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ASM–LSM–government relations

Shaping an agenda for collaboration

Author information

This report was written by:

Abbi Buxton, Senior Researcher, IIED, UK

Matthew McKernan, Research Consultant, IIED, UK

Steve Bass, Head of Sustainable Markets Group, IIED, UK

And edited by: Sian Lewis, Staff Writer, IIED, UK

About the event

For more information about our work on artisanal, small- and large-scale mining, visit www.iied.org/towards-inclusive-responsible-mining, or contact:

Abbi Buxton, abbi.buxton@iied.org

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1. Introduction

Over the past six months, IIED has been exploring routes to a more inclusive and responsible mining sector that supports improved stakeholder roles, relations and responsibility, to secure sustainable livelihoods and economic performance. We have spoken to 37 people from the world of gold mining — including representatives of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), large-scale mining (LSM), civil society and government. This builds on our many years of engagement to develop a knowledge programme for ASM (see www.iied.org/asm-knowledge-programme) — identified as a major gap in the sector by IIED's 10-year review of Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (Buxton 2012).

This paper draws on our conversations and a recent literature review to present the key opportunities and challenges that help or hinder ASM for sustainable development — and how improved relations between the different stakeholder groups can address these. It is intended as a framework for discussion at a 'visioning workshop' in April 2015. The workshop will see global and influential members of ASM, LSM and government jointly shape a framework for a series of in-country dialogues with locally-driven and locally-defined agendas for transforming the local ASM sector.

2. A focus on relations

The gold mining sector ranges from the local artisanal labourer to the multinational industry leader and includes local and international governments and communities. Ensuring an effective dialogue between all the stakeholders requires strong relations within and between each group — particularly ASM, LSM and government. To improve these relations we must first understand them. And to do that we must understand each group, and the relations between them, which change over space and time.
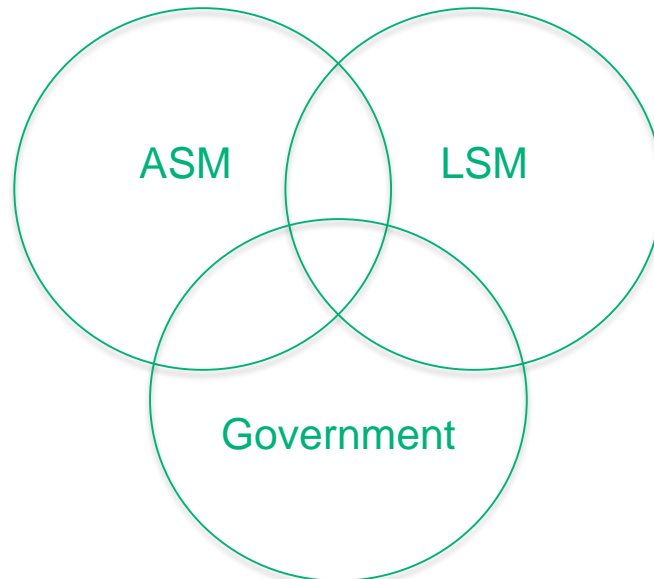
Figure 1. Key groups of stakeholders within the gold mining sector
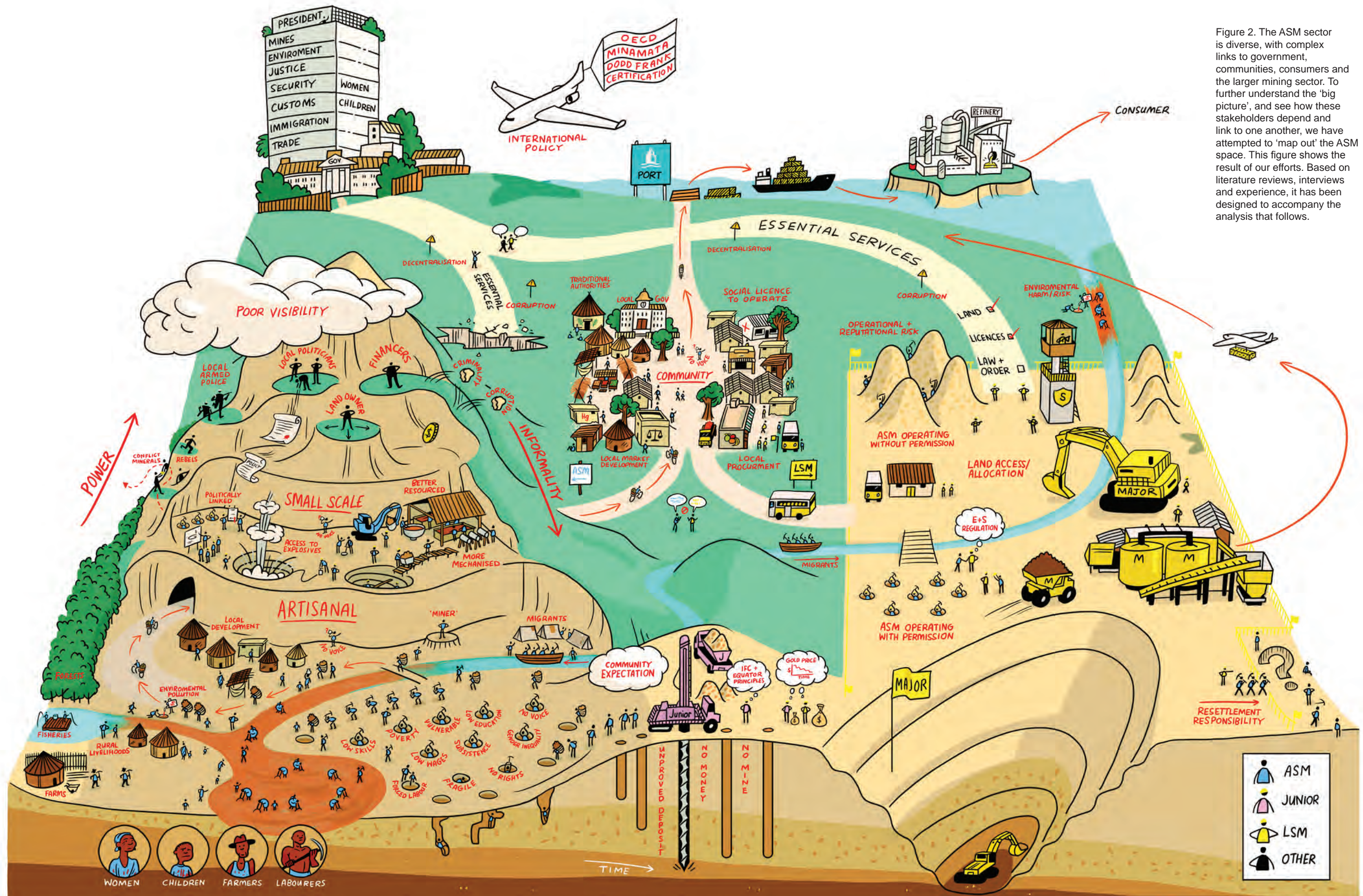
Figure 2. The ASM sector is diverse, with complex links to government, communities, consumers and the larger mining sector. To further understand the 'big picture', and see how these stakeholders depend and link to one another, we have attempted to 'map out' the ASM space. This figure shows the result of our efforts. Based on literature reviews, interviews and experience, it has been designed to accompany the analysis that follows.

