



**PanAfGeo WP3 WORKSHOP ON ASM, ACCRA,
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**CHALLENGES FOR ASM SECTOR IN THE
GAMBIA AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE
GEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT**

BY

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Introduction
- The Geology and Mineral Resources of the Gambia
- Legal and Institutional Framework
- The mining sector in the Gambia
- Artisanal and Small Scale Mining
- The Main Challenges of ASM in The Gambia
- Way forward

Introduction

- The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in mainland Africa
- A coastal state with an area of about 11,000 sq km
- Population of about 2M
- A significant proportion of this population depends on agriculture
- Tourism is one of the major foreign exchange earners
- Exploitation of the country's mineral resources is now becoming key to economic growth.

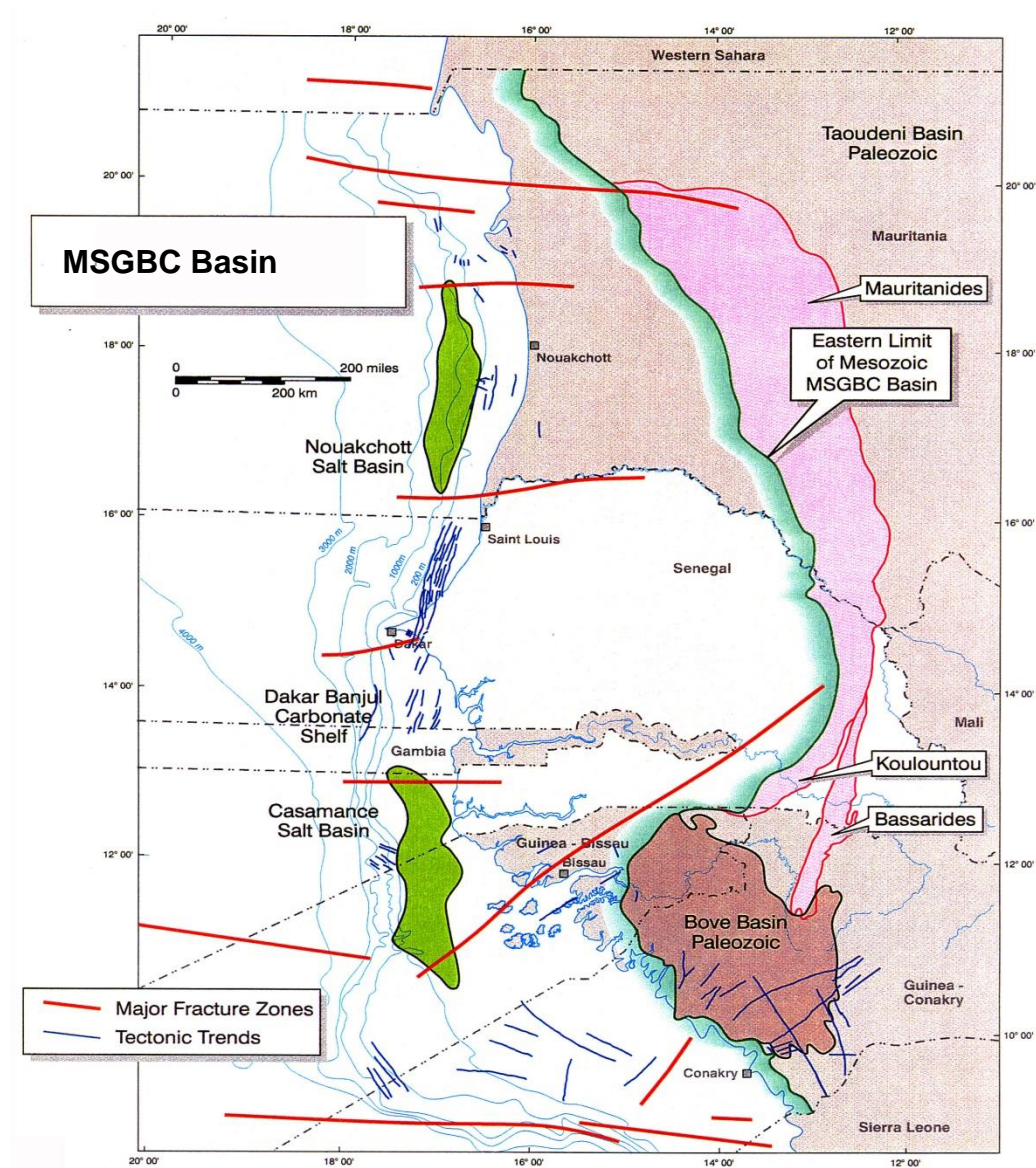
Introduction: Geographic Location of The Gambia



