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INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM  
on Mining, Minerals, Metals and  
Sustainable Development

# WOMEN IN ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE MINING: INTERVENTIONS FOR GREATER PARTICIPATION

## CASE STUDY



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Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining: Interventions for greater participation

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## SUMMARY

This case study provides key perspectives on how to maximize some of the key opportunities identified in the IGF report *Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining: Challenges and opportunities for greater participation*. It presents findings of interviews with a select informant group whose perspectives can be considered as the beginning of many consultations that shed light on practical solutions to the recurring challenges women continue to face in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Interviewees included miners, miners' group leaders and practitioners, and members of academia.

Interviewees generally agreed that a holistic effort by multistakeholder collaborations should encompass economic, social, technical and political empowerment. Some suggested target interventions for this holistic approach would focus on communications and engagement, capacity building, business support, women in groups, and policy and regulatory reforms. Interviewees also highlighted the need for education (a literacy campaign), awareness raising and multistakeholder dialogues as crucial in first raising women's knowledge, confidence and ability to stand up for their rights, and then transforming societal and sectoral attitudes toward the realization of women's potential in ASM. Most agreed that this is the fundamental intervention to addressing the barriers women face and laying a suitable foundation for major support mechanisms in priority areas.

Interviewees then identified key skills that are crucial in achieving the overall objective of having well-qualified, self-confident, self-sustaining, productive and effective women operators in various capacities in ASM. These include leadership skills, represented in their capacity as managing owners of mines, mining cooperative leaders or leaders of miners' associations. The interviews also underscored that a strong leadership and working structure combined with clearly set out goals can be the precursor helping attract financial and other resources. Secondly, interviewees identified the critical nature of technical skills training, particularly regarding such skills as how to use geological data, conduct mining, simple field geology and gemmology, efficient ways of sieving, simple techniques using retorts and gradually more advanced equipment like crashing mills. Technical skills are insufficient if they are not complemented by regular business and finance management skills, along with regular training courses on issues of acquiring mineral rights; acceptable occupational health, safety and environmental management practices and standards, with training modes conducive for women. Interviewees also emphasized the need to develop capacity-building programs that would see the skills taught put into practice, along with the need to involve civil society organizations (CSOs) in collaboration with governments.

Interviewees agreed that women can lead successful mining businesses but stressed that they need support in many key areas, mainly loans, capital, equipment/technical know-how, and market access. Some suggested that considering ASM as part of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) could help channel support mechanisms needed to maximize ASM's potential, while others emphasized the need to encourage and support microfinance schemes to package loan facilities suitable for women in ASM. Supporting women who are active in value addition should, according to one interviewee, involve promoting partnerships and networks with other similar but more successful and advanced businesses to inspire knowledge transfer, and linking with markets for better beneficiation. Most of the interviewees highlighted the importance of the health and safety of women in ASM, and mechanisms to address women's health and safety risks could be key to women's capacity to develop and run successful businesses. As pointed out by one interviewee, in some cases women should be supported to diversify their mining businesses in terms of the commodities they mine (e.g., away from gold and gemstones to industrial and building materials) and in the long run into other non-mining businesses.



Most interviewees highlighted the need to set a framework on ethical practices and governance of associations and cooperatives, and functionally link them to higher structures with closer links to policy-makers for greater impact. Funding and gender recognition by law were also identified as crucial for successful women-led cooperative formation. Interviewees suggested the adaptation of a human rights approach to get to the bottom of the problem whereby access to justice mechanisms and procedures is accorded more due attention to address sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination, exploitation and harassment. Furthermore, gender-impact assessment needs to be mandatory as part of environmental impact assessments (EIAs). Many interviewees agreed that involving women in policy framework discussions could be crucial to accounting for their views and rights, and to implement gender-based targets in regulatory instruments. Involving local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), regional miners' associations, large-scale mining operators, and development organizations was also considered important.