2.1   Understanding ASM

ASM ranges from the subsistence labourer to the resource-wielding landowner, and from the gang leader to the local politician. There are differences in scales and incentives.

> *"Each group [within ASM] poses a different challenge and a response from LSM varies depending on what group we are talking about."* (LSM interviewee)
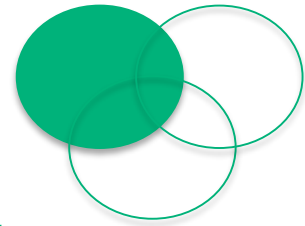
In many countries, subsistence mining exists alongside more capitalised ASM operations with often complex and multi-tiered labour structures. Benefits are skewed in favour of those at the top of the structure — those with power, skills and capital (see Figure 3).

Local politicians, land owners, and financiers tend to hold power within the 'ASM hierarchy' by virtue of their 'capitals' and take a share of the risks and rewards. Vertical relations with those lower down the hierarchy can be positive and mutually beneficial, but not always.

Within ASM, small-scale gold mining is characterised by a certain level of mechanisation, sophisticated processes, organisation and resources. Formalisation, certification and traceability efforts are often more successful here than within 'artisanal' gold mining

Indeed, artisanal gold mining is ASM at is most basic, defined by minimal (if any) mechanisation, poor organisation, high poverty, marginalisation and vulnerability. Low mineral recovery rates, low productivity, low levels of technology, low incomes and unskilled labour continue to drive poverty and its associated environmental and social 'ills'. Yet rising youth unemployment, diminishing viability of agricultural land and increasing migration makes artisanal mining an important livelihood opportunity for many poor people.

Labourers make up the bulk of ASM and are the most vulnerable. Largely driven by poverty, these people are often casual labour, and include women, children and the elderly. Criminal elements often prey on this group, where exploitation is rife and dependencies complex. Formalisation has been the cornerstone of efforts to improve ASM, but little protection is given to labour.

Even within ASM, it is increasingly recognised that:

> *"…a change of mind-sets is needed and new issues need to be considered: legalisation, formalisation, labour and social conditions, and child labour." (*ASM interviewee*)*

Rarely are ASM market players considered legitimate within the mining sector. In the face of short-term licensing, ASM is often treated with a 'project mentality', subject to the whims of electoral cycles, donor funding cycles and personnel changes in decision-making bodies. This adds to the precarious nature of this livelihood and undermines opportunities for investment and growth.
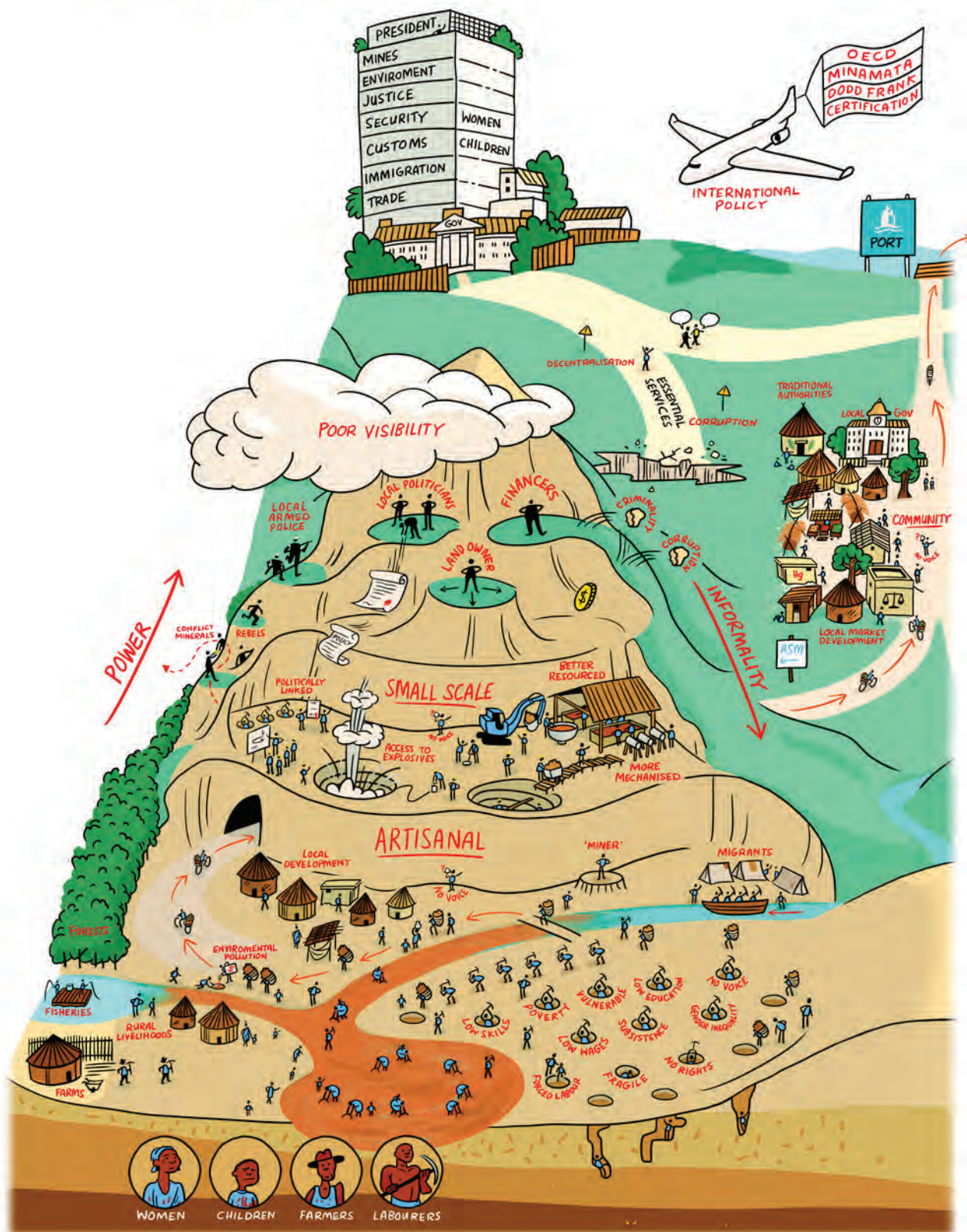
ASM Snapshot

