



Mining, Environment and Community Conflicts: A Study of Company-Community Conflicts over Gold Mining in the Obuasi Municipality of Ghana

Seth Opoku Mensah¹, Seth Asare Okyere²

¹Development Planning Unit, Agona West Municipal Assembly, Agona Swedru, Ghana

²Faculty of Architecture and Society, School of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico Di Milano, Italy

Corresponding Author: Seth Opoku Mensah, Development Planning Unit, Agona West Municipal Assembly, Agona Swedru, Ghana

ABSTRACT: The environment, its natural resources and development capacity remains a contentious element in the development process of human society. In Ghana, similarly as Africa and other developing countries, there is a huge dependence of environmental resources for economic growth and development. Mining gold resources is directly engulfed in this environment and natural resource exploitation process. While mining companies capitalize on their contribution to development and provision of social services, local communities refute and demand abrogation of large-scale gold mining on their 'land'.

Through an informant data collection approach and secondary data collection, the study analyzes cases of company-community disputes over gold mining and the underpinning issues, the dispute resolution strategies, and the weaknesses in the existing framework. Cases of disputes centered on compensation, resettlement packages, unfulfilled promises, mistrust and lack of alternative livelihoods for economically displaced groups. The dispute resolution strategy is also seen as being too bureaucratic, poorly connected to the cultural and social intricacies of local communities and primarily company oriented. The Study proposes the need for a new framework that considered communities as integral but not peripheral in the general national framework as well as sustaining and enhancing local alternative livelihoods and community led co-designed sustainable development plans.

Keywords: Environmental Resources, Conflicts, Ghana, Gold Mining, and Livelihood

1. Introduction

Across the globe, several processes of socio-economic, environmental and political dimensions are shaping the functionality, relevance and fortunes of communities at the basic level of human society. The environmental question, though a global agenda is of a differentiated phenomenon based on the environmental morphology and context in the developed and developing world.

In the developing world, there is still a huge dependence on environmental or natural resources for development. The environmental question in this regards, has often not been related to the issue sustainability only but also the large scale industry ramifications on livelihoods and distributional costs on communities and small towns which are more vulnerable. These many natural resource related-investments range from minerals such as gold and diamond to forest and water resources. In Africa, a continent with arguably a larger proportion of the world's natural resources, the significance of the environment and its associated questions is worth it due to the economic, cultural, social and political implications of its use. Out these resources, the extractive industry especially the gold mining sector has remained one of the most significant in shaping local communities and urban areas. The mining sector has been at the fulcrum of intense controversy and trajectories over its development abilities (Yelpaala and Ali, 2005) and destructive efforts. Sometimes considered as the entry point for development (Davis and Tilton, 2003), it has been glaringly criticized for its negative impact on the environment (Hilson 2002) and its role in conflict and underdevelopment (Ross, 2001) in several towns and cities across the continent.

There is enormous benefit of gold mining on its immediate environment; and cities such as Johannesburg stand to show the environmental gain of gold mining. On the other hand, particular attention has been given to the environmental costs of gold mining on land contamination, land degradation, burden on community members, and water quality (Yelpaala and Ali, 2005). Within this context of these long-lasting discussions of gains and losses, benefits and costs in relation to the environment is the issue of conflicts. The recognition of the benefits and costs and the associated effects on livelihood have often resulted in marked disputes sometimes culminating in investor-community

conflicts. Resource related conflicts have not just been an appendage to the environmental questions of costs and benefits of gold mining but an integral part of it.

In Ghana, it has become glaringly difficult, for mining companies who rely on extensive tracts of land to operate to coexist with indigenous communities whose livelihoods are intrinsically connected to the land they live on. This seeming incompatible coexistence has generated disputes/conflicts between the mining industry and local communities. The mining industry is therefore accused on exacerbating conflicts through their operations and activating latent disputes through their procedures. These conflicts normally concern livelihood security, access to resources, ownership, use or degradation, environmental effects, gendered impact, impact on social cohesion and cultural beliefs, human rights violations and distribution of risks and benefits and the 'meaning of development (Bebbington et al., 2008; Hilson, 2002, Kemp et al., 2010).

As the relationship between the mining companies and communities have been described as the 'battleground' for contesting the operational activities of industry (Calvano, 2008), it is clear that disputes emerge from this interaction. It is a form of interaction where there is enormous power and relational inequality between companies and communities. Companies wield considerable resources (legal, financial) both in size and potency while communities are poor and weak with limited impact. Thus people have resorted to publicly opposing mining operations and often resort to violent agitations resulting in deep rooted disputes. In certain instances, mining companies have insisted these suggestions from local groups are perceptive, misguided and instigated by environmentalists who blind their eyes to what gold mining present to these communities and their territory.

These have often alluded to the environmental regulations and standard that they have adopted and the numerous Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes they have implemented in human and territorial development. On the contrary, opposing groups however agitate against their operations calling for an end to materialistic policies of local and national planning authority's that support resource investments that disregard the environment and the

environmental rights of the people. Further, these conflicts or disputes also centre on the distributional effects—who gains; who loses and bears the cost exerted on the environment. In other instances, the people are uncertain about the gains and losses of gold mining and its feasibility if it should be allowed alluding to the deceiving portrayals by mining corporations. It is therefore of prime interest in this study, to understand the environmental effect of the gold mining industry, its implication on the company-community disputes and the procedures for dealing with such cases.

2. Conceptualising Mining Conflicts and the Company-Community Interface

2.1 Mining and Conflicts

Planning has been evidently seen as very ‘conflictual’ in its process activity, organization and allocation; so does mining activity. Jenkins (2004) argues that historically, the mining industry has taken the ‘devil may care’ attitude to the impacts of its operations often acting without social legitimacy, causing major devastation, and also leaving when an area has been exhausted of all economically valuable resources. He augments this argument by stating that the ‘cost benefit language’ is often utilized as a tool to defend the thesis that damages caused are far outweighed by financial benefits. In the context of mineral extraction, writes Hilson (2002), mining activities can be potentially destructive and causing irreversible damages. It is this very nature of mining operations that carry with it the inevitable phenomenon of conflict.

The environmental effects of mining: removal of large tract of forest cover and productive top soil, leaching in water bodies are often the ‘breeding grounds’ but not the actual manifestation of conflict. Even though communities might be aware of the complications, it is other factors such as poor communication, mining broken promises and lack of working agreements between mines and communities that intensify conflicts (ibid). Perception, as highlighted earlier in the discussion of conflict, is a major element between mining and conflict. Mining induced degradation, violation of human rights, forceful evictions and

demolitions affect the way mining is perceived and contributes in intensity the conflictual aspect of mining (Lawson and Bentil, 2013).