## NOTE

This report is one of three in a global research project funded by the IGF providing an updated review of current knowledge on ASM trends and gender issues. The two reports can be found online:

- *Global Trends in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM): A review of key numbers and issues*
- *Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining: Challenges and opportunities for greater participation*

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## INTRODUCTION

Building on the findings of the previous report, this case study provides a synthesis of perspectives by a select informant group on the ways forward to implementing an enabling environment and support mechanism that is practical and achievable. It will be used as a background to the women in ASM session at the ASM18 conference in Livingstone, Zambia from September 11 to 13, 2018. The session will provide a platform for participants to showcase their experiences, share information and lessons that are replicable and scalable, debate global trends and build trust that will lead to identifying common needs and ways to improve institutional collaboration. The aim is to strengthen the voices of women in ASM, ensure global policy processes are better informed by local realities and dialogue, and inspire new global networks to inform and drive change in the sector.

This case study solely relied on interviews with select respondents who are involved in the sector in various ways and have knowledge of and/or expertise in the topic of women in ASM. A total of 20 participants were interviewed representing miners, academia, miners' group leaders and practitioners. Each participant was sent a one-page information sheet with the study aims, interview guidelines and reporting plans, and a document containing interview questions (see Annex). Interviews were conducted following a semi-structured research protocol to guide discussions. Participants were encouraged to engage more with some areas than others depending on experience and expertise, with flexibility for some follow-up questions arising during the interview based on responses. Interviews lasted between an hour and an hour and half with each individual participant.



## KEY INTERVENTIONS

Interview respondents generally agreed that a holistic effort encompassing economic, social, technical and political empowerment should be the target of interventions by multistakeholder collaborations. Some of the target interventions are summarized as follows.

### COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Most of the interviewees noted the need for women's education and awareness about their legal and human rights, which they identified as perhaps the single most important ingredient to raising women's confidence to force and inspire change. As one respondent explained, women need to have self-belief that they can be engineers, geologists and leaders, and this comes as a result of extensive education and awareness campaigns. Basic education (literacy campaigns) should be developed for women in mining communities, with provision of access to information using innovative platforms. Another respondent highlighted that information on such issues as land use and land management knowledge, land policies and regulations, simple geological data, and available technologies should be communicated to women in ASM through user-friendly methods such as local media and mobile phone systems.

**“Norm change comes from within, and that can be transmitted to others through creative communication.”**

One interviewee noted that acceptance of scientific data is low in most communities, such as in Madagascar where customary practice sometimes obliges people to sacrifice a zebu (cattle) believing that doing so helps discover minerals. Awareness and literacy campaigns are therefore crucial for successful communication of information. One of the best methods that one interviewee pointed out is encouraging the involvement of “champion women” (i.e., those who have excelled in their fields either through education or experience) to educate, mentor and support other women by being role models. This can have a powerful impact if well supported. Other interviewees underscored the need to consider the crucial role that men in leadership positions (gender-championing men) can play, pointing to the fact that men are the “gate keepers” and can be influential in removing the hurdles women face. Through such an approach, other men can be educated to appreciate the advantages of empowering women.

**“If men are the problem then men have to be part of the solution.”**

Most of the interviewees recognized the need for education, awareness and dialogue at the local level, not only involving women but also traditional rulers and media. Educating and engaging with communities, community leaders and media (particularly TV and radio) at the local level has a significant impact in dispelling myths about women in ASM. Furthermore, it was highlighted that sensitization also needs to extend to religious leaders who have great influence on society. One of the interviewees cited her own experience, pointing out that some role model fathers and elders can be encouraged to demonstrate to others about the roles and opportunities they give their daughters and other women. This could have significant result at the community level to address issues of discrimination against women in ASM.

Sensitization and sharing of accurate information about women's potential as mining entrepreneurs should not only be confined to society, government and media but also extended to the financial sector. One interviewee recommended engaging with banks and microfinance institutions to raise awareness of women's saving capacities and to de-risk lending to women in ASM. This is crucial, given that access to finance is one of the main challenges that women in ASM face due to the extra burdens related to gender bias on grants, loans and collateral, which in many cases require male approval. While banks can be enlightened on the role of women in ASM, one interviewee highlighted



the harsh reality that the onus is upon women miners themselves as people in need of financial support, and that banks as profit makers require appropriate evidence.

