

Artisanal and Small- Scale Mining: Beyond Zama-Zamas

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Background on ASM

ASM stands for artisanal and small-scale mining

Not a new phenomenon

Contrary to popular belief, ASM came before large-scale mining (LSM)

Even the discovery of gold in South Africa started as ASM

Background on ASM



THERE IS NO GLOBAL
DEFINITION FOR ASM



SOME DEFINITIONS BASE IT
ON SIZE, SOME ON ACTIVITIES
AND SOME ON MINING



DEFINITIONS RANGE FROM
COUNTRY TO COUNTRY AND
REGION TO REGION

Background on ASM: Definitions

- ▶ Some definitions of ASM are as follows
 - ▶ ASM operations exploit marginal or small deposits, lack capital, are labour intensive, have poor access to markets and support services, low standards of health and safety and have significant impact on the environment. (IIED)
 - ▶ Largely a poverty driven activity, typically practiced in the poorest and most remote rural areas of a country by a largely itinerant, poorly educated populace with little other employment alternatives. (World Bank)

Background on ASM: Definitions

- ▶ Mining activities that are labour-intensive and capital-, mechanization- and technology-poor. (ICMM)
- ▶ The majority of workers in ASM exploit small deposits in remote rural areas, from where it is difficult for miners to get their goods to the market. Their work is labour intensive low paying, extremely hazardous, and almost always avoided if other work is available.

General Characteristics of ASM

Labour Intensive

Rudimentary tools

Low levels of
mechanisation

Low development
index countries

Range of
participants from
illiterate to
formally educated

General Characteristics of ASM

Poverty (alternative livelihood)

Sometimes child labour

Low Capital

Little to no information on geology, mining
and beneficiation

Indigenous knowledge systems

ASM in South Africa



ASM partially recognized in the legal framework - MPRDA 2002



In Section 27 of the MPRDA small scale miners can apply for a mining permit on 5ha piece of land



Permit is valid for the period specified in the permit, which may not exceed a period of two years, and may be renewed for three periods each of which may not exceed one year



Section 27 does not speak on artisanal mining

Differences between Artisanal and Small Scale

- ▶ Artisanal mining uses rudimentary techniques with no machinery
- ▶ Even extraction is done using rudimentary techniques
- ▶ Small scale uses a degree of mechanisation
- ▶ Small scale may use higher capital
- ▶ Junior miners are small to medium scale miners

Zama-Zama Mining: FAQs

What is Zama-Zama mining?

Zama-Zama mining refers to invasive and illegal gold mining activities conducted by syndicates in South Africa.

Why is Zama-Zama mining considered problematic?

It poses safety risks, environmental damage, and legal issues, as it often occurs outside regulated mining practices.

What are the economic impacts of Zama-Zama mining?

While it provides income for many individuals, it also undermines formal mining industry revenues and can lead to economic instability.

How is the government addressing Zama-Zama mining?

Authorities are implementing regulatory measures, security operations, and community engagement initiatives to curb illegal mining activities.

Can Zama-Zama miners become part of the formal economy?

Yes, with proper regulation, training, and support, informal miners can be integrated into the formal mining sector.

ASM vs. Zama-Zama Mining

▶ASM

ASM is structured and sometimes legal. No syndicate, no violence and no crime even though it is sometimes practiced without permit.

▶Zama-Zama

Zama-Zama refers to illegal mining activities, often unregulated, conducted by unauthorized miners with little regard for safety or environmental laws. Syndicate based and riddled with crime.

▶Key Differences

The main distinction lies in legality, regulation, safety standards, and the economic impact, with ASM being informal yet safe and Zama-Zama often associated with illegal practices, risks, exploitation and crime.

Formalisation

- ▶ Just like ASM, there is no universal definition for formalisation.
- ▶ Formality implies compliance with legal, technical, environmental, economic, social, and labor aspects in order to be recognized as a legal, legitimate, profitable, safe, and environmentally sustainable activity (ARM)
- ▶ Formalisation is a multifaceted aspect and requires multiple stakeholders to achieve it.

How does formalisation reflect on the grassroots level?

- ▶ A formalised artisanal miner is one that has:
 - ▶ Access to markets
 - ▶ Security of tenure
 - ▶ Safe working place
 - ▶ Environmentally sound practices
 - ▶ Social licence to mine
 - ▶ Legal licence to mine
 - ▶ Inputs into the economy
 - ▶ Has a fair income level and opportunity for growth

How should formalisation come about?

- ▶ Formalisation should be a bottom up approach
- ▶ It should be a multi-stakeholder approach
- ▶ It should be based on current systems and processes at grassroots levels
- ▶ Should take into account illicit financial flows
- ▶ Should be spear headed by the state in conjunction with miners



Questions?