Figure 3. Within ASM, subsistence mining often exists alongside more capitalised operations. Benefits are skewed in favour of those at the top of the structure — those with power, skills and capital.

2.2 Understanding LSM

In the same way that there are different scales of ASM, so too are there scales within LSM, marked by differences in resources and priorities. At one end are junior/exploration companies; at the other are major companies and 'industry leaders'; and there is a huge spectrum of mid-sized companies in between.
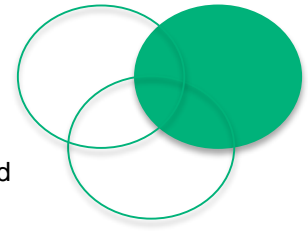
> *"There are big differences between the business model and realities of majors versus juniors."* (LSM: Junior interviewee)

Juniors tend to be the first on the ground and so have a big role to play in setting expectations within the community. But they rarely have the resources to finance those expectations, and establish the corporate-community relations necessary to last throughout the 20–30 year life cycle of the gold mine. Exploration is a risky business, marked by high operational costs, and low levels of production and revenue, with an unproven resource. For these companies, every penny counts, and must be accounted for. They rely heavily on external financing and must operate within strict reporting guidelines, such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards and the Equator Principles. Junior mining operations are often eventually acquired by large-scale mining companies, which then take on the legacy of responsibilities and relationships.

Compared with juniors, industry leaders have huge operations, resources, and a breadth of in-house skills and expertise, including on community engagement. It is these companies that have made the greatest progress on responsible development of mineral resources over the past decade (Buxton 2012). Their biggest concern today surrounds their 'social licence to operate'. Despite finding technical 'fixes' to health, safety and environmental challenges, industry leaders remain exposed to huge political, operational and financial risk in the face of increasing corporate-community conflicts (Davis and Franks, 2014). Solving the community and social issues underlying these conflicts will not be easy — not least because they demand an external focus, with joint solutions implemented through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

> *"The mining industry has made 80% of the progress with 20% of the effort; the next 20% progress is going to require 80% of the effort."* (LSM: Major interviewee)

Juniors, mid-sized companies and majors must all deal with the challenges of operating in remote locations, often with little in the way of law and order, infrastructure and government capacity to service its citizens. Today they operate with shrinking profits owing to low gold prices. This means less investment, fewer jobs and "more strain in mining areas" as ASM increases and community conflicts escalate.