**“I would not blame banks, I would start educating women.”**

Most agreed that documenting and communicating success stories of women in ASM should be a part of such engagement and sensitization campaigns. The most effective way of sharing those stories would be by active involvement of the women in ASM themselves through the creation of a conducive engagement platform.

**“ASM mostly is not for intellectuals, and discussions and language need to be simplified so the miners and everyone at the lower level get involved openly.”**

While the above-mentioned suggestions could have major impacts on transforming women's attitudes and confidence—as well as societal and sectoral attitudes toward women in ASM—it is important to recognize that addressing traditional norms (and the burdens of domestic chores) while promoting women's voices and intellectual and technical capabilities could take time. On the flip side, as one interviewee underscored, there is limited knowledge or even consideration of the societal implications and the impact on gender relations if women were to have more money, power and capabilities. It is therefore important that research tools are applied on the ground to understand these issues at the same time as conducting those crucial literacy, engagement and sensitization campaigns.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Capacity building goes hand in hand with raising awareness, literacy and sensitization of and about women in ASM. There are some key skills that are critical to achieving the overall objective of having well-qualified, self-confident, self-sustaining, productive and effective women operators in various capacities in ASM. One skill that many interviewees mentioned is women's leadership, be it in their capacity as managing owners of mines, mining cooperative leaders, or leaders of miners' associations. In most cases, particularly in women's groups or associations, a common issue that most interviewees pointed out is that women in leadership positions compete with one another—and in some cases fail to work in harmony and instead promote their own self-interest—suggesting that those women need sensitization and leadership training. Another issue mentioned is the lack of capital and other resources (mainly for those leading various associations) to function well. However, a strong leadership and working structure along with clearly set out goals can be the foundation that helps attract financial and other resources.

**“Women can defeat barriers if they are trained enough to lead by example.”**

Secondly, interviewees identified the need for technical skills training, particularly on how to use geological data, simple field geology and gemmology, efficient ways of sieving, simple techniques for using retorts—and gradually, more advanced equipment like crushing mills. While most women miners carry out some basic mining and processing techniques like sieving, ore purification, gemmology and stone cutting, there is a significant need to upgrade their skills on responsible and productive mining and processing techniques. This will help reduce their dependency on male counterparts, some of whom are believed to exploit women and deny them their due benefits. One interviewee suggested that such skills training should be done so that those trained can also train other women to ensure transfer of skills and knowledge.

It was generally agreed among the interviewees that women can succeed in the processing of minerals, although some pointed to the heterogenous nature of women's activities in ASM and warned of the risk in focusing on one or two areas, as women have demonstrated they can succeed in multiple mining business types. Training women in value chain activities such as cutting, polishing,



jewellery making and ore processing can, however, be less challenging to support than pit-level activities, as many women are already involved in those activities with some success. There are a few notable examples where, either inspired by individuals or supported by development partners, women receive such training in practice. One interviewee, for example, mentions the new lapidary centre in Sakaraha, Madagascar, that is aimed at training women to acquire skills in stone processing (See Box 1).

### BOX 1. SAKARAHА LAPIDARY CENTRE



Photo: Lynda Lawson

This centre located in Sakaraha District, Atsimo-Andrefana Region of Madagascar was created through a collaboration between the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Australian government, and its aim is to provide training for women on Cabochon cutting and jewellery making. GIZ implemented a series of training of women on costume jewellery to better integrate women into the value chain and gradually introduce the sector in the field of trade fair. The purpose of the training is to professionalize women in value addition and promote local trainers to scale up the production of costume jewellery. Through the first and second training in October 2017, 15 women were beneficiaries, with four of them promoted to the next level of training in cutting coloured and precious stones.



## “Developing women’s capacity in leadership and technical training and ensuring genuine participation is more important than just giving them quotas.”