Geology and Mineral Resources of The Gambia

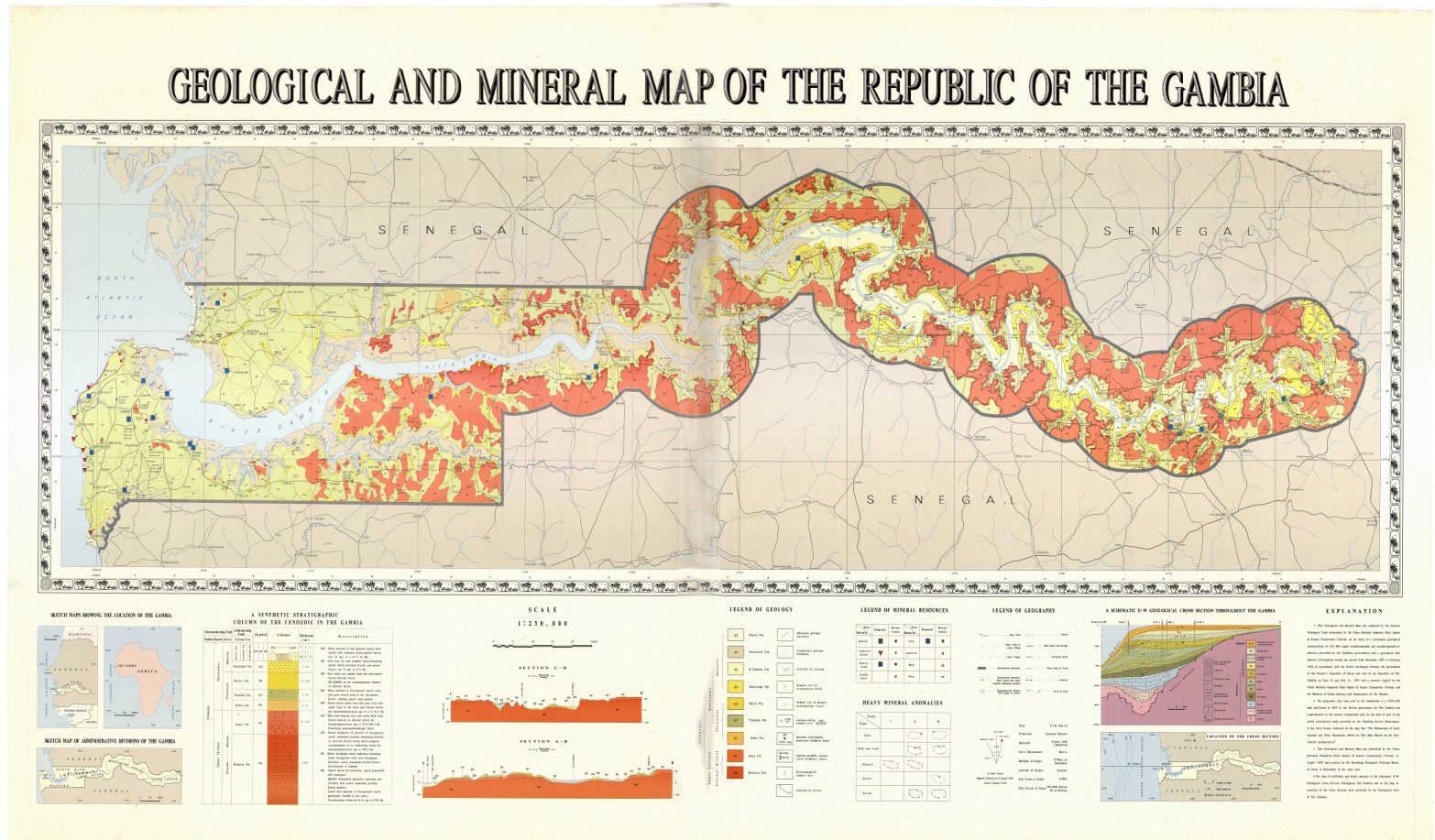
- The Gambia is located in the central part of the MSGBC Sedimentary Basin
- Mainly Meso-Cenozoic strata have been deposited
- The first geological survey of the Gambia in 1925 by W. G. Cooper
- Produced a geological map and identified specs of gold and tin in the alluvial deposits in the Upper River Region
- Geological and Mineral Resources study of 1988
- Detailed geological and Mineral Resource survey of 1995 produced 1:250 000 map

