

# **Microeconomics of Artisanal and Small-scale Mining**

## **Objective**

Share experiences and information related to the micro economic context of ASM in order to :

- document what is known and what relevant information is lacking &
- identify strategies to improve the collection of micro economic data that is critical to policy interventions aimed at enhancing the contribution of ASM to poverty alleviation

Microeconomics

Income

Microeconomics

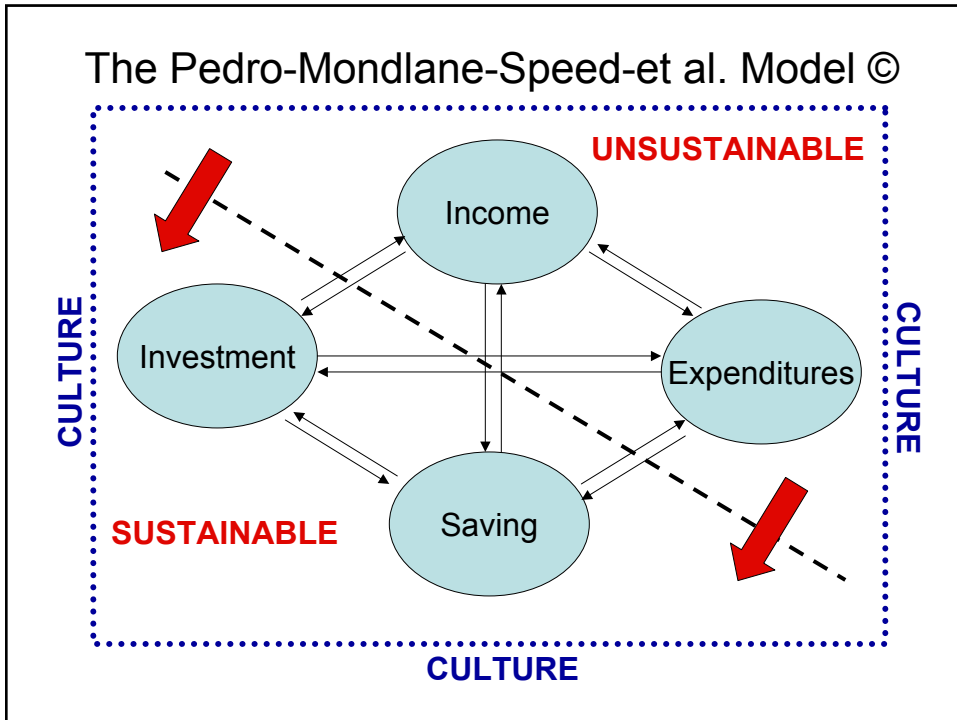
Spending

Microeconomics

Saving

Microeconomics

Investment



## Barriers to data collection

1. Reliable economic data
  - Informality and illegality
  - Incomes are uncertain, intermittent, variable
  - Population of miners is continuously shifting
  - Mining communities may be artificial/ made up of short-term migrants.
  - Lack of funding for baseline studies.
  - Lack of local people or people with local experience to conduct the study.
  - Conflicting interests in communities.

## Barriers to data collection

2. People may give inaccurate information because
  - Fatigue of projects that do not bring change
  - Secrecy because of (semi)illegality
  - Mistrust in researchers and/or government
  - People may not know the answer (e.g. annual household income)
  - Questions are not relevant to daily life experiences
  - Prevent payment to others (taxes, fees to bosses)
  - Fear of being robbed

## Barriers to data collection

3. Data that can be generalized across time/space
  - Many types of miners; migrant, local, gold rush miners, seasonal or permanent.
  - Mining populations are composed of diverse groups, incl. women and children.
  - The microeconomic context of ASM is shaped by local cultural beliefs and practices.
  - Mining cultures are often transient
  - ASM is typically embedded in a range of income-generating activities.
  - What constitutes poverty and wealth is culturally determined.

Data collection will be facilitated by:

Legalization and/or  
organization of  
miners



Data collection may improve with:

Change in the model of research: Integrating  
the community in project development data  
collection and monitoring; emphasizing  
continuity and follow-up.



## Data collection may improve with:

- Endorsement by community leaders/authorities
- Prior knowledge of researchers of target area;
- Clearly defined purpose; the purpose of, and party requesting, data collection are understood by local people.
- For some types of data, qualitative data, can be more accurate than trying to get quantitative estimates.
- Using control (non-mining) villages to compare data

## We further talked about:

- Mining experiences in different countries
- Government policies
- Indicators of wealth, income, and dependency on ASM
- ...and more.....

