bookkeepers, and their livelihoods and backgrounds are dynamic and diverse. The majority of miners are poverty-driven, from families and individuals earning enough to survive, young students funding their school and university education, and farmers supplementing their income to larger groups of men, women and children. There is also a burgeoning number of highly educated and well-connected 'opportunistic entrepreneurs' whom, due to their unique position and access to significant capital investment, are able to navigate the complex socio-political and bureaucratic landscape needed to obtain a license. Yet, the majority of miners in Ghana, as many as 70-80 percent, operate informally due to barriers associated with obtaining a license.

The negative environmental and socio-economic issues of ASM are expressions of informality

This informality has given rise to a host of well-documented environmental and social issues in Ghana that galvanised stakeholders, and, in particular are associated with unlicensed ASM - referred to locally as *galamsey*¹. These negative 'expressions' of informality have also been the predominant focus of the Ghanaian media, which, due to a lack of sensitisation, have depicted the entire informal sector in an extremely negative and damaging light.

The most regularly reported issues include the pollution and destruction of water bodies, the degradation of the environment and arable farmland, as well as the negative health impacts associated with using mercury in gold amalgamation and working in hazardous conditions with little or no safety measures. Furthermore, ASM activities are often accompanied with increases in infectious diseases and social issues in surrounding communities, and, due to a lack of reclamation, may leave open pits increasing incidences of malaria and posing significant safety risks.

Despite these detrimental impacts and negative stereotyping, many local stakeholders interviewed during the production of the diagnostic, and a wealth of academic literature on ASM in Ghana, recognise the significant and positive impact of both formal and licensed and informal and unlicensed ASM activities to community development. These include contributions to the building of schools, clinics, houses and local infrastructure, as well as providing a source of regular and relatively well-paid employment and for invigorating farming, associated service industries and local markets. In addition, foreign miners, many of whom are working illegally, often fill gaps in the supply of finance, equipment, technical knowledge, and support on efficient mining and backfilling techniques.

The current policy frameworks fails to incentivise and support formal ASM

The most significant issues facing Ghanaian small-scale miners and communities identified through the literature review and stakeholder consultations were; access to equipment and formal finance, and, most importantly, difficulties with obtaining a license. These all stem largely as a result of a shortage of untitled land for ASM activities and accompanying geological records without which it is difficult to obtain formal finance to cover the costly and sometimes bureaucratic process (reportedly from 3 months to 3 years if there are issues with the application) of obtaining a license and environmental permits. These issues both inhibit and discourage, rather than incentivise, operators from formalising their activities.

Despite current government efforts to re-categorise ASM licences and various support initiatives for ASM to date, the space and policy framework for the minerals sector in Ghana largely prioritises the development of large-scale mining. The most significant national and local efforts to formalise the ASM sector have centred around the implementation of the 'Inter-ministerial Task Force on Illegal Mining',

¹ *Galamsey* means 'to gather them and sell' and refers to informal and historical ASM in Ghana.

which focuses on conducting sweeps of illegal mining operations to arrest miners and seize equipment. However, this approach has been largely ineffective and unsustainable at reducing galamsey operations in the long-term because it does not sufficiently address the root causes of informality (access to land, finance and ease of licensing).

Through broad stakeholder consultations, the diagnostic also identified that the Geological Survey Department whose function it is to improve geology for small-scale miners, by identifying and geo-prospect areas specifically for ASM activities, are often absent from policy dialogues and policy-making on the sector. The department also suffers from a lack of funding, which means that land is not being regularly identified for miners. This has a knock on effect: without proven geological reserves, miners are less able to access finance from formal lenders and turn to more informal alternatives. Further research also found that although national and local government departments undertake community outreach programmes that crosscut a range of ASM issues, they do not address them directly. In addition, these efforts are not properly linked up to initiatives with other national and local government units nor effectively embedded in district or municipal wide development plans.

As a result, the development potential and support for ASM at the local level is not being fully realised and miners continue to be absent from local policy formation and decision-making. And the same is true at the national level where, despite quarterly meetings with the Minerals Commission, the Ghana National Association of Small-Scale Miners (GNASSM) are largely absent from discussion with other agencies and changes to policy and regulations are often undertaken without consulting their members. This makes for high-level policies and laws that are ineffectively implemented because they do not reflect the realities on the ground.

Ways forward for discussion at the dialogue

If the current resources used to address the negative 'expressions' of informal mining could be transferred or replicated to focus on addressing the barriers to formalisation (identified through the diagnostic as access to land, finance, licensing and, participation in policy debate), Ghana's ASM sector could be supported and incentivised to formalise itself. Aside from generating additional revenues, by bringing operations into the legal domain, the Ghanaian government would be able to effectively regulate ASM activities, minimise negative environmental and social impacts, and potentially propel the sector on to a more sustainable development trajectory.