Technical skills are insufficient if they are not complemented by business management skills, a skill set that in many cases (not just for women) determines the sustainability of mining businesses. Many interviewees pointed out the training needs for women in finance and business management, accounting and bookkeeping. Accounting and reporting issues are among the challenges that ASM businesses (particularly those operating in groups) have faced. Thus, providing regular training courses on business and finance management and making such accreditation a prerequisite for issuing grants and loans would not only be to the advantage of miners but could also serve as a guarantee for lending and funding institutions. Furthermore, women can benefit from the knowledge and skills related to understanding the supply chain and larger markets. Empowering women with such skills can bolster their success rate in ASM, thereby motivating other women.

Furthermore, interviewees highlighted the need for regular training courses on issues of acquiring mineral rights, acceptable occupational health, safety and environmental management practices and standards, with training modes conducive for women. While there have been many interventions through such things as capacity-building exercises and workshops organized by ministries of mines and/or development partners, these are mostly done in towns and not rural areas, and so most miners do not benefit due to travel issues. Women in particular suffer due to their domestic responsibilities and inability to travel to towns and cities. Thus, many interviewees suggested the need to involve civil society organizations (CSOs) in collaboration with local government branches to help build women’s capacity through training and sensitization, with one noting that results are realized when the CSOs take lead, with government only providing support through legal and policy frameworks.

This is not to ignore the views of many, as reflected by one interviewee, that performance of CSOs with respect to women in ASM has been somewhat mixed, with some isolated cases of support in various capacities. CSOs in Tanzania, for example, are trying to assist those women who are willing to own primary mining licences (PMLs) by holding meetings and sensitization on rules and regulations that apply to them. Some interviewees believe that CSOs can be integral in providing legal and technical guidance to women in ASM to identify parcels of mineral-rich land and obtain licences. Similarly, they can help prepare women miners to advocate for their mineral, land, socioeconomic and environmental rights, and to hold duty bearers/policy-makers accountable. However, the general understanding is that CSOs can do much better, despite being challenged by their lack of in-depth knowledge about the sector’s challenges and opportunities and their misconceptions of ASM as a “messy” affair. In addition to addressing the knowledge and misconception issues, CSOs, as with governments, will need to become better coordinated to have any significant effect.

Finally, one interviewee warns of the “fatigue” that many miners feel about the number of training initiatives at various levels and periods, underscoring that while these are important it is equally important to moving into the next level of implementing platforms through which trained capacities are deployed. The key message is that capacity building should not just be about delivering training in a certain skill with no follow-up after completion: instead, there should be well thought-out programs that aim to see the skills taught put into practice. This would necessitate that those programs include pilot programs such as model mine pilots in which trained women can deploy their newly acquired skills, in the process gaining valuable on-the-job experience and accreditation.



## BUSINESS SUPPORT

There are rare cases where individual women miners have excelled in what they do as miners, engineers, geologists and mining processors. Interviewees noted that some women have succeeded in establishing and operating their own mines—along with businesses in mineral-value addition, ore processing, and providing services such as food supplies in mining areas. One respondent also referred to a few who have managed to build their own houses and took their children to good schools, including outside the country. These isolated and very rare success stories beg for a collective effort to utilize those disjointed skills and experiences and demonstrate the heights of women's potential in the mining sector.

**“How about initiating a pilot model mine with some of the successful and talented women in charge of the areas of their respective skill sets.”**

The overall understanding among interviewees is that women in ASM have the potential to run successful businesses, but they also need support in many key areas, mainly loans, capital, equipment and technical know-how, and market access. Many pointed to the role of governments through such mechanisms as creating loans, revolving funds and grants facilities. However, some interviewees cautioned that such mechanisms need to be undertaken cognisant of the limitations that only a few women can be supported, and expectations can become high. As such, they can be carefully targeted with the objective of promoting a multiplier effect through training, funds management support, monitoring and evaluation. Some interviewees noted that local governments are closer to communities and should take a greater role in addressing some of the issues women face, like making sure male signature is not made a requirement; using women who have done well to motivate others; and ensuring grants are given to those who show hard work. Some also suggested the need to encourage and support microfinance schemes to package loan facilities suitable for women in ASM.