> *"It is a difficult time for finding money to finance initiatives that do not add to the bottom line immediately."* (LSM: Major interviewee)
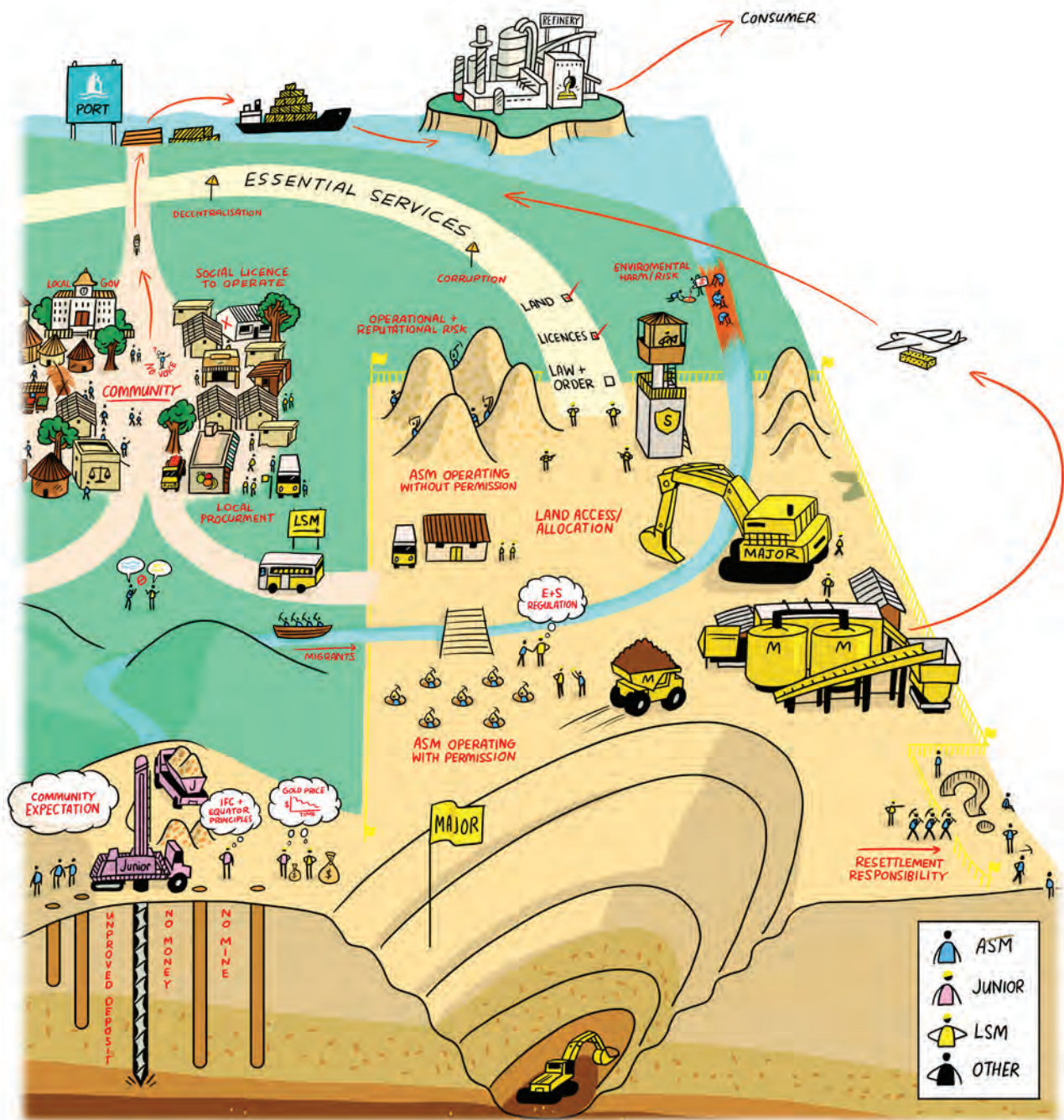
Figure 4. Within LSM, there are junior/exploration companies, major companies and industry leaders, and a range of mid-sized companies. Each group is marked by differences in resources and priorities.

2.3   Understanding government

A range of government officials at all levels are needed to shape inclusive and responsible gold mining. This makes identifying and engaging the right people difficult; so they are often left out of the conversation.

It is not just the Ministry of Mines that needs to be engaged in a broader conversation. Our interviewees suggested that other relevant ministries include those responsible for: environment, justice and security, customs, immigration and trade, women and children. High-level buy-in from the 'Office of the President' can also help drive action forward.

Decentralised government (including regional and local authorities) has fewer resources than national ministries and must often deal with conflicting local and national policies. This makes it extra hard to manage ASM populations, which are often geographically and politically marginalised with little known information. Corruption at all levels impacts ASM hugely, especially in local contexts, where politicians may be incentivised by the status quo (receiving illegal payments from informal activities).

In many places, traditional authorities continue to play a key role in governing local ASM activities and setting the 'rules of the game'. Social and cultural regimes can overlap with regulatory regimes: an opportunity if formal regimes reflect social and cultural realities; a disaster if not.

Donor governments and international policies (such as the Minamata Convention on Mercury) also serve to shape ASM governance, nationally and locally. Similarly, supply chain initiatives (whether the OECD guidelines or certifications) can serve to govern the chain, determining the division of risks, rewards and functions, and the extent to which the most vulnerable are included or excluded.
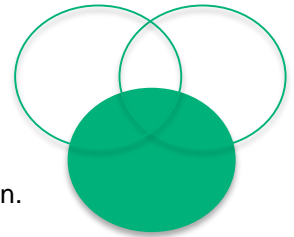
2.4   Relations between LSM and ASM

The complexities of both ASM and LSM are pronounced when they interact. Relations between LSM and ASM are defined by the nature and location of the resource, and are not necessarily in conflict.

> *"Companies are always very supportive of legal ASM mining, and efforts by government to establish more formal ASM."* (LSM: Major interviewee)

Artisanal and small-scale gold miners may operate on a LSM concession, with permission or without. They may be part of a settled or resettled community; they may be ex-workers of LSM companies, or they may be migrants. Their relationships with LSM can be viewed within the context of corporate-community relations, where ASM is an outsider or an established community member.

One LSM executive defines the challenge for companies as one of deciding whether ASM should be approached as a security or social issue. With ASM often considered a 'tier 2' problem — a risk to be managed at mine site level — immediate security issues are often prioritised over social issues. Indeed, ASM can be both a security threat and an operational risk to company operations and personnel —either indirectly, through the criminal elements that prey on ASM, or directly, through the consequences of operating without health and safety, social or environmental provisions. Shifting mind-sets to allow social issues into the conversation requires an understanding of experiences at this level of where it has been treated differently.

> *"ASM is not a risk in itself. It becomes a risk if you don't have the right level of proficient management to handle it."* (LSM: Major interviewee)

We also heard from interviewees that tackling ASM is not just a mining issue:

> *"ASM is a government and societal issue requiring skills and competencies outside the mining company."* (LSM: Major interviewee)
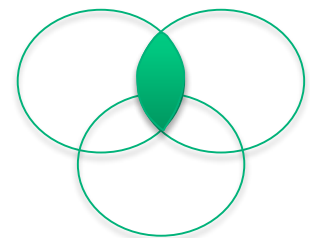
2.5   Relations between government and ASM

Relations between governments and artisanal and small-scale gold miners are complex. Government is seen as the primary force for transforming the ASM sector. But lack of knowledge, capacity and political will in government to improve ASM was highlighted as the single greatest challenge by most interviewees.
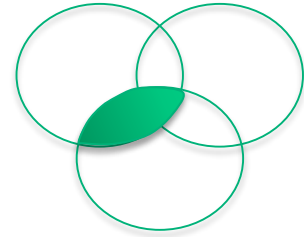
Few central governments understand the local realities of their ASM populations, or their economic potential. Regulatory regimes for ASM have progressed in fits and starts with isolated successes but many setbacks. Incentives for formalising ASM are confounded by the disincentives, with vested political interests and resource-wielding stakeholders profiting from the sector's informality. A lack of regulation and transparency has left the ASM sector bereft of basic services and social protection, and very vulnerable to exploitation and *de facto* criminalisation. Informality increases the vulnerability of marginalised groups and heightens the risks to local communities and other economic activities.

