

Ex4Dev19

WORKSHOP BRIEFING



Which SDG is most catalytic for harnessing artisanal and small-scale mining?

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Ex4Dev19 workshop attracts over 50 PhD researchers, leading academics, and expert industry professionals

On Friday 8th November a 50-strong group of committed change makers met at Surrey Business School for the fourth edition of Harnessing the Extractive Industries for Development (Ex4Dev). This year's workshop centred on artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing participants the opportunity to explore challenges, opportunities and oversights.

Speaking the language of the SDGs to link them to ASM

The day kicked-off with an introduction from Professor Gavin Hilson underlining the importance of linking ASM to the SDGs. These 17 global goals represent the world's most comprehensive plan and call to action for social inclusion, environmental sustainability and economic development. Participants were urged to 'speak more creatively in the language of the SDGs'. This, it was outlined, is needed to promote the sector and its inclusion in global initiatives, and spur policies and programmes that will harness its importance for development as well as address the negative impacts.

To do so, Ex4Dev19 was organised around three panels reflecting different SDGs: 1) Decent work and Financial Inclusion; 2) Gender and Inequality, and; 3) Environment and Health. Rich insights from in-depth academic research undertaken in Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ghana, Guyana, and Tanzania provided the details of local level ASM dynamics needed to develop workable policy solutions.

While industry professionals from the African Center for Environmental Health, Canadian International Resources Development Institute, DELVE – a global platform for ASM data, Impact Facility, Moyo Gems and Nineteen 48, Oxford Policy Management, Solidaridad, and the United Nations Environment Programme highlighted technical recommendations as well as practical challenges and trade-offs when it comes to implementing programmes and promoting ASM.

These perspectives facilitated a dynamic discussion among participants, introducing questions related to gender, sustainability and labour. For example, what does sustainability mean versus responsibility in the context of ASM production? How do informal norms and formal regulations influence existing gender related inequalities? Is it possible to track and measure the contribution of the sector to the SDGs? And what is needed to address political barriers that are inhibiting its development?

Keynote – development minerals and partnerships are needed to promote ASM for sustainable development

Responding to these emerging questions, Caroline Ngonze from the United Nations Development Programme, provided the keynote speech. Both challenging the floor and building on her expertise, Caroline emphasized several key issues. Driven by industrialisation such as house building and large infrastructure projects as well as the transition away from fossil fuels to a low carbon green economy, she outlined there is rapidly growing demand for development minerals and metals. Mined in large quantities by ASM operators, sands, clays, gravels, minerals and metals such as cobalt are all needed in increasing volumes placing the sector in a unique position to help deliver on the SDGs. To achieve this and



promote socio-economic growth and enhance environmental protection, Caroline appealed for participants to remember and implement three ‘-ions’ in their work and advocated ASM and SDG policymaking to focus on: formalisation, transformation, and acceleration.

Finally, Caroline challenged the floor by asking which SDG could have the most catalytic effect for ASM? The audience called out multiple answers, linking ASM to nearly all SDGs, thereby characterising the diversity of the sector as well as the need to continue to push for an improved understanding of its importance in achieving the SDGs.

Her own opinion, meanwhile, was in favour of SDG17 Partnerships for the Goals; underscoring the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration and praising the diversity of stakeholders engaged, energy, and discussions had at Ex4Dev19.

Next steps

- **Connect with workshop participants and find all presentations on the website: ex4dev.com**
- **Submit a viewpoint or full academic paper in an upcoming special issue on ASM and the SDGs of an international journal. More details will be provided soon.**
- **[Join](#) the Ex4Dev mailing list to receive updates.**



Titus Sauerwein PhD researcher and organiser of Ex4Dev19 opens proceedings to a 50-strong audience of researchers, leading academics, and expert industry professionals.

Acknowledgments

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