The relationship between mining and conflict was triggered by the conception of the 'resource curse' in the early sections of the 21st century. This conception gained momentum in many developing countries where research undertaken revealed that natural resources such as gold, oil, diamond and other minerals have contributed to instability, war and degradation (Arthur, 2012). The 'resource curse' (Aunty, 1993) argues that countries endowed with abundant mineral and natural resources, expected to witness immense economic and social progress, sadly, have only experienced economic troubles, social instability and authoritarian and conflict ridden issues (Sovacool, 2010, Lawson and Bentil, 2013). Other scholars (Haber and Menaldo, 2007) contradict the 'resource curse' hypothesis by arguing that the mere presence of mineral resources does not create authoritarianism but even contribute to democratization and cases of 'blessings'. One can concur that both theses could be explored on a contextual relevance of socio-economic and politic-cultural factors where such mineral are present; there needs to be further understanding than generalizations. That is, the very nature of mining conflict cannot be oversimplified into an 'existential phenomenon' of mineral resources but of some peculiar characteristics of the minerals and their territorial context.

In furtherance of this, mining operations are normally undertaken in rural areas where people make use of 'uncleared' land or depend on land for agriculture and subsistence purposes. This notwithstanding, mining could be acceptable under good technology and managerial skill. Yet, the fundamental issue that land will remain primary for food and shelter stands (Veheye, 1997). Hence, mining and conflict coincide because both companies and communities place different socio-economic values on land (Hilson, 2002). Epps and Brett (2000) add that mining communities are sometimes among the poorest segments of the population and often engage in small scale local economic activities. They are unexposed to global society and more vulnerable to the impacts of development. However, the strategy of mines in the past decades has been on financial compensation and social support. On the other hand, due to the connection of indigenous people to

environment, the fact that they have occupied the territories for thousands of years, monetary contribution makes an insignificant contribution to the loss of land. Such a view could therefore be unrealistic to imagine (Hilson, 2002). In effect, the conflictual nature of mining emerges from the big gap between the way companies conceptualize the value of environmental resources and its connection to the livelihood and cultural significance of community members.

2.2 Company-Community Relations in Mining

Over the years, the recognition of the necessity of a functional relationship between mining companies and communities have not just been theoretical but as part of a broader development framework of sustaining communities and their environment. In fact, globally and domestically, it has been understood that the politics of mining are increasingly being played at the local community level (Veiga et al., 2001). Companies and communities and their relations do not emerge in an optional situation, the very dynamics of gold mining imply a relational dimension of interaction or otherwise, be it functional or non functional. It is not something they could wish for but rather actively embrace. Undertaking mining operations suggest that international and transnational corporations must interact with communities or indigenous people who have emotional and historical links to the land (Garvin et al., 2009).

However, scholarly literature often cites the mining company relationship as a strained one. The relations are often seen as 'conflictual encounters' (Kemp et al., 2010) and range across economic, geographic and cultural contexts (Barton, 2005; Bebbington et al., 2008; Garvin et al., 2009; Jenkins, 2004, Whiteman and Mamen, 2002). Though traditionally, mining exploitation has been presented as an impetus to economic growth, the consequences on catchment communities has been alarming. Often, the blame has been laid on the industry perceived as indifferent to sustaining communities and addressing the enormous negative impact of their operations. This view is well presented in the media, civil society and international organizations such as the World Bank. One must appreciate as well, the tensions are not one sided and that the expectations from communities and their perceptions play a key role in the tension within the industry-

community relations. Mining is viewed undoubtedly as a dangerous activity with acute effects on the socio and environmental context within which it operates. As the global environment has been very visible especially within the sphere of mining activities, residents are demanding recognition of their rights, entitlements and their livelihood. There are indeed tensions, conflicts and/or disputes on the risks, impacts and distribution of benefits.

The tensions simply stated, results from an individualistic pursuance of self interest which according to Ochieng Odhiambo (2000) leads to 'contradicting, compromising, or even defeating the interest of the other. The divergent of goals and interests, perceptions and outcomes basically widens the 'cleavages' within the relationship context thereby creating tensions and associated conflicts. As has been highlighted previously in the discussion of mining and conflicts, it is therefore obvious that this situation emanates from a system of interaction between the primary stakeholders in the industry.

3. Contestation in the Mining Sector: Patterns of Protest

Bebbington et al. (2008) identify two main characteristics that define the mining sector: contention and ambiguity. Contentious because mining have significant adverse effects on the social, environmental and economic sphere but offer limited benefits for few. It is also ambiguous because of the sense carried by local communities (and even development experts) that mining could do more. The seeds of conflict are therefore sown in this situation where there are divergent positions on mining and its environmental effects. As typical in conflict situations, protests therefore emerge as a way actors act to express their positions and make their stance much more visible and audible. Shifting geographies of mineral investment has generated a new wave of protest around issues of environment, human rights, identity, territory livelihood and nationalism (Bebbington et al., 2008).

Bebbington et al. (2008) in their paper on mining and possibilities of development outline different patterns of mining protests. These new patterns are very different from the historical workplace oriented mining protest. The

first pattern of protest they outline is that which concerns 'meaning of development' rather than the distribution of rent or benefit. Actors in this sense adopt a much more hostile situation by arguing against extraction in a particular place or not at all. Again, they state that protests can be read in terms of different theoretical arguments. That is whether ecological environmentalists, radical environmentalist, anti-mining groups, their positions express their theoretical base as is common to find the 'resource curse theory' at work in those who are normally doubtful of mining's role in development.

The third pattern of protest refers to those that occur simultaneously at the local, national political sphere and the home bases of companies and investment banks among others. They further explain that since actors have change along the lines of local, national, transnational which are rights based and environmentalist groups. In effect, protests have been patterned within 'preexisting international networks' or alliances emerging to deal with specific mining issues. The alliance is what has seen the linkage between environmental and human right abuse issues permeating mining sector protests. For instance, the international day of action against Barrick Gold (simultaneously held in Argentina, Chile, Peru, Canada and Australia) or the no Dirty Gold Campaign. The authors indicate this kind is rooted in "struggles for indigenous peoples rights and pushing for 'free, prior and informed consent' from indigenous peoples before extractive industry projects can proceed on their lands (ibid).

The final pattern of protest they remark is the type they refer to as defensive responses to the 'accumulation through dispossession' rather than 'accumulation by exploitation'. In almost every case in the developing world struggles have often been against dispossession of land or territorial space; property and self governance, citizenship and cultural rights and values within the sub-soil (Bebbington et al., 2008a). The movements within these patterns of protests are not just those of miners or workers protesting over labour issues. They are movements whose operations are 'transcalar' and issues cross-cutting and transcending across different disciplines of society.

4. Scope of the Study

4.1 AngloGold Ashanti Gold Mining Limited (AAGL)

AngloGold Ashanti (AGA), as it is known today, was formed in 2004 and headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa. The company runs a global operation with 20 operations in ten countries across Africa (Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania), Latin America (Argentina, Brazil), US and the Pacific (Australia). The AngloGold Company formed in 1998 through a consolidation of Anglo American mining interest in South Africa became AngloGold Ashanti Mining Limited through a merger with the Ghanaian based Ashanti Goldfields Corporation and is today the world's third largest producer of gold.