National laws define to what extent ASM is considered legal or illegal, formal or informal. By default they establish the legitimacy of ASM to participate in joint ventures, collaborative projects or even dialogue. The result too often is that artisanal and small-scale miners are left out in the cold.

International policy regimes have far-reaching consequences for local ASM populations. One interviewee suggested that the discourse surrounding 'conflict minerals' has created a sense of 'fear' around ASM. Research into the short-term effects of the Minamata Convention in the Philippines highlighted the difficulties of implementing it — without offering viable alternatives to the use of mercury or any technical assistance, local ASM populations claim the convention harms their profitability and livelihoods, forcing them into a further state on informality. Market-driven certification can also marginalise the most vulnerable, who are unable to meet increasing market standards.

2.6   Relations between government and LSM

There are expectations on both sides of government and LSM. On the one hand, governments are expected to provide law and order, a clear and stable regulatory regime with transparent payments and accountability. On the other hand, gold mining companies are expected to deliver tax revenues alongside certain development benefits through socially and environmentally responsible operations.
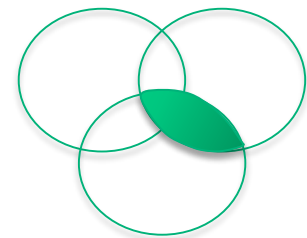
But lack of capacity and dedicated resources often prevents governments from holding up their side of the bargain. And mining companies are not a homogenous group; while we often focus on the best-practice leaders, these companies are the exception, not the rule. The complex realities of societal challenges, coupled with significant differences in resources and expertise available to individual mining companies, lead to inconsistencies in what is promised and what is delivered.

Pinning down specific roles and responsibilities for LSM and government is a major challenge. For example, in Ghana, mining company Newmont has for many years actively engaged ASM on and around their sites, including setting aside parts of their concession for ASM. But these initial steps have not been followed up by the government, leaving local artisanal miners asking: "who will help us access the area, find areas with better prospects, and work with us on environmental control?" But who should be responsible for addressing these questions — the company or the government?

3. Common ground

Our analysis suggests that each stakeholder group — ASM, LSM and government — faces a range of challenges, both within the group itself and in its relations with other groups. Some of these are specific to the group. But many are shared by all three — and by mapping these shared challenges we can begin to see the entry points for collaboration.
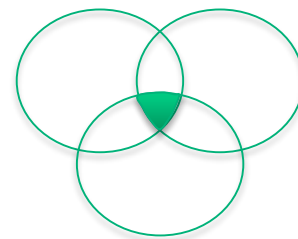
3.1   Shared challenges

Figure 5 shows the individual challenges faced by ASM, LSM and government, and where these overlap. It suggests that governance and livelihoods are twin challenges faced by all three groups. It is here that a multi-stakeholder response built on improved relations could make a real difference towards an inclusive and responsible mining sector.

	ASM	LSM	Government
Challenges	gender inequality; vulnerability; forced labour; poverty; sustainable development; information; pollution; in-migrations; social licence to operate; land and mineral rights; criminality; law and order; informality; corruption; exploitation; geological data; institutional and legal frameworks; resource scarcity; exclusion; government capacity; international policies; security; risk management; market opportunities; remote communities; profits and taxes; conflicting priorities	risk management; poverty; social licence to operate; in-migrations; informality; expectation management; resource scarcity; remote communities; criminality; operational costs; reporting standards; law and order; corruption; government capacity; international policies; institutional and legal frameworks; pollution; security; profits and taxes; conflicting priorities; geological data; sustainable development	corruption; limited capacity; international policies; conflicting priorities; lack of political will; short term drivers; poor coordination; pollution; geological data; institutional and legal frameworks; exclusion; poverty; social licence to operate; sustainable development; employment; information; in-migrations; government capacity; criminality; informality; law and order; remote communities without government presence; processes for land allocation; profits and taxes

