

# **THE ROLE OF GHANA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AUTHORITY (GGSA) IN ARTISANAL AND SMALL SCALE MINING (ASM)**

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# INTRODUCTION

- Artisanal and Small-scale mining (ASM) refers to informal mining activities carried out using low technology or with minimal machinery.
- It is estimated that more than 100 million people rely on this sector for income, mainly in developing nations.
- In Ghana, artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) has grown in size and significance, contributing about 34% of gold production and all diamond production.
- Though it can be regarded as a source of foreign currency earning to a limited extent, it does help to reduce unemployment, especially in most rural areas where there are few alternatives to agriculture.

# INTRODUCTION (cont')

- ASM is labour intensive and thus provides **employment** and **incomes** to large numbers of people who are generally uneducated, poor and live in remote areas where no opportunities exist for formal employment.
- Gold's lucrative character, interwoven with legendary stories has resulted in many hasty mining ventures, doomed to failure.
- Majority of miners in Ghana operate informally without access to geological data, land, finance and ease of licensing.
- Since no exploration activity of any kind is carried out in such cases, the discovery of new ore reserves is left to chance and some of these small scale miners operate by mere speculations without exploration.

# **GHANA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AUTHORITY (GGSA)**

- The Ghana Geological Survey Authority (GGSA), until recently the Geological Survey Department (GSD), was established in 1913 by the colonial British administration to, amongst others, investigate and establish the extent and quality of both existing and yet undeveloped areas of mining activity in the Republic of Ghana and to prepare for their exploitation.

# GGSA ACT 928

*According to the GGSA Act 928 of 2016, some of the objectives are to:*

- a) carry out systematic geological mapping, assess, monitor and evaluate geological hazards and risks, collect geoscientific data, manage and disseminate geoscientific information;
- b) promote the search for, and exploitation of minerals in the Republic, undertake research in the field of geoscience and furnish specialized geoscientific services;
- c) conduct research into matters of importance for the exploration, exploitation and protection of the nation's geological and geoscientific natural resources.

# ROLE OF GGSA IN ASM

*According to GGSA Act 928,*

- GGSA has the mandate to promote the exploration and exploitation of the natural resources of the country.
- GGSA can carry out exploration and delineation of ore deposits and come up with the mineral inventory available for exploitation at the small-scale level.
- GGSA can predominantly serve as a backbone for assisting the ASM miners through the provision of geoscientific data to enable the miners know the various mining methods and how to obtain a good recovery with regards to the various exploitation methods based on the geology of the area.
- GGSA has the mandate to advise the Government to make informed decisions on geoscientific issues concerning mineral and ground water resources, environment, geohazards and land use planning.

# CONCLUSIONS

- As stated earlier, one function of the GGSA is to provide “improved geology” for ASM operators in Ghana in order to help them identify suitable land for mining and unlock finance through the provision of bankable documents.
- Information already available at the GGSA from its earlier activities and additional material gathered from abandoned concessions of prospecting and exploration companies could be a good starting point for this renewed investigation.
- The success of the continuing levels of exploration is required to maintain and increase existing levels of production in the industry. It will also allow the ASM operators to work in areas where the minerals are known to be available; hence reducing the investment risks, unnecessary land degradation and water pollution arising from their frequent wild searches for mineralised areas.
- Furthermore, enhanced geo-data of land for ASM may make it easier to undertake and improve the quality and accuracy of ASM Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and also help the miners have the necessary bankable documents to access formal finance and enter into formal partnerships, investments and agreements with one another and/or financial institutions. This legal status and access to land will encourage licence purchasing, provided the process can be further streamlined.



# RECOMMENDATION

- Due to their limited resources and background, most of the individual ASM operators are not in a position to conduct exploration activities. Thus, if the industry is to be sustained, it is important that the GGSA is well resourced and funded to continue with exploration and delineation of mineralised deposits and come up with the mineral inventory available for exploitation at the ASM level. GGSA also needs to be better involved in ASM policy-making and dialogue in order to fully realise this function.

*THANK YOU*