The current AngloGold Ashanti Mining Limited was incorporated in 2004 borne out of a merger between the state owned Ashanti Goldfields Corporation and the AngloGold Mining Company based in South Africa with several sites in the Americas and Asia. The Ashanti Goldfields Corporation before the merger was a gold mining company based in Ghana that was founded by Edwin Cade. The Ashanti Mine, located at Obuasi, 56 km south of Kumasi (the second largest city), has been producing since 1897

4.2 Overview of the Obuasi Municipality

The geographical scope of the Study is the Obuasi Gold mines-located in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The Obuasi Municipality is located within the Ashanti region of Ghana and about 64km from the regional capital, Kumasi. The land area covers 162square kilometers. The Town, which has the gold mining concession, is also the municipal capital, happens to be the natural wealth of the region. Some of the communities within the operational area and affected by operations include Anwiam and Ahansoyewodea. The selection of this particular study area is due a couple of reasons. Among these include the area being one of the oldest mining areas in the country dating as far back as 100 years and over, the presence of the largest mining corporation in Africa, the existence of frequent disputes of environmental legacy between civil society, organized groups and companies among others. Moreover, the gold mining at this area has contributed

immensely to the economic development of the country and promoted several initiatives for social and territorial development.

5. Approach and Method

The approach for this research was fundamentally oriented towards a qualitative dimension. According to Brockington and Sullivan (2003), this particular approach offers the most appropriate mechanism as it will enhance the exploration and interpretation of the study elements. This also allows for flexibility and an 'open' minded than a rigid one. The case study approach was employed as it enables the understanding and identification of factors that influences the variables in the study. Due to the multi-actor and plurality of this study and the limitations of fieldwork, qualitative method was adopted for the collection of data from a distance. Semi-structured interviews were prepared for informants on the field to obtain information for the study.

The research involved preliminary investigation of the study variables to ascertain their significant in the study area, theoretical discussion and literature on secondary information, data collection and analysis. Since the research does not seek to present statistical analysis, a more qualitative look was favored. Data was collected from secondary and primary sources. The secondary data was generated from Annual report of Mining companies, NGOs and other civil society groups, and newspaper publications. Existing literature was also reviewed to provide a theoretical and conceptual understanding of the variables to aid the discussion of the cases. Field data was obtained from informants and community workers within the catchment communities and mining concession.

Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used for the study. Purposive sampling methods were employed to obtain information from respondents who are directly involved in the case study and posses' information for the analysis. These included the workers, NGOs, the local activist groups and the planning authorities at the local level. The sensitivity of some of the issues also meant that to avoid bureaucracy coupled with limited time for the study, informants, and local employees were much involved in the field data collection process. The data collection procedure was very participatory involving all interest parties at

the local level. Informants had interviews with local people, community based organizations and some local employees. The techniques also involved the use of observations and photographic evidence in the study. Information was generated from informal interviews, company reports, newspaper articles and research reports from civil society.

Analysis of the data was discussed from the sources outlined earlier. Cases of conflict/dispute situations were analyzed per community within the catchment area with dimensions such as sources, actors and their interests, grievance procedures, expression of conflict and company response. The implications of these to local planning were discussed in the analytical section.

6. Beyond Perceptions: Environmental Cost of Mining in Obuasi

6.1 Environmental Effects of Mining within the Obuasi Catchment Communities

Several recent studies have highlighted the environmental legacy of mining in the Obuasi area. This discussion however orients itself towards two issues of water pollution and land contamination and degradation.

6.2.1 Water Pollution

Chemicals leached from the operations of the AGAs mining activities have been the prime source of pollutant on the several water sources within the catchment areas. The Third World Network (TWN) Africa conducted independent research between 2002 and 2004 revealing the alarming situation of water pollution.

Box 1_TWN: Water Contamination

“Historic mining and more recent extensive surface mining operations have combined to damage the quality of water, especially surface water in the study area. The waters in the study area are acidic, falling outside the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] and WHO range of standards...The presence of heavy metals such as iron, arsenic and manganese is particularly high in most streams sampled...Arsenic values were between 10 to 38 times higher than levels permitted by EPA general guidelines and over 1,800 times higher than the WHO maximum values. The same pattern was observed for manganese, whose values were up to 26 times higher than EPA-allowed limits. Iron values were between 1.7 and 15 times higher than levels allowed by EPA guidelines.”

Source: ActionAid, 2006.

The catchment communities, which are normally smaller in size in terms of population, are beset with the generally water problem confronting rural communities in Ghana and rely extensively on local water bodies such as streams and rivers for uses both domestically and agricultural purposes. The study by ActionAid reiterates that several of the water bodies have been contaminated by mining operations. The report further quote the Director of the Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) and a campaign group, Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM) as estimating that about 60 percent of local water sources have been contaminated (ActionAid, 2006). Though this assertion may be considered anecdotal, biased without any scientific empirical evidence, the study TWN affirms his position. An extract from the report, quoted in the box 1 elucidates clearly the pollution consequences of mining operations.

Clearly, boreholes, hand-dug wells which draw water from the water table beneath the earth surface have been undoubtedly affected as well but with immense implications for livelihoods in terms of potable water supply and health conditions.

One of the problematic issues of mining operation results from the lethal chemical usage and its release to the detriment of the environment and human health. AGA Obuasi mines involve the use of chemicals to extract gold. Open pit surface mining adopts the 'heap leach' method where industrial quantities of cyanide are poured on the earth and also for crushing of rocks (ibid). The report further expands that the process comes at a considerable environmental and human cost. This is because it involves large volumes of water and the construction of run-off dams - known as 'tailing dams'- to contain run-off residues from the ore-extraction process. Leftover wastes are called tailings and they often contain pollutants such as arsenic and cyanide acids”.

The chemical pollutants impacts significantly on the quality of the water and its usability for human, livestock and farming purposes. These considerations are intrinsically connected with the daily survival of communities and their livelihood capabilities.

Box 2_TWN Africa on Pollution

“Cyanide leakage due to flooding and dam failure –such as incidents in nearby south and north Dokywa in 1996 and 1998 – further compounded an already pressing problem, leading to the abandonment of villages such as Badukrom and Attakrom. An effluent discharge in November 2005 from AGA’s Pompora Treatment Plant into the Kwabrafo, a tributary of the Jimi river, has contaminated these rivers and deprived villages and towns such as Sansu, Odumase, Akofuom, Jimiso Kakraba of their once-fresh water...”

Source: TWN Study reported by Actionaid, 2006

In another incident, it was recorded that a community-Dokywa village that had its main source of water polluted by cyanide affected and visible through the change of water colour to light brown. Furthermore, another small village of about 10,000 people was flooded by toxic waste from a so-called containment lake at a nearby local plant (ActionAid, 2006). Plate 1 below illustrates the effect of chemical pollutants on river bodies.