resource scarcity   sustainable development
social licence to operate   government capacity
in-migrations
legal frameworks   remoteness
taxes   criminality   law and order
security   development priorities
corruption   land rights
environmental harm
international policy demands
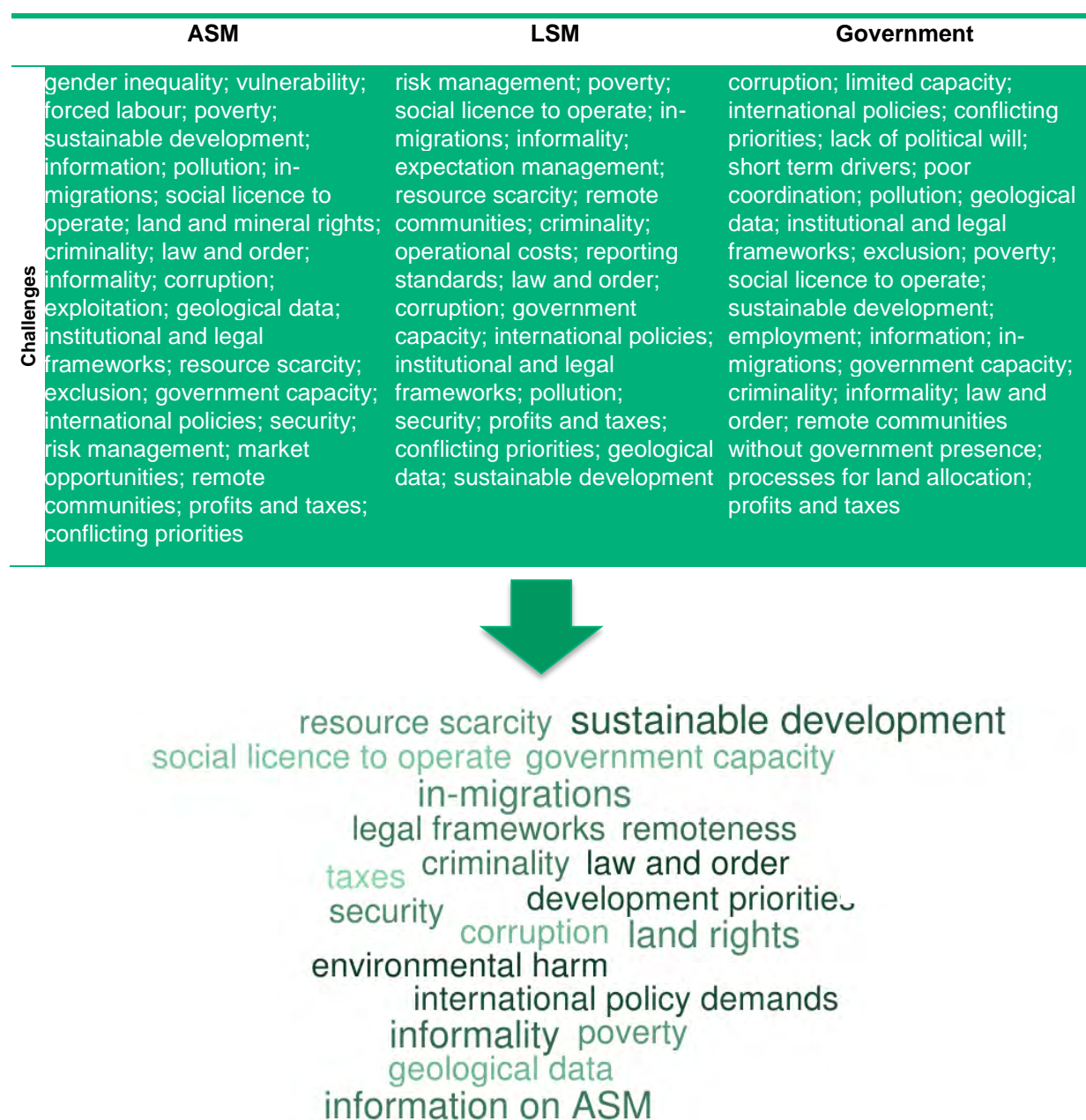informality   poverty
geological data
information on ASM

Figure 5. The shared challenges faced by ASM, LSM and government.

3.2   Visions of success

As well as sharing challenges, our interviewees from across ASM, LSM and government also shared 'visions of success'. Through our conversations, we began to hear the changes within ASM-LSM-government relations that stakeholders feel are necessary to enable effective dialogue that can move gold mining towards more inclusion and responsibility (see Figure 6).

Recognised responsibilities
Market-based solutions
Better information on ASM Law and order
Increased profitability
Recognition for ASM activity Providing jobs
Reduced harm Empowerment for ASM
Clear rules for dialogue Shared knowledge
Global representative ASM body
More information for ASM
Better understanding between ASM and LSM
Guaranteed access to mines
Development benefits
Improved livelihoods
Sustainable development

Figure 6. 'Visions of success' articulated by our interviewees across ASM, LSM and government.

4. Priority issues: a proposed agenda for dialogue

The discussion above describes a 'long-list' of challenges and visions, or 'issues', that fall out of the interactions within and between ASM, LSM and government groups. Here we propose a 'short-list': those issues that are common to all three groups. As we've seen, these 'priority issues' tend to fall into two broad categories: livelihoods and governance. In many cases the priority issue we have identified acts as an overarching theme, under which lies a number of the more specific challenges listed above.

In all, there are seven priority issues. The first three — around roles and responsibilities, knowledge, and voices — form the building blocks for effective collaboration. Together, they will help lay the foundations for a series of in-country dialogues that has a real chance of achieving change. The remaining four priority issues are areas that could provide the focus for specific discussions.

Each priority issue can be seen as a problem to solve or as an opportunity to realise. And each one needs multi-stakeholder collaboration to move the debate forward and break the stalemate of recent years. During the April visioning workshop, we will ask participants to share their experience and expertise to help mould these priority issues into a strong agenda for in-country dialogue — with the understanding that any global framework must act as a flexible outline to be filled and shaped by local stakeholders.

4.1   Agreeing roles and responsbilities for ASM

The problem	The opportunity
The distribution of stakeholder roles and responsibilities for ASM is dysfunctional and poorly defined.	Bringing in all stakeholders can clarify roles and drive responsibility for ASM.

Any initiative on ASM needs to agree the roles and responsibilities for dealing with ASM. Ultimately, ASM is seen as a social or development issue that should be dealt with by government. But governments often lack the capacity, resources and information to engage these groups of geographically, economically and politically marginalised people. And any corruption serves to maintain the status quo. There are few NGOs who work on ASM, even among those who work in the related fields of rural livelihoods and large-scale mining. For ASM, no rights means no obligations (and no access to support). LSM often takes responsibility for local miners that have been resettled from their land and for communities neighbouring their concessions. And many efforts here to work in partnership, set up cooperatives and provide technical training have been successful. But most LSM companies don't consider themselves to have roles and responsibilities beyond this.

In an innovative LSM-ASM-government partnership in Tanzania, LSM support for ASM reflects a broader citizen-based responsibility, undertaken as "residents of Tanzania, to support the efforts of the government programme on formalisation".

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

How do we bring all stakeholders into the debate, in particular ASM and those who are operating and implementing solutions on the ground?