One interviewee noted that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) programs improve livelihoods in communities, and considering ASM as part of SMEs could help channel support mechanisms needed to maximize ASM's potential. According to this school of thought, SME support mechanisms such as financial schemes (e.g., value added tax and other tax exemptions when purchasing equipment), technical and business skills, and marketing opportunities can be provided with gender fairness in mind. Another interviewee suggested that government and financial institutions need to reduce terms and conditions of capital and loans to women to encourage ASM project establishment and development.

Supporting women who are active in value addition should, according to one interviewee, involve promoting partnerships and networks with other similar but successful and advanced businesses to inspire knowledge transfer. Reflecting on her own experience, the interviewee pointed out that women need careful mentorship by business people, with opportunities for international learning experience through time spent in places like India and Thailand to understand the value chain and learn from advanced processing techniques. Partnerships could also involve linking women miners with established small or medium-sized companies through some agreement like the one between the Ntungamo Women Tin Dealers Association based in Ntungamo District Western Uganda and Hills Resources Ltd (see Box 2).



## **BOX 2. BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE**

The Africa Centre for Energy and Mineral Policy (ACEMP) is working with 40 members of the Ntungamo Women Tin Dealers Association based in Ntungamo District, Western Uganda to build their skills, with the goals of enabling them to add value to their mineral products, generate more income and ultimately lift their households out of poverty. ACEMP noticed the need for and supported the Association to acquire mining rights that would legalize their activities. ACEMP did this by linking the Association up with another partner, Hills Resources Ltd, which agreed to allow the women to set up their processing centre on the company's licence. Hills Resources acquired a location licence and entered an agreement with the women to use that licence for their operations. In return the women sell their mineral commodities to Hills Resources at a negotiated fee that is at least 20 per cent above market rates.

Helping women access markets, according to most of the interviewees, is as crucial as supporting business management and productivity. One of the interviewees highlighted the need for markets to be set up with institutional buying arrangements prioritizing women, as women are currently getting exploited by buyers. Another alluded to the issue that some women do all the hard work of mining and, for reasons of security and cultural norms, give their finds to their husbands to sell, only for the husbands to conceal the real value from them. Yet another interviewee suggested that a one-stop lapidary centre could serve as a market centre, while also promoting market knowledge, skills training, and women's market networks, including sponsorship for gem shows in different countries. Encouraging a fair trade business model was also suggested to help address the barriers faced, including differing languages, knowledge of international market values, responses to international consumer demand and complying with standards requirements.

Most of the interviewees highlighted the importance of the health and safety of women in ASM, and mechanisms to address women's health and safety risks could be key to women's capacity to develop and run successful businesses. These should include: i) awareness raising and education on health and safety risks, ii) provision of basic tools and safety gear (e.g., helmets, boots gloves), iii) childcare and education facilities for children to keep them out of dirty water, iv) improving mineral processing practices in which women have active roles that involve hazardous chemicals, v) provision of mechanized equipment, technology and technical skills. All of these are crucial for responsible and productive operations. There is a need for research to be conducted to identify gender-appropriate and affordable mining equipment and technologies that suit local settings.

**“Women need to be considered within the overall rural development plans.”**

As pointed out by one interviewee, in some cases women should be supported to diversify their mining business in terms of the commodities they mine (e.g., away from gold and gemstones to industrial and building materials) and in the long run into other non-mining businesses. Many women are already engaged in quarrying, and despite its low value per quantity the industrial and building industry can be a reliable source of income for women. The long-term objective for women should, however, be to deploy earnings from mining and quarrying by investing in non-mining sectors such as tourism (hotels, restaurants, cafes and shops), service delivery, and modernize agriculture (for those who depend on it). This way women can avoid dependency on limited and uncertain mining resources.