Plate 1: A polluted River in Dokywa Village



Source: ActionAid, 2006 and Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining, 2013

6.2.2 Land Contamination and Food insecurity

The very nature of land and its connection with the daily lives of rural communities in Ghana aggravates the implications contamination exerts on the environmental significance of gold mining operations. Rural land has become a very controversial and sensitive resource-partly because of the significant

changes that has accompanied society and human development in recent decades. Centuries before, land was vast and expanse, arable land was readily available and agriculture and small family housing remained its prime use. Today, population growth, higher demand for land for non-agricultural purposes, its higher alternative value and the loss of quality has made it very 'conflictual' and sensitive. The availability of land for primary purposes of farming has significantly reduced. In effect, land although since time immemorial is a scarce commodity, is seen as more scarce than before and an attempt at reducing its significance to a known group turns into controversy. Mining has represented one of the alternative high value uses of land but has come with enormous negative externalities.

Box 3_TWN on Land Contamination

TWN Africa indicates serious poisoning of local crops in areas of historic gold mining activity, with high levels of mercury, zinc and arsenic found in local 'Obuasi oranges'. "Mercury values were up to five times more than EPA limits and 26 times more than World Health Organization limits. Zinc concentrations were up to five and eight times more than EPA and WHO limits. Arsenic values were 24 and 1,226 times the EPA and WHO limits respectively."

Polluted Farm Land

"Sediment samples generally exhibit the highest concentration of measured trace ions with values of arsenic and iron being extremely high in most samples. The highest values were roughly coincident with areas of past and/or active mining/processing activities."

Source: ActionAid, 2006

Agriculture (specifically food crop production) is intrinsically connected to the livelihood and sustenance of local or rural communities in Ghana especially those in mining communities. For decades or even centuries, food crop farming has been the main source of livelihood for those populations and any activity that deprives them of these represent a many threat to their existence. Though this is viewed by the people as a socio-cultural entitlement is it also recognized and embedded in the international declaration of human rights and the 1976 international convention of economic, social and cultural rights. The right to food is not only considered in terms of the economic or the physical access but also the means for its procurement. In other words, it is a fundamental and inalienable

right for people to create the means for obtaining food of which crop production represent a critical dimension in rural communities.

Mensah (2009) in her study in Obuasi on gold mining and CSR reveal that farmers in mining communities also lose their crops and the fertility of their land to mining activities. The impact exerted on the farmers is not just a matter of crop destruction as a result of the spillage of cyanide, smoke from the mines. One can also extend the discussion to include a more crucial effect on the quality of the soil for farming. This is more important since it affects land fertility and the ability of the land for generating the capabilities for reproduction of crops. Gold mining affects food crop production and even the cultivation of very important cash crops as cocoa. Citing the experience of one farmer in her study, Mensah reports that farmer as saying in a bitter tone that: 'his cocoa trees became stunted and thus he had to destroy them and grow cassava. According to him, with the smoke from those chimneys, you cannot plant certain crops such cocoa (a very important cash crop in the country) and plantain.

Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the environmental cost within the Obuasi catchment area cannot be viewed singularly from the physico-natural perspective. The loss of production of cash crops brings to fore the economic livelihoods questions of financial sustainability and household income generation needed to drive rural households out of poverty. The environmental cost is therefore an issue that permeates into the very core of living of populations within the catchment areas. In Plate 2 is a mine acid waste which normally drains through fertile lands and affect crops and land fertility.

Plate 2: Mine Rock waste and mine acid waste disposal on fertile land



Source: Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining, 2013

One issue often overlooked in the discussion of mining and the environment is the problem of abandoned pits. Surface mining generates enormous increases in the presence of pits which were previously dug for gold. Apart from the danger it poses to both inhabitants and their livestock, it is also a gross manifestation of land wastage and unsustainable resource utilization. Often, the case is neglected in circumstances when tests and assessments reveal no clear incident of pollution of the soil. But one can reckon that the issue is much more beyond just pollution, but also encompasses what happens to these pits in the aftermath of use and its implications to the lives of people living in the catchment communities. Obuasi has not been an exception to this problem.

Box 4_Actionaid UK on Abandoned pits: the Binesere Community Pit

There are several abandoned gold mining pits in Obuasi which pose serious risk to locals and also deprive them of land for cultivation. In a description, the research indicates the pit is 'a moonscape of grey clay with pools of water 500 meters long by 150 meters wide'. Even though the AGA claimed it has obtained permission to fill the pit and there is no incident of pollution, the community disagrees citing content of cyanide and chemicals in a previously forested area.

Source: ActionAid, 2006

Plate 3: An Abandoned open mining pit in Bensere Community



Source: ActionAid, 2006

6.3.2 Land Degradation

Aryee et al. (2003) note that the miners leave behind 'moonscaped' surfaces, destroy agricultural land and stimulate the erosion of the earth surface. Several tracts of land has not only been contaminated with the unregulated mercury use

but also left usable by the condition. Thus, the unplanned and rudimentary process of mine extraction has led to severe land degradation in several villages with consequences of health and safety implications (Offei-Aboagye et al., 2004, Aryee et al., 2003).

7. Cases of Company-Community Disputes

7.1 Varying Expectations of Mining Development Impact

One of the critical elements in the conflict situations is the divergence of opinions on the expectations of mining and development at the local community level. Community's had high 'hopes' of the impact of mining on the development and wellbeing of the local areas. As was argued in literature, the 'resource curse' and the continued social deprivation in the mining communities might have lead to this 'development dreams'. Gold resources have been in the Obuasi area for quite a long time but its role in fostering the development progress of the local people has been questionable. Hence, the realization of foreign investment, the 'community-self assessment of financial benefits' as well as corporate promises considerably shaped expectations. The people therefore expected much from the mining companies and the actual realization of social benefits were far below their initial expectations. This benefits in comparison with the environmental impact of mining operations became the 'breeding grounds' for potential disputes and conflicts that evolved later in the work of AngloGold Ashanti.

Though Mining Companies assert that these expectations are imaginary and often lie outside their sphere of influence as business entities, they also highlighted the projects that have been developed as part of their corporate social responsibility programs. CSR remains mining company's tool for driving the development progress of their catchment areas. it is however important to recognize that both mining companies and communities place different values of their development actions, initiatives and programs and hence dichotomy of these valuations initiates potential differences. It is also important to recognize that issue of 'development expectations' brings to fore traces of the municipal authority and local community planning. According to the local government Act, the District and Municipal Assemblies are the main 'development agents' at the

local level. In view of this, the situation of communities looking to mining companies as 'development entities' may present shadows of a failure or inadequate efforts of the municipal authorities and local community planning to take charge of the development process and translate these resources into social development benefits for local communities.