How can we change the mentality of governments and open their eyes to the range of options and opportunities within ASM? How do we mobilise and create political will, and deal with corruption and those resisting change?

How do we frame the responsibilities of LSM companies, recognising them as both profit-making entities and corporate citizens?

4.2   Improving our knowledge of ASM

The problem	The opportunity
Insufficient knowledge of ASM, its challenges, potentials or solutions prevents effective policy and practice.	Bringing together practitioners, local people and researchers provides opportunity for knowledge sharing, but should be coupled with research to plug key information gaps.

The limited knowledge of in-country ASM makes it hard to demonstrate its economic potential and the conditions under which this is achieved. But without showing the gains of a formalised and profitable ASM sector, it is difficult to encourage the appropriate enabling government and corporate policies. Few countries have extensively surveyed and understood their ASM populations. In contrast, so much is known by people working on the ground on what works and what doesn't work, but this is rarely written down, captured or openly shared. Marginalisation and informality means very little knowledge from ASM communities themselves reaches and influences decision makers. This makes it difficult to assess the relevance and practicality of proposed interventions.

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

What information on ASM is most needed to inform more effective policy and practice?

How can this information empower not only policymakers but also ASM communities themselves, and people working on the ground?

How do we capture the diverse realities of ASM: informal and criminal as well as formal?

How can we incentivise all stakeholders to create and use relevant information?

4.3   Amplifying ASM voices

The problem	The opportunity
Despite years of trying to 'improve' ASM, the sector still lacks effective voices and equitable decision-making spaces.	Stronger ASM voices can ensure change reflects local realities and development priorities.

ASM needs an effective voice in decision-making circles. But 'illegal' or 'informal' miners lack the legitimacy, credibility and confidence to come to the table. ASM is often poorly organised and scattered across remote locations, making participation a logistical dead end. And ASM is incredibly diverse — and context-specific — so no single body can hope to truly represent the sector's wide-ranging priorities. Arguably, one of the first challenges in enabling dialogue lies in agreeing the words we use to talk about ASM (see 'Defining legality for a global discussion').

Defining legality for a global discussion

A global discussion on formalisation needs an agreed working definition of the key terms 'informal', 'illegal' and 'criminal'. These words are often used interchangeably, but each one shines a different light on the miner's intentions. Using the correct terminology can challenge incorrect assumptions about why and how people mine.

Formal: People operating with legal sanction.

Informal: People operating without legal sanction.

>   **Illegal**: A subset of informal miners in countries where the law states that all informal ASM operates outside the law.

Note: There is a spectrum between formal and informal that includes a large number of people who are either in the process of formalising or operating with reference to (and therefore 'within' the framework) of the law. Although considered 'informal' for these purposes, it is important to recognise good intent and positive action.

Criminal: People operating with *mens rea* (criminal intent) to break the law.

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

Is the above a useful typology for formal, informal and criminal ASM? How important are 'words' in bringing ASM into the conversation?

How do we ensure ASM voices are not only brought to the table but represent the diversity of ASM (woman, child, migrant, gang leader, land owner etc.)?

How can we capture the voices of the informal as well as the formal as legitimate participants?

The indigenous peoples of the world — a diverse and complex group — were able to come together to form an international position of strength and legitimacy in discourse. How might ASM mirror this trajectory?

4.4   Addressing vulnerability

The problem	The opportunity
Extreme vulnerability and dependencies that exist within ASM are often overlooked.	Targeted initiatives for improving livelihoods could help reduce vulnerability within ASM.

ASM is rarely considered a legitimate livelihood compared with agriculture, fisheries and forestry. It receives far less support from either government or civil society. And yet the extent of poverty and vulnerability within the sector demands that it be treated not simply as a subset of mining but as a significant rural livelihood/development issue and, arguably, as one of corporate-community relations. Addressing child labour and hard labour for women is a first step. This would, as one interviewee described, "put the social fabric back into the community". Ensuring adequate labour protection for diggers, seasonal farmers and other labourers, including migrants, is also important. Alternative livelihood opportunities may be attractive to the most vulnerable. But this approach must recognise (often replace) existing dependencies, including corruption, criminality and exploitation, as well as 'push' and 'shock' incentives — to supplement farm incomes, provide youth employment, respond to economic shocks or natural disasters. 'Sustainable landscapes' approaches might offer a way to deliver long-term improvements in ASM, looking at how natural resources (minerals, soils, water, biodiversity, etc.) are used to promote inclusive green growth and respond to rural realities and incentives.

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

What do we know about addressing vulnerability in ASM? What actions are being taken in this area, and with what success?

How can LSM-ASM-Government partnerships step up to improve livelihoods and reduce vulnerability?

What do the new trends in 'sustainable landscapes' and 'inclusive green growth' offer the ASM sector?

4.5   Strengthening mineral rights: a governance and investment opportunity

The problem	The opportunity
Legal means to access land and mineral resources often overlook ASM, failing to recognise its economic potential, and negating cultural and social land arrangements.	Secure access to resources and improved governance could prove a strong incentive for investment and market development for more responsible ASM.

ASM is not considered to have the same economic importance as LSM, despite evidence that it can better reduce poverty by diversifying the livelihood activities available to the rural poor (Gamu *et al*, 2015). Indeed, a large portion of our respondents claimed that the sector's economic potential is woefully undervalued. Key to fulfilling this potential is an enabling framework that allows governments to regulate and encourage investment in the different sub-sectors. One approach to this is a state-sponsored buying programme. For example, in Ethiopia, the government has not only established exclusive areas for ASM, it also plays a leading role in sourcing. It's transparent supply chain enables artisanal miners to fetch a good price for their goods.

Ensuring access to land, or more specifically mineral resources, is key. Land is often given to LSM without regard to local active miners, intentionally or not. Poor information on ASM communities is coupled with inadequate geological data. So even if artisanal miners have, or are given, land they rarely have the capacity to access the mining areas themselves. Both Colombia and Peru have developed models that allow the LSM title-holder to subcontract to smaller-scale miners without taking on environmental or social liabilities, which might offer an opportunity for collaboration. Different deposits and extraction methods may offer different entry points to engaging ASM. Extending the length of exploration and mineral development licences for ASM, so that they are more in line with those given to LSM, would create opportunities for investment and growth.