## WOMEN IN GROUPS

According to many of the interviewees, women need to be encouraged to form groups, which in many respects is key to empowering them. Two types of women's groupings need to be distinguished according to their objectives and mandate: (1) women's associations, which are more like unions representing miners and promoting their interests, and (2) women's mining operators' groups, which are usually called cooperatives, and are groups of miners investing in and operating mining businesses. While the role of women's associations is discussed in detail in the previous report of this research series, leadership skills development is one of the recommendations that applies equally to both women's cooperatives and associations. This is because the lack of leadership and managerial capacity—combined with the misuse of power—often hinders the real progress that women miners can make as groups. Most interviewees highlighted the need for setting a framework on ethical practices and governance of associations and cooperatives, and functionally linking them to higher structures more closely linked to policy-makers for greater impact.

Women miners' cooperatives should not necessarily be taken to mean women-only groups, although that is possible. They could be a group of mostly women miners led by a woman, and as one interviewee noted they could involve men as part of their operations to account for physical and technical gaps. Most interviewees agree that there are very few cooperatives led by women, which could be attributed to the lack of trust among women. The reasoning given is that some may feel they would fail in their home responsibilities, and so they migrate, and groups of migrant women often do not trust one another. Others, on the other hand, pointed to poor management and accounting as a reason for failed cooperatives. Strengthening associations of women miners can help upgrade women's skills to form cooperatives, given that those associations know and work closely with miners and can be instrumental in identifying miners with a potential to form cooperatives, at the same time facilitating support mechanisms to address the governance, leadership, management and accounting challenges faced.

Some interviewees noted the need for cooperatives to be well recognized by law, which would help provide an enabling environment for supportive mechanisms by the public and private sectors. In addition, it was suggested that crucial factors include funding and a dedicated body with close links and influence on policy making to oversee and monitor functioning of these cooperatives. That dedicated body can be an umbrella cooperative that oversees member cooperatives in regions and provides an accessible network to markets, suppliers, processing plants, financial means, technical skills and other support mechanisms. Some of the interviewees, however, warn about the danger of relying too much on—and/or perhaps forcing—cooperative formation as a solution when in fact it can be counterproductive, particularly when groups don't gel and fail to work together. It is, therefore, important to support cooperatives structurally, focusing on organizational and governance strengthening.

## POLICY AND REGULATORY REFORMS

Interviewees generally agreed on the desperate need for legislative reforms that promote women's case in mining, which can lay a positive foundation for many other support mechanisms. While cautioning against overgeneralization, one respondent points out that the ongoing review of mining policies presents an opportunity for governments to introduce policies specific to the ASM sector aimed at realizing its development potential. The general understanding is that many governments have the desire but lack the instruments and capacity to implement gender-reform measures. According to one interviewee, there is progress in terms of verbal agreements and recognition of gender mainstreaming, but this does not translate into policy strategy, as governments are usually unsure about what to do.



**“There are policy provisions but in reality, it is a man-eats-woman sort of world in the mining sector.”**

One interviewee alluded to the risk that the current formalization push might be overwhelmed by the historical background that has legitimized the non-recognition of women as miners. Accordingly, this begs for an adaptation of a human rights approach to get to the bottom of the problem so that women’s access to justice mechanisms and procedures is accorded more attention to address sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination, exploitation and harassment. Furthermore, gender-impact assessments need to be mandatory as part of environmental impact assessments (EIAs).

**“Invisibilization’ of women is happening through the formalization push.”**

Many interviewees agreed that involving women in policy framework discussions could be crucial to account for their views and rights; and put in place gender-based targets in regulatory instruments. One respondent suggested the need for an independent entity that is armed with legal, financial and institutional instruments and is mandated to ensure participatory policy reform and enforcement of legal provisions on the ground. Having such an entity—well connected with the reality on the ground and with a well-established relationship and trust with miners and other key stakeholders—can be crucial. Governments for their part have the responsibility to reveal and ensure understanding of policy frameworks and legal fairness among miners in general and women in particular.