7.2 Cases of Disputes between Companies and Communities

7.2.1 Mining induced Impoverishment (Anyinam Community)

Mining operations has been clearly understood as damaging and affecting the livelihoods of catchment communities. This case is quite apparent in the small town of Anyinam. This case has been chosen because it provides a context for understanding the relationship between large scale mining operation and the traditional livelihood activities of local communities. It directly responds to the question of how mining affects traditional occupations of small communities and how locals respond in the complex system of relations and local economic activities. The case of this small community primarily focuses on the impact of the gold exploration activities of AngloGold Ashanti Mining on the bases of livelihood in Anyinam.

The town previously was a farming community, based on subsistence farming and the people's daily life circulating around the use of land and natural resources. Agriculture is the mainstay of the larger populace and it is considered both an economic activity and source of domestic support. The land on which they undertake their agricultural activities remains the most important resource for them and they perceive it as being critical to their socio-economic survival.

The inception of AngloGold has considerably affected certain livelihoods in the community of Anyinam. This small town has become one of the prime areas for the AngloGold mining company. The town today hosts four of the mining shafts (the Kwesi Mensah Shaft-KMS) for AngloGold Ashanti and hosts several of the residential accommodation for the workers and staff on the company. This therefore implies a huge takeover of agricultural land previously cultivated for domestic and economic purposes. The community bears the immediate negative impact of the mining activities on the land surface and also faces the threat of

being further pushed away due to the explorative activities of AngloGold Ashanti mining operations.

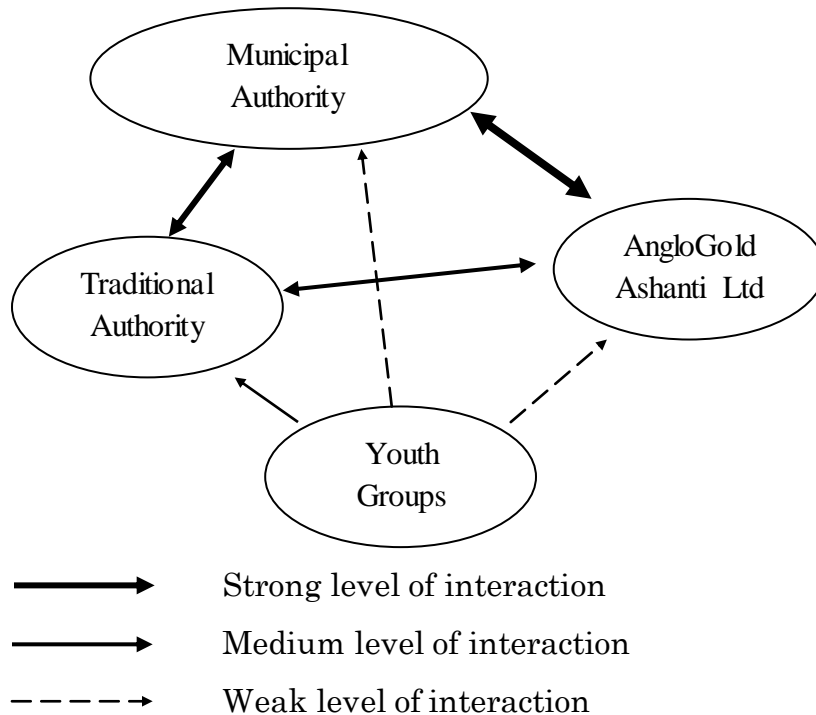
As per the agreements and contractual issues leading to the commencement of operations of AngloGold, all the lands in the area are under their concession and they hold the legal right to demarcate it for any mining related activity as and when it is expedient to do so. Based on this concession of right, the company holds the right to acquire any previously productive or occupied land and to resettle or compensate the affected group under already documented rules and guidelines satisfying to all parties and interest groups. The case in Anyinam which has generated the case of dispute is due to the fact the AngloGold has taken over large portions of land, installed shafts and other huge equipments and fenced the explorative areas to prevent any encroachment on the area. By implication, most of the land in the Anyinam area belongs to AngloGold Ashanti (the same applies to most of the land in Obuasi). The effect has been loss of productive agricultural land for the people of Anyinam, limited accessibility to certain parts of the town, limited expansion of the community and impoverishment as a result of the loss of their livelihood.

The immediate disputes however arose as a result of the compensation issues concerning the loss of farmlands and inadequate land for development projects as a reduction of reduction of space due to mining activities.

In a related issue concerning mining induced impoverishment, the youth groups in the Akrofuom Community have raised concerns about the inability of AngloGold Ashanti is addressing rise youth unemployment in their community. They attribute the rising unemployment issues to the loss of productive farm lands due to the mining Activity and the negative impact of mining on their land thereby affecting the productive capacity of the land to support farming. As a result of this, many of them indicate that they had no option but to leave the traditional occupation of farming. With no alternative livelihood avenues, they are left jobless with nothing to support themselves and their families. In effect, they have accused the mining companies of contributing to the current social and economic deprivation and doing nothing 'meaningful' about it. The discontent

has therefore being expressed as ‘rationalisation of illegality’ as many resort to illegal mining for daily sustenance.

Figure 1: Network Analysis for Anyinam Community



Source: Authors elaboration, 2013

AngloGold Ashanti limited is the lead actor in this particular case of the conflict. As the main body responsible for the exploration and mining development activities in the Obuasi area, they also wield legal and economic resources unparalleled to any of the other stakeholders in the case. They are the promoters (so to say) for mining exploration and have been granted the concession right to do so. The traditional authority, as the main customary and cultural representative leaders have often alluded to the negative impacts of mining operations and argued for fairness and integration in the mining development framework. They however oppose the takeover of farmlands and argue for a suitable compensation for the loss of their livelihood. Recent development has led the youth of Anyinam community to organize themselves into associations voicing out against the impact of the mining operations in the area. The network depicted in Figure 1 shows that the pattern of interaction has been concentrated around the municipal authority and the mining company. Community members

reveal that this kind of ‘togetherness’ without an active inclusion of their roles is what augments their view that two agencies are not really in their interest. There is a very weak interaction with the local people represented by the youth groups.

The main issue underlying the dispute in Anyinam community is about compensation for loss of farmlands and expansion for development projects. Though AngloGold Ashanti has the concession right and there can legally acquire land, the law provides for adequate, suitable and reasonable compensation for damage or any loss. Community members asserting this, indicate that the obligation to fulfill the compensation as part of the ‘deal’ has not been adhered to and companies are dragging their feet on it. On the contrary, AngloGold Ashanti as a business entity has a bureaucratic process of financial payments and hence follows certain procedures for any payment to be made. The company therefore revealed that the necessary processes are being followed and valuation being made for the compensation to be made. These opposing views led to protests and clashes on site. The youth in the community recently embarked on a road blockage, blocking all access to the mining area and preventing workers from normal operations on site. They also chased out workers out of site and threatened violence in pursuance of their views of fairness and delay in payments from AngloGold. Clashes have often been violent with occasional police response to address the issue of youth vandalism.

Plate 4: Protests by Community Members against Large Scale Mining



Source: Wasa Association of Communities Affected by Mining, 2013

7.2.2 Today's Social Demands for Yesterdays Costs (Pompora/ PTP/ Ahimadukrom Communities)

Sometimes the shadows of yesterday, could cast a spell on the responsibilities of today. This seems to be the case of three communities within the catchment area of AngloGold Ashanti gold company limited. This was selected and identified as an interesting case for a couple of reasons. First, it brings to fore a certain complexity in corporate mining and legal liabilities toward identified lethal effects. Again, in the usual business agreements and underlying contractual principles, to what extent can existing companies be held responsible for previous acts of old companies which have become part of a merger? And what is even the appropriate level of compensation and who determines what?

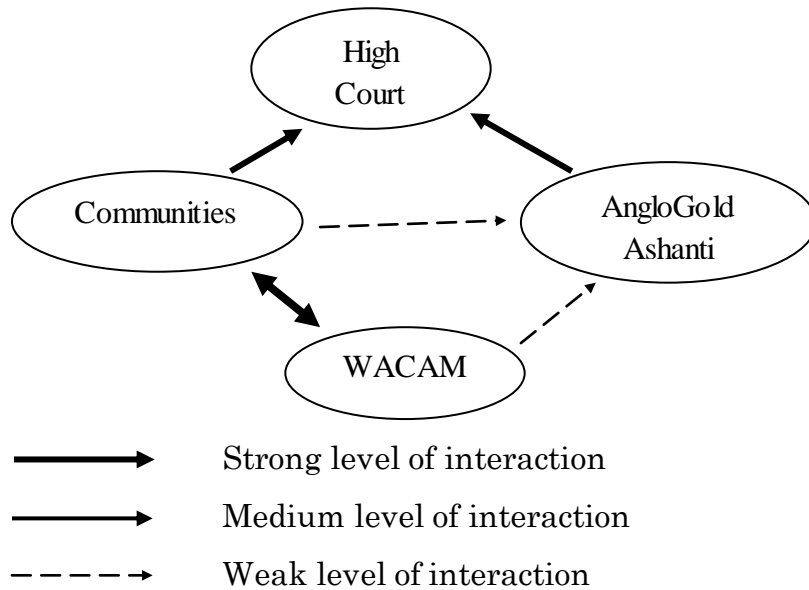
As discussed earlier, AngloGold Ashanti commenced operations in the year 2004 after a merger with the then Ashanti Goldfields Company. The latter was the main mining company and undoubtedly contributed to the negative impacts of their operations in the local environment and the people themselves. One of such legacy was the outbreak of skin diseases referred to as the 'three dots disease' years before the merger. This was attributed to an accidental release of the chemical cyanide in the above-mentioned three communities. The release of very lethal chemicals has been a bane in the health and social life of community members which Action-aid comprehensively documented in its report on a study on environmental legacy within the same area.

Though AngloGold Ashanti were not in operation then, the people from the three communities are currently demanding compensation for the effect the disease had on their health and their capacity to earn a living from their economic activities. The main actors' involved in the case include the three communities, AngloGold Ashanti Company Limited and WACAM.

The traditional leaders (local chiefs) and the communities are the main claimants for compensation from AngloGold. WACAM as the main local NGO is working as their advocate and mouthpiece in bringing the issue to the forefront of political and social discussions across local and regional contexts. However,

AngloGold Ashanti strongly opposes the legitimacy of these claim and perceive themselves are not liable for such damage.

Figure 2: Actor Network for Pompora/ PTP/ Ahimadukrom Communities)



Source: Authors elaboration, 2013

In the case of Figure 2, all actions seem to be directed to the High Court which has taken over the case of the dispute between the community and AngloGold Ashanti Company. The case was taken to court as none of parties were able to reach a fair agreement on the issue. As the communities and their representatives-the traditional leaders-argued for the AngloGold Ashanti to take responsibility and fulfill the necessary obligations coupled with pressure from civil society like WACAM, the company thought the opposite. Hence, it is clear from the network that the greatest form of interaction is concentrated around the high court where both competing parties direct their arguments. The interaction between the three communities' and AngloGold is weak and seems to explain why such as issue will have to be settled in the court of law. WACAM has long considered the case of this dispute as a human right violation and been consistently been an advocate for three communities on these issues-thus a stronger and greater form of interaction between them.

There has been no physical form of protest or manifestation. The opposition between the three communities and AngloGold Ashanti led to the court case which has been a remarkable one. It is quite a rarity for such to happen and

there seems to be a long road ahead as the case still persists. Those who were affected are still maintaining their claim for compensation and the mining company is still adamant and opining that it cannot be held responsible for the damage of a previous entity. Perhaps, this is a battle of legal 'big wits' or may be an interpretation of core business operations and liabilities. That could be left to the business and management experts to discuss, but for the purpose of this study, one could say the 'shadow of a past action seems to have cast a spell' where a payment is demanded today for yesterday's social debt.

The manifestations and the popularity of the issue have been aided by the electronic media (radio and television) and the permeable voice of civil society. A strong solidarity has been shown for the victims through the advantage of social ties in small towns and communities and the visibility has gained wide observance and support in and out of court premises. But typical of court cases in Ghana, it is going to take quite some time for a conclusive outcome.

6.2.3 Unfulfilled Agreements, Broken Relationships (Dokyiwaa Community)

This case reveals a crucial element in the nuances of gold mining conflict disputes and manifestation of grievances. This case was chosen because it provides and corroborates the assertion that the manner in which large scale gold mining companies penetrate local communities by shaping their expectations and perceptions through agreements and plans is critical to the way in which conflicts might emerge in the future. It helps provides answers to issues of how local peoples positions might change from the original mutually accepted agreements.