Market development for ASM cannot be effective with consumer-driven certification and traceability alone. Any approach which focuses on the better organised and better resourced operators within ASM needs to be complemented with one that understands dependencies and protects the most vulnerable. Improving ASM ultimately requires a response that is both rights-based and market-based.

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

Is the competition between LSM and ASM over resources a real one or are there complementarities and synergies to explore?

What lessons can be learned from Colombia and Peru on sharing mineral resources on an LSM concession? Is there a role for LSM to play in supporting access to land through formalisation?

What do we know about the successes and drawbacks of state-sponsored gold buying programmes?

How might we improve traceability and certification mechanisms to include those most vulnerable?

4.6   New lessons on formalisation

The problem	The opportunity
Formalising ASM has not always helped to realise the sector's development potentials.	Recognising the continuum in ASM from formal to informal could spur innovation and improvement in formalisation efforts.

Policymakers, development practitioners and researchers alike increasingly want to know what does and doesn't work in formalisation. It is accepted that linear, top-down and uni- or bi-stakeholder approaches alone fail. It is also clear that unless we can distinguish between legal, criminal and informal activities it will be difficult to jointly agree the purpose of formalisation, and an appropriate way forward. The poor distinction between ASM and LSM in most countries' legal frameworks makes it particularly difficult for ASM to comply with the law. And hazy definitions of 'legal', 'illegal', 'formal' and 'informal' across the world stop ASM stakeholders from participating in dialogue and collaborative action. Corruption in the sector may work against formalisation as local politicians, land owners, and others receive bribes from informal or criminal activities. A recent study of formalisation efforts in Colombia pointed to more successful policies where local communities and ASM play a role in defining the process, where LSM are involved through sub-contracting, where ethical trading initiatives create market opportunities and where global initiatives, such as the Minamata Convention and the OECD Guidelines on Supply Chains, drive the national government to improve the sector (Echavarria, 2015).

> ### Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts
>
> *Can we agree and promote a working definition of formality, such as that described in the box above?*
>
> *How should policy change to reflect a 'formality continuum' that recognises that some ASM may, for example, operate within the law even if not strictly formal? And that that some potentially useful aspects of formalisation are driven from within ASM rather than imposed from outside?*
>
> *What examples are there of successful formalisation policymaking and implementation?*

4.7   Tackling migration and security

The problem	The opportunity
Security, migration and social disruption are both a cause and effect of systemic ASM problems	Including migrants within decision-making consultations acknowledges their membership of the working community and strengthen social dynamics

ASM is a highly migratory sector. Some people are pulled into it by 'gold rushes'. Others are pushed into it by seasonality, shocks and vulnerability. In-migrations can disturb the social fabric of a community, as well as the operations of a mine. In some countries, the armed forces or public security employed to tackle migrant trespassers are actually part of the problem. In the face of mass migration and lack of rule of law, mining companies get scared: scared that someone will get killed; or that their sites will be overrun; or that they will be blamed for environmental pollution or social ills. One mining executive told us that this threat is so real that the risk of engaging positively with ASM (which includes migrants) is arguably greater than that of not engaging at all. Some LSM, however, are looking to strengthen their relationship with local communities as a way to manage in-migrations.

In many cases, migrant labourers aren't given the protections of more stable communities and can therefore be highly vulnerable. Suriname offers a unique way of tackling migrant ASM. Here the government recognises that migrant miners are part of the working community of the area, and so includes representatives from these groups in their decisions about development funds. The government believes that including migrants in dialogue will prove a more successful strategy for managing the challenges posed by migrant ASM. In Peru, migrants have formed their own ASM representative organisations to engage with mining companies.

Moving the debate forward: share your thoughts

What solutions are available to companies to manage the immediate security threats posed by large in-migrations?

How might a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion, such as seen in Suriname and Peru, help in minimising or mitigating the threats and risks from migrant ASM?

What lessons can be learned from other migratory communities, such as pastoralists and seasonal workers, for improving the ASM sector?

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5. Concluding thoughts

The section above presents our view of the priority issues following our interviews and analysis. During the visioning workshop we will ask participants to suggest whether any of these need to be deleted from the list, and whether any others need to be added to it.

Our intention is to facilitate an agreed outline of the issues that can provide an effective framework for dialogue in different locations across the world. Such a framework will also enable shared lesson learning on key challenges and solutions for the ASM sector as a whole, while ensuring the agenda and dialogue is ultimately determined at the local level.

Our overall goals are:

1. to build trust among ASM, LSM and government — to enable the equitable co-creation of solutions that can improve the sustainability of gold mining practices and support the livelihoods of ASM; and

2. to cement the legitimacy of the dialogue process and, in so doing, ensure commitment to change and uptake of identified solutions, among all stakeholder groups.

The visioning workshop will look to:

• build social capital between key change agents across all stakeholder groups;

• challenge existing positions and stimulate shared learning;

• spur new collaborations across stakeholder groups; and

• design the dialogue series to ensure maximum uptake and input.

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Over the past six months, IIED has spoken to 37 people from the world of gold mining — including representatives of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), large-scale mining (LSM), civil society and government — to explore routes to a more inclusive and responsible mining sector that supports improved stakeholder roles, relations and responsibility, to secure sustainable livelihoods and economic performance. This paper draws on these conversations to present the key issues that serve to help or hinder ASM for sustainable development — and how improved relations between the different stakeholder groups can address these. It is intended as a framework for discussion at the 'Visioning Workshop' to shape an agenda for a series of in-country, multi-stakeholder dialogues to effectively transform the ASM sector.

Sustainable markets

Keywords:
Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), dialogue, towards inclusive and responsible mining, informality

Event Materials

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