IGF HIGHLIGHTS:

WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2017

The Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF) entered its second day of discussions, at its AGM on Wednesday at UN Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Delegates continued their discussions on various challenges and solutions related to artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) and large-scale mining (LSM).

At lunchtime, UN Environment launched a report, titled ‘Mine Tailings Storage: Safety Is No Accident’, and the G7 CONNEX Support Unit presented on strengthening assistance for complex contract negotiations in the extractives sector.

SESSION 7: LSM AND ASM: CHALLENGES AND NEW INDUSTRY APPROACHES

As facilitator of the morning session, Estelle Levin-Nally, Director, Levin Sources, introduced the topic, underscoring: the key role of governments; an understanding of ASM worker motivations; and a focus on profit, rather than asset protection.

David Noko, AngloGold Ashanti, shared his company’s experience in addressing ASM, which exists on eight of their ten country sites. Emphasizing their commitment to lasting solutions, he explained that the company had established a country-wide framework to navigate regulatory complexity, developed a strategic approach of ‘co-existence’ and inclusivity, and formed relationships based on trust.

Nick Cotts, Newmont Mining, noting the need to keep learning about the complexity of ASM, shared the company’s experiences over the past decade with its Merian mine in Suriname. Warning that no ‘plug-and-play’ solution exists, he outlined lessons learned, which include: promoting inclusive and legitimate engagement with small-scale miners through participatory approaches; forming partnerships and helping miners become more efficient through technology transfer; and monitoring, evaluating and reinforcing sustainable ASM practices.

Glenn Gemerts, Ministry of Natural Resources, Suriname, recalled the emergence and expansion of ASM inside the country since the 1980s was linked to political turbulence. He clarified that ASM produces as much as gold as LSM. He stressed the importance of finding solutions to land rights issues, and called for more collaboration among different stakeholders to help small-scale miners acquire education and seek alternative economic activities.

Participants posed questions regarding: companies’ long-term visions in transforming natural capital to human capital; government involvement in encouraging collaboration between LSM and ASM; and the potential for reversing the norm of...
LSM improving the quality of ASM, to instead consider how ASM can improve opportunities for LSM in states with a failed mining industry.

SESSION 8: DEVELOPMENT MINERALS AND THE SDGS

Daniel Franks, Chief Technical Advisor, African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)-EU Development Minerals Programme, UN Development Programme (UNDP), facilitated the session. He explained that the term ‘development minerals’ includes less-valued materials such as gypsum, sand and gravel, noting that their total production value far exceeds that of precious metals and gemstones. Using the example of the impact of tarred roads in remote areas in Madagascar on the livelihoods of the rural poor, he emphasized the potential these minerals have in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by bringing needed infrastructure to developing countries.

Ernest Gbwaboubou, Minister of Mines, Industry and Technological Development, Cameroon, described development of the country’s mining code in 2016, and mapping of over 480 mining sites in the country. He called for better institutional frameworks, and for strengthening legal capacity to support ASM development.

Raijeli Taga, Director, Minerals Resources Department, Fiji, explained how the ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme assisted her country to rebuild its infrastructure following the damage of Tropical Cyclone Winston in 2016. Observing that quarries far outnumbered metal mines in her country, she noted that demand for construction materials was insufficient for these businesses to succeed, and highlighted that the programme provides training, and assists quarries to meet standards and access finance.

Greg Radford, Director, IGF Secretariat; Daniel Franks, UNDP; Ernest Gbwaboubou, Minister of Mines, Industry and Technological Development, Cameroon; Raijeli Taga, Director, Minerals Resources Department, Fiji; Jennifer Hinton, Director, Auranda Minerals; and Adjunct Professor, Carleton University; Antonio Pedro, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); Harivao Fenosoa Razanakolona Rajaonarisoa, Head of Department of Administration and Control of Operations, Interregional Directorate of the Ministry to the Presidency in charge of Mines and Petroleum, Madagascar; and Maximin Emagna, African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States
SESSION 9: GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT TO DEVELOP A COMMON VISION FOR MINING

Moreblessings Chidaushe, Norwegian Church Aid, Southern Africa, facilitated the session. She explained that the session’s objective of developing a common vision for mining was borne out of the Alternative Mining Indaba that was created as a space for voices from communities living in mining areas.

Tom Butler, CEO, International Council on Mining and Metals, emphasized that the question remains how to better integrate the African Mining Vision at the national level. Referring to successful public-private-community partnerships in a number of African and Latin American countries, he stressed the need for strong local champions to ensure operationalization of the vision.

Kojo Busia, African Minerals Development Centre, stated that mining partnerships used to be established between governments and the private sector through contractual or legal instruments, which often led to unequal access and gaps between the political elite and civil society. He said that, by contrast, the African Mining Vision, at its core, emphasizes the engagement of all stakeholders. He recommended that long-term visions be tailored to each country based on their political and economic situations.