Dokyiwaa village is one of the dominant communities with agriculture and land cultivation as the main local economic activity. Agriculture is not only for subsistence but also provide a manageable source of income for family support. The expansion of mining activity within the community has meant a structural change in local economic activities and even their places of habitation. Some of them have been resettled and a significant proportion have lost farm lands either due to exploration, expansion or the effect of the mining activity that has reduced the availability of productive land. The mining company obviously aware of this and as part of the development strategies has created a resettlement plan

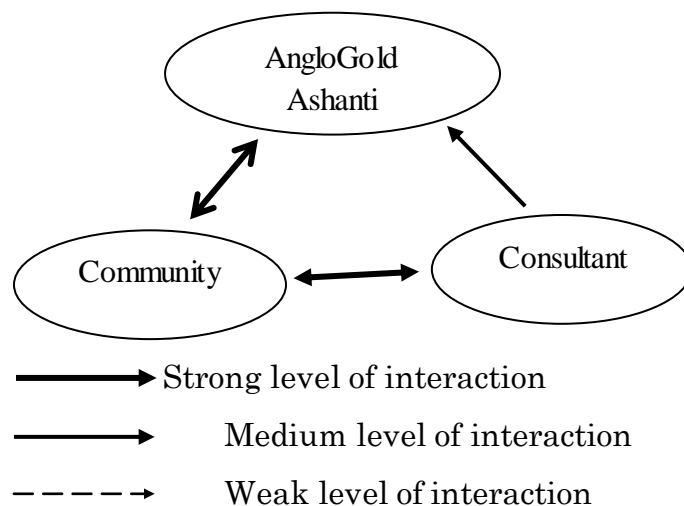
and package which details out the procedures and mechanisms for tackling the complexities of resettlement and addressing the concerns that come along with it. The dispute has been centered on the unwillingness of AngloGold Ashanti to fulfill all its obligations in the resettlement plan. The resettlement plan as part of easing the process of moving the people from acquired areas for mining activity was developed to aid the process resettling the people and providing all relevant social services and facilities to support their wellbeing in the newly inhabited place. This was agreed on by the parties under the premise that all relevant responsibilities within the plan will be carefully executed to the satisfaction of all. However, the community members of Dokyiwaa allege that AngloGold Ashanti has failed to fulfill their part of the agreement and they are therefore demanding immediate response on every detail of the resettlement package. One major issue of contention in the plan is the 'Land for Land' scheme. This scheme is basically aimed at providing land for those who lost their farmlands or productive land as a result of the resettlement. The company is therefore required under the agreement to release portions of their concessions to the affected members for productive purposes. This scheme does not only include land but also farm inputs such as fertilizer to support agricultural activities in the resettled areas. Apparently, the resettled areas do not have the same conditions and facilities as previously inhabited areas. The resettlement plan also includes the need to provide social services and facilities for the resettled members to support their daily life and general wellbeing. However, these social services and facilities are nonexistent. Basic water supply, schools, good roads among others are woefully inadequate or in a very poor state. Dokyiwaa community, AngloGold Ashanti Company and the Community Consultant are the main actors in this case. What is quite interesting here is the inclusion of the community consultant. The community has appointed its own consultant who deals with issues that affect the community interest. He is also acts as the main technical representative of the community in matters requiring expertise and technical bureaucracy.

The case in Dokyiwaa community does not have any clear opposer in the situation. This is somehow quite strange as opposition seem to be a very

characteristic nature in conflicts or disputes. However, during the early stages of negotiations on resettlements with AngloGold as the promoter of the scheme, all parties agreed under the premise of each their responsible part of the deal. The communities were therefore allies in the process. Nonetheless, the communities changed their position from their original stance in the discussions as the mining companies seemed to have failed to fulfill certain obligations in the original agreement. Auxiliary services and other social facilities remain to be seen in the community. At this point, the community opposed the mining companies and called for the details of the resettlement package to be respected and adhered to. In pursuance of this, the community utilized the services of a community consultant, appointed by them to provide expert assistance and see to the general interest and wellbeing of the community.

The fact that all actors started with a mutual agreement on the resettlement issues is revealed in the actor network where interaction is distributed across all actors without a major concentration within the group.

Figure 3: Actor Network for Dokyiwaa Community



Source: Authors elaboration, 2013

The main contention has been the expression of mistrust in the AngloGold mining company. Dokyiwaa community members have been one of the most aggrieved parties among all the communities within the mining area but have also been those who have followed laid down procedures in manifesting their

concerns. As to whether this is due to the role of the community consultant or the people's willingness to adhere to originally accepted agreements cannot be ascertained. The people therefore expressed their discontent through lodging formal complaint through the main three main procedures established by the AngloGold Ashanti Mining company. The first was through the Community Consultative Committee (which is composed of representation from the community and the mining company), the Community Forum (a general community assembly with the staff of the community relations department of AngloGold Ashanti for discussion issues and concerns) and the Community Trust Fund.

AngloGold Ashanti, citing the one of their core values as making communities where they operate better off, also followed the company's grievance procedures in addressing the issue. For instance, the 'Land for Land' which the company gives back land at the same size as this which was lost with accompanying farm inputs have already started in the community.

8. Company Strategies for Addressing Disputes

AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) has adopted its own internal mechanisms for dealing with cases of disputes, grievances or complaints from community members who may be affected by their operations in one way or the other. The Community and Social Development Department is primarily tasked to deal with community issues within the catchment areas. There is also the Grievance and Complaints office that directly handles all cases forwarded to the Company by aggrieved community members. Other mechanisms set up include the Community Consultative Committee (CCC), the Community Forum (CF) and the community Trust Fund.

8.1 Existing Communication Avenues for Community-Mining Issues

8.1.1 Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

The CCC is the main interface avenue between the AGA and the communities within the catchment areas. It is the main mode of communication with the company concerning all issues that require response from the mining company. Hence, each community within the catchment area is required to form a

consultative committee in order to have effective communication with AngloGold Ashanti. The composition of the CCC includes local chief of the community, local authorities within the community, youth leader, one representative each for men and women and an opinion leader. The number is expected to be ten persons. The CCC periodically meets the community and social development department staff and other staff to communicate their concerns. The CCC is premised on an interactive interface between the two main parties. Based on the composition, it is assumed the diverse groups and interests are represented and hence their particular issues could be forwarded for discussions. Meetings of this group are therefore restricted to the appointed members only and other members of the community are prevented from attending.

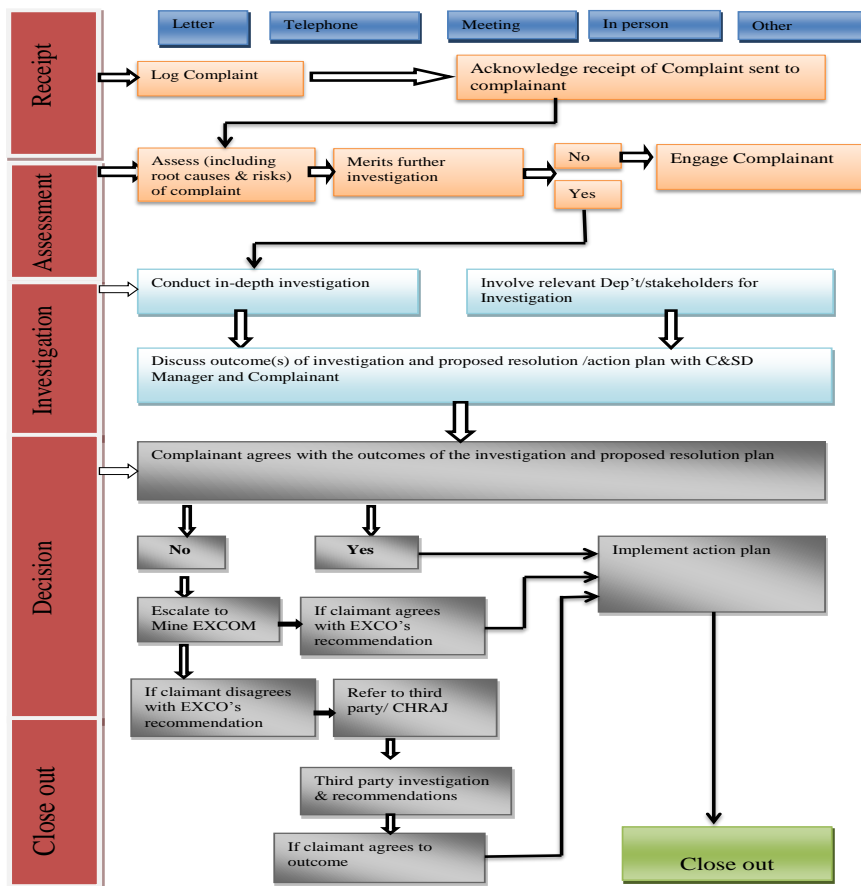
8.1.2 Community Forum (CF)