Main Tectonic Features of the MSGBC Basin



Cont.

Detailed geological and Mineral Resource survey of 1995 produced 1:250 000 map



Cont.

- Mineral resources of the Gambia are mainly of Sedimentary origin
- The main minerals are
 - ❖ Quaternary quartz sand
 - ❖ Beach heavy mineral sands (mainly Ilmenite, Rutile and Zircon),
 - ❖ Cockle shells, Clays, Laterite and Peat
 - ❖ Anomalies of Gold in the Upper River Region

Legal and Institutional framework

The Geological Department is responsible for both the geological survey and mineral resource development

Geological Survey:

- Carry out geological exploration and mapping
- Collect, archive and disseminate geoscientific information
- Geology and Mineral information can be accessed through the Department
- Environmental geology, including geo-hazard assessment

Cont.

Geological Survey:

- Geophysical and geochemical investigation;
- Offers services to other Government departments, the private sector and the general public on geotechnical matters.

Mineral Resources Development:

- The Mines and Quarries Act is administered by the Geological Department.
- It is the main legislative framework governing the administration of the country's mineral resources.

Cont.

- Regulations have been developed in consultation with stakeholders to give a better effect to the Act;
- Regulated the exploitation of the country's mineral resources;
- Mines and Quarries Inspectorate Unit
- Before 1994 ASM was free for all and on a subsistence ventures

Cont.

- Implementation of the regulations and Policies on minerals development;
- Process, and give recommendations on mining licence;
- Monitoring and supervision of the mining licence
- Act provides for opportunity for local and foreign investment in the Mining Sector;
- Environmental and Social obligations much emphasized in every mineral activity.

CONT.

- Design mineral policy inline with ECOWAS Directive that seeks to address the needs of the State such as;
 1. Protection of National Interest,
 2. Access to Information,
 3. Human Rights Obligations,
 4. Dispute Resolution.

CONT.

- The National Environment Agency(NEA) administers the National Environment Management Act and Environmental Regulations.
- The Department works in full consultation with the NEA and other relevant stakeholders on Mining issues through task committees and working groups.
- No mining activity without Environmental Approval.

The Mining Sector in the Gambia

- Major and minor mining (LSM and ASM)
- ASM categorized under minor mining
- The development path for the Mining Sector in The Gambia is unique;
- Whereas in many African countries the production and export of valuable minerals is the target for this sector;
- In The Gambia Emphasis is on production and processing of construction aggregate to supply the internal construction market.

Cont.

- To achieve this development the Government tries to implement measures aimed at stimulating the demand side for domestic construction materials;
- current mining activities in the Gambia consist essentially of a number of very basic, informal, and artisanal ventures;
- The main focus of these activities are on cockleshell and sand winning and limited clay, laterite and sand extraction

Clay

➤ Mining activities in the Western Part of The Gambia, Clay mining.

Open Pit Clay mine in Western Region



Clay kiln at a clay making factory



Clay brick production plant



End product ready for the market



Mineral Sands mining



- Heavy Mineral sands: ilmenite, Rutile and Zircon
- Coastal deposits Licensed
- Emphasis on value addition and benefits to State
- Easily mined through wet and dry mining.

Cont.

- Laterite: Huge potentials exist
- With booming construction industry, this holds huge potentials for construction materials



Artisanal and Small Scale Mining in The Gambia

- In The Gambia the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is complex and diversified
- No distinction between the A and SM
- About 90% of those involved in mining activities are in the ASM
- Farmers joining the ASM sector during the dry season to supplement their income

Cont.