**“Innovative approaches emerge but don’t really address the issue, as there is a mismatch with the reality on the ground.”**

According to most interviewees, governments should also work with local NGOs and involve existing miners’ associations, which can be less bureaucratic, more transparent and effective, as these NGOs and associations have close working relationships with miners. However, interviewees also point to the challenges governments face when working with miners’ associations which tend to be personality-driven with one or two personalities dominating and, in the process, promoting individual interests. Overall, it was agreed that the real actors are at the regional and local levels, and it makes sense that national governments involve either local government authorities (LGAs), NGOs or regional miners’ associations working on improving governance and transparency.

**“The voices of many are drowned in those of a few personalities.”**

Although large-scale mining (LSM) companies’ involvement in ASM issues is limited mainly to management of “ASM risk,” one interviewee argues that they can play a role supporting government initiatives by setting standards.

**“As opinion leaders with a lot of power, LSM companies can mobilise opinion and people, and in so doing can promote women’s need for access to land and education.”**

Therefore, to implement the stated desire of governments to address women’s legal and policy issues in ASM, they will need to pull together all the resources working with local entities and women miners themselves in order to formulate policies that account for women’s needs and realize their potential. Governments also will need to work with development organizations, who are increasingly refocusing their approach on gender. In the past, a number of international development organizations have been heavily involved by providing financial support and developing new initiatives; however, many of the interviewees felt that effectiveness and impact are missing. They point to the fact that in many cases there is a serious lack of transparency and accountability, and that most miners and communities do not know the whereabouts of huge financial investments on new initiatives that usually fail to take off. Some interventions also lack coherence and fail to align with existing policy and regulatory frameworks in host countries, further hindering their continuity.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Women have played—and continue to play—multiple and significant roles in communities, and they can potentially act as powerful agents of change. Greater research is needed to document women's various activities in the ASM sector, unpack the complexity and (in)formality of financial flows involving intermediaries, and understand the interaction of stakeholders in their dealings with respect to gender issues in ASM. Not many targeted government-led programs exist that specifically work on the agenda of women in ASM; CSOs and development organizations themselves have been dedicating significant efforts to mainstreaming gender, which in practice have translated in the women's issue ending up relegated to the bottom of priorities. Oftentimes, isolated interventions and practices occur, and the lack of alignment with existing ones leads to failure to address gaps and bring changes badly needed on the ground.

Concrete reform should be inspired by multistakeholder collaborations for collective funding and consolidated action to address women's needs in mining operations. Governments, in alignment with local entities, have a major role to play in leading the reform process by introducing gender-sensitive policies and regulatory requirements aimed at ensuring fair, productive and responsible participation of women in ASM. With an enabling environment laid by governments, it is incumbent upon CSOs and development partners to proactively engage with women in ASM and respond to their needs in critical support areas by pulling resources in collaboration with government. Above all, the ultimate responsibility falls on women in ASM and their representatives to take advantage of support mechanisms provided and raise their levels of awareness, knowledge, confidence, information, and technical and leadership skills.



## ANNEX

### QUESTIONNAIRE

- I. Brief overview of your background and engagement with the topic.
  - How does gender as an issue area feature in your work?
- II. Very briefly, how would you describe the overall performance of government, industry, CSOs and development organisations in the gender aspect of ASM/mining? Where are the major gaps/challenges?
- III. Are there any successful business cases of women in ASM? What can be learnt from those examples?
- IV. If you were to offer up to five main interventions to promote women's effective participation in ASM/mining, what would those be?
- V. What specific and realistic intervention is needed (and how) to support women through each of the areas across the four channels as shown in the table below?

	<b>Policy, regulation</b>	<b>Skills, capacity</b>	<b>Research, Knowledge</b>	<b>Communications, engagement</b>
Land rights				
Licences				
Capital, loans				
Traditional norms, domestic chores				
Equipment, technology				
Geological data/expertise				
Markets and marketability				
Institutional backing: government and associations				
Cooperatives				
Voice in decision-making				

- VI. Your thoughts on how the women in ASM workshop at the ASM18 conference should be facilitated to generate best outcome.
- VII. Final remarks



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