

Strengthened Organizational Capacity in the Artisanal Mining Sector



What is the problem?

Artisanal and Small-scale Mining (ASM) in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) often suffers from poor levels of organization, representation and institutional capacity. Artisanal miners are required to be organized into cooperatives however these often end up being business units or groups of traders with little actual representation of the miners themselves in any decision-making processes. These often differ from general concepts of cooperatives and may deliver only limited, if any, dividends and benefits for their members. Understanding of the legal requirements of cooperatives' operations is often at a low level, as is capacity to take full advantage of business opportunities.

In all countries of the GLR, miners themselves are generally poorly represented in forums and consultations and face challenges in exercising their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Some miners' associations exist to group miners together to give them a higher degree of visibility and representation but these need support to strengthen their activities. In some areas, miners have limited ability to engage in policy dialogue and effort to express their opinion is often restricted to public demonstration which, regrettably, often ends in violence.



What are iTSCi and Pact doing?

Research – An in-depth analysis of the structures, functioning, constraints and opportunities for ASM cooperatives across geographies and minerals is needed. This should not be an academic exercise, rather it should provide a practical blueprint, based on consultation with grassroots ASM actors as well as those in government and business, to determine the most effective organizational structures and functions to serve the ASM sector. This analysis would lead to the development of tools and protocols which would be rolled out as part of the formalization of the ASM sector in the region.

Organizational capacity development – ASM organizations – whether cooperatives or associations – need a wide range of support in order to become legal, useful, functioning entities. They require technical support to increase productivity and efficiency. Added to this, they need legal guidance, support in licensing, improved governance, skills in dialogue and bargaining, communications and advocacy. Further, these groups need skills to manage resources and operate as effective business units.

Cooperatives in iTSCi

iTSCi already includes a number of co-operatives, and co-operatives associations in the Great Lakes Region as members who would be ready to participate in these activities.

Co-operatives participate in existing stakeholder meetings which can be used as a focus to understand their needs and objectives to design further work programmes.

What will your support do?

US\$30,000 will pay for printing of 5,000 handbooks on cooperative legality, structure and function in local languages.*

US\$50,000 will support 3 cooperatives to complete all legal processes to develop their mines and establish their site organization.

US\$50,000 will pay for 'train the trainers' workshops in 2 new ASM areas.*

US\$80,000 will pay for the essential consultation and research to present a blueprint for ASM organization.

US\$100,000 will fund full training and support for miners' organizations to become effective ASM representatives in one province.*

US\$120,000 will pay to convene a meeting of ASM organizations in the region (cooperatives, associations and other structures) to consider how to achieve collective representation.

** Dependent on other activities being funded*

To contribute to the iTSCi Programme's ongoing field work infrastructure, contributors should also budget for an additional US\$7,500 per year for iTSCi membership.

For More Information

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