Mutuso Dhliwayo, Executive Director, Environmental Law Association, Zimbabwe, noted that enabling dialogue between governments, mining companies and local communities, requires understanding the complexities and tensions between the different groups. He identified obstacles to realizing any collective mining vision, including: lack of respect for one another; absence from ‘the table’ during decision making; restricted access to information; host communities bearing a disproportionate burden of risk compared with their share of benefits; and lack of access to remedies in the case of human rights violations.

Malvern Mudiwa, Marange Development Trust, recounted his experience of community relocation and subsequent environmental pollution, due to unregulated diamond mining industries. He admonished mining companies for their ignorance of local community rights, and called for empowerment and capacity building of the latter.

Gofaone Molefhe, Ministry of Mineral Resources, Green Technology and Energy Security, Botswana, stressed the importance of recognizing unique country and community contexts. He lamented the prevalence of ‘information asymmetry’ among mining stakeholders, and inadequate management of stakeholders’ expectations.

In an open discussion, government delegates and civil society participants shared their experiences and commented on: expanding the level of leadership from communities; developing strategies to improve involvement from youth; and the importance of understanding community priorities and needs. On engaging and empowering local communities, Busia emphasized the importance of setting a long-term vision for community capacity building.

SESSION 10: MINE CLOSURE AND POST-MINING TRANSITION

Hilary Morgan, Natural Resources Canada, moderated the session. She introduced the draft Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Mine Closure Checklist and invited participants’ feedback.

Lassana Guindo, National Mine Closure Commission, Mali, highlighted the impacts of mine closures and provided examples from his country, underscoring the importance of community involvement from the beginning, in association with the mining company and government.

Mark Freberg, Teck Resources, described his company’s involvement in APEC, and the organization’s approach to mine closure and managing closed sites. He underscored the importance of beginning the closure process early. Using an example from a closed mine turned ‘solar energy farm’ in Canada, he affirmed that transition opportunities are available for post-mining operations.

Roger Gunson, Mineral Resources Authority, Papua New Guinea (PNG), explained that PNG has so far not regulated mine closures, but is in the process of establishing legislation. Using the case of the Misima mine, he underscored the importance of planning ahead to ensure that post-closure assets will continue to benefit local communities.
Participants posed questions on: how to address social closure; government approaches to abandoned mines; duration of company support to post-closure mines; how to manage unpredictability during and following closure; and state versus company responsibilities. They called for flexible closure plans, that can evolve over time, to address unknown factors. Freberg noted that his company is required to provide a bond and operating manual to guarantee future maintenance of the site.

**SESSION 11: ASM CASE STUDIES**

Rokhaya Samba, Ministry of Industry and Mines, Senegal, facilitated the discussion, inviting panelists to share their experiences on a range of issues, including illicit financial flows from gold mining, developing ASM management strategies, and responding to gold rushes.

John Tychsen, Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland, introduced the PanAfGeo Project, funded by the EU and IGF, which provides training to governments and academia in seven African countries to conduct geographical surveys.

Holger Grundel, Levin Sources, presented findings of a baseline study of the ASM gold sector in Mongolia and a toolkit to address illicit financial flows in ASM, noting that understanding the underlying political economy is essential for designing successful reforms.

Seydou Keita, Ministry of the Environment, Sanitation and Sustainable Development, Mali, reviewed the country’s history and evolution of gold mining since the colonial period. He presented a 10-year national project that has introduced sustainable industries including bee keeping, fish farming, animal raising, and gardening to communities to replace mining activities.

Ahmed Taleb Mohamed, Ministry of Mining, Mauritania, described his government’s response to the recent gold rush in his country, highlighting the rapid organization and introduction of new technologies to miners. He described measures towards formalizing the sector, including a baseline study, workshops to sensitize new miners, mapping of mining areas, and regulation.

Addressing questions and comments, panelists acknowledged the important role of women in ASM, referring to the independent women miners of Ethiopia, who, they suggested, should form associations to protect their rights.

**SESSION 12: EIA FOR ASM-LSM**

Rob Stevens, Canadian International Resources and Development Institute, moderated the session. He noted that, in some areas EIA requirements are the same for ASM as for LSM, whereas in other areas, small-scale miners may fall below the production threshold for triggering an EIA requirement. He proposed that governments conduct Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) of designated ASM zones. He emphasized the value of training, and of taking a ‘single window’ approach to licensing, including providing miners with forms and guidebooks to follow.

Justine Shirley Seyire Dzadzra, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana, highlighted that ASM in her country comprises one-third of total gold production, employs up to one million people, and has existed for the last 1,000 years. She stated that the EIA requirements for ASM are minimal, unless mining activities are in an environmentally-sensitive area. She noted strategies for environmental management, including the posting of indemnity bonds by ASM operators, investigating complaints, and using technology for monitoring.

Godfrey Scott, Guyana Geology Mines Commission, explained the legislative infrastructure for EIA in his country. He noted that all projects are screened for risk, but that, based on size, many ASM are exempt from EIA requirements. He noted current strategies include training, and continual revision of the EIA model.

In discussion, participants raised questions regarding when to engage the public in the EIA, how indigenous people are involved, whether ‘historic use’ is taken into account, and how to control mercury usage.