- Many rural people depend mostly on ASM to feed their families, send children to school etc;
- The sector also stimulate other sectors
- ASM activates in the Gambia is both an important source of livelihoods and environmental damage



Cont.

The types of ASM activities in the Gambia;

- ☐ It varies from informal individual quarry miners seeking a subsistence livelihood
- ☐ To group of people panning for gold in rivers especially in the east part of the country
- ☐ To ASM entities producing minerals in a responsible way.
- ☐ To entities licenced to operator

Cont.

- **The legal Artisanal and small scale mining**
 - The are registered business entity
 - Have access to geological information
 - They obtain land owner's consent
 - Subjected to environmental impact assessment
 - Apply for mining permit or licence;
 - Pay royalty to Government
 - Are obliged to carry out rehabilitation

Cont.

- **Illegal ASM activities in The Gambia**
 - Many a time this miners would form groups and approach the traditional authorities
 - Paid “**LUWASARREH**” to the traditional land owners and village heads
 - Illegally mine on licensed areas
 - Do not reclaimed areas mined for post mining activities.
 - Mine inspectors monitors and stop their operation.
 - No royalty payment

Cont.

The opportunities related to ASM

- Job creation as so many unemployed Gambians are engaged in the sector;
- Stimulate economic growth as it's a leading contributor to industrial development;
- The royalty payments increase Government revenues;
- It reduces urban migration as most youth resort to it during the dry season;
- Increase local purchasing power

The Main Challenges of ASM in The Gambia

- Environmental hazard;
- This developments comes at the expense of natural environment, including deforestation of the woodland;
- Worker safety;
- Lost of revenue as limited tax and royalty is paid to Government;

Cont.

- Adverse local social effects;
- Child labour;
- Women doing manpower jobs and risky undertaken;
- Its leads to traditional land disputes and conflicts;

Environmental Damages



Forest destroy



Land degradation

Child labour



**Bafulloto mine, Gambia where
Women and Children are often
involved in underground mining**

Cont.

**Women doing manpower jobs
and risky undertaken**















Cont.

- The consequent lack of an adequate regulatory and policy framework can prevent formalization of this sector.
- This, in turn, makes improvements in the livelihoods of miners and their dependent communities difficult to achieve.
- Absence of formalization also makes improvements in environmental performance much more problematic.

Cont.

- ❖ **Geology:** inadequate and inability to access geological information such as information about ore bodies;
- ❖ **Law & Authority :**
 1. the environment in which ASM operates discourages investment
 2. contradictions between different/official acts;
 3. land disputes especially the traditional land
- ❖ **Finance:** uneconomical investment decisions, such as after securing land right they can be prevented from operation;
- ❖ Limited access to investment, loans and grants;
- ❖ They are also a chain of middlemen ready to exploit them;

inadequate and inability to access geological information



Illegal miners searching for gold in Badari, URR , The Gambia

Cont.

- ❖ **Human resources:** inability to utilized skilled labour force , lack of written contracts;
- ❖ **Organization:**
 - . lack of coordination or cooperation;
 - . lack of umbrella unions and
 - .lack of service offers by governments and donor partners

Way forward for the ASM sector in The Gambia

- First step is to recognize that construction raw materials are natural mineral resources, which are of enormous economic importance to our country;
- Because they are economic minerals they must be properly explored and exploited like any other mineral resource;
- Regulation of the ASM sector;
- Implement the National Environment Management Act, NEMA 1994;

Cont.

- ASM operators to obtain environmental clearance before licence or permit be given
- To make regulations regarding environment, health and safety and working conditions
- Fair and reasonable compensation for disturbance and damage to land owners
- Environmental and Social obligations should be emphasized in every mineral activity.
- Sustainability: by promoting ecological integrity by ensuring that livelihood activities do not irreversibly degrade natural resources within a given ecosystem,

Cont.

- Integration of ASM into National Poverty Reduction Strategies and into the mainstream of economic system;
- ASM be offer financial and technical support;
- Detailed ASM operation plan shall form part of the licence;
- Rehabilitation/end-use options for a site to be determined at planning stage;
- Reclamation bond to be enforced;
- Stiff penalties for offenders;
- Have effective monitoring and management of ASM.



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THANK YOU