The CF could be described as the general community assembly organized by the AGA to meet all members in the community. Directed by the community and social development department, it provides the opportunity for the each member in the community to directly communicate his/her concern to the company's staff for response or any other form of assistance. Unlike the CCC, every member in the community has the right to attend and express his view. Community members have however lost 'trust in the forum' labeling it as a 'talk shop' where they are given information but not integrated into all phases of the decision making process. It seems, in their view, an information delivery point than an input process into shaping process for devising strategies and frameworks towards community development.

8.1.3 The Draft Revised Complaints and Grievance Procedure (RCGP)

This document is the main organizational blueprint for addressing complaints and any issues brought up against the mining operations. The document identifies the following as the guiding principles underlying the conflict or dispute resolution process: predictability, equitability, engagement and dialogue and continuous learning. The main process of implementing this framework as displayed in Figure 4 involves: Lodging of complaints, assessment and preliminary field investigation, reporting and action planning and third party investigations.

Figure 4: The Draft Revised Complaints and Grievance Procedure



Source: AngloGold Ashanti, 2012

In as much as this is a good attempt at addressing expected disputes and grievances from local communities, there remain key issues worthy of notice. First of all, the framework considers the initial stages of the resolution work as purely a corporate exercise by involving mainly company staff. This could be good but not sufficient in very alarming dispute situations. To consider these locally embedded informal mechanisms at a later stage may rather elongate and complicate the nature of the conflict. Secondly, local institutions such as NGOs, local assemblymen and Municipal Assembly cannot be peripherally considered as third parties. NGOs possess enormous knowledge and contribute to the way mining activities are viewed at the local level. A resolution process to enhance its

feasibility, prospects and success must of necessity include such local based institutions at the early stages of the process.

9. Possible Suggestions for Consideration

Based on the above discussions, the following suggestions have been made. These recommendations are aimed at intensifying greater community-company interaction, improving natural resource governance, minimizing conflicts and making local community planning more responsive to the dynamics of mining communities.

9.1 Power, Guarantees and Transparency

The arena within which the company-community interrelates is not a level playing field. There exists an enormous power inequality as mining companies wield economic, legal and political powers as compared to local communities who normally are considered peripheral in the process and often have to resort to advocacy groups and civil society. Hence, there is the need to adopt certain minimum guarantees, from a political, legal and economic perspective, that safeguards and protects the interest of weaker local mining communities in Ghana. These should include entitlements, legal framework support and rights that make local communities as indispensable actors in the decision-making framework. There is also the need for visibility, transparency and information dissemination as a mandatory element that can enhance accountability by civil society and community groups. There is also the need for a reorientation of the institutional and regulatory framework of the mining sector. Community representation should not be simply localized. It is necessary to ensure that there is an adequate representation at all levels of political and administrative decision-making within the gold mining sector that includes community representatives to contribute to shaping agendas. The Chamber of Mines, Minerals Commission, Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and civil society groups will be helpful in actualizing this implementing this suggestion.

8.2 Intensify Company-Community Engagement

The initial contacts between company and community are critical to the way perceptions, expectations and demands will be shaped with time. Again,

communities form the immediate recipients of mining impact and should therefore be actively engaged in the decision making framework. Often mining consultations and discussions are held at a very political and centralized level with the involvement of governmental agencies and multinational companies at the highest level. Community engagement becomes only relevant when these actors begin to localize their activities. However, the broad higher level decisions often are translated to the local level which impact communities. It is therefore relevant to ensure that the decision making process actively engages communities at all levels and their views should frame the way things are localized. Deeper and stronger community engagement will minimize conflicts and maximize mining's impact to community development.

9.3 Community-driven Sustainable Development Plan

Local communities if equipped, empowered and capacitated are able to define their own development trajectories and make progress towards communally and mutually accepted goals. The approach often has been quite 'exotic' and communities have been alienated from the relevance of too much company-driven sustainable community development approaches. Local communities have existing informal mechanisms through which they define their progress. The chieftancy system, local community of elders, groups and associations exemplify traditional systems but are key to community sustainability. To ensure that approaches by mining companies will be sustainable, socially acceptable, cultural sensitive and feasible it is important for the process to be led and shaped by the communities themselves. This will enhance not only feasibility but also responsibility and success. It will provide should framework that encourages functional relationship among the government, companies, communities, local government, civil society and other relevant parties before, during and after mining operation life span. Though this could prove to be a difficult and time consuming effort, its benefits will be much more enriching and sustaining therefore addressing several recurrent problems on gold mining and conflicts.

9.4 Integrating Mining and Community Issues into Local Planning

Local development plans have particularly treated mining conflicts as a peripheral issue in their development frameworks. The need to envision mining

into a broader framework than just environment and revenue is also entirely missing. Physical devising toward community organization is totally absent in the planning discourse. Since the conflicts are normally not just about mining presence or environment planning efforts must adapt to these. Local planning should therefore carefully study, understand and harmonize issues of large scale mining, environment and conflicts. Local efforts should try to utilize the tools to shape the physical planning of mining communities especially during resettlement and ensure that planning regulations demand the provision of essential services within resettled areas. Communities must understand local planning as integrating their concerns and planning must use its technical competencies to aid resource development.

9.5 Alternative Livelihoods, Employment and Skills Development

Mining communities in Ghana are often very based on primary production, basically subsistence agriculture activities which also serve as a source of economic sustenance. Displacement, resettlement or pollution implies a loss of these traditional means of livelihood. There is therefore the need to consider sustainable alternative livelihoods are far reaching and empowering. Mining companies will normally cite small scale businesses activities, training schemes and enterprises as the main modes of supporting local people economically. However, in several instances, these schemes are not sustainable, economically viable and productive and tend to collapse in few years. It is evidently important to enable affected people obtain job opportunities, stimulation packages and incentives to encourage business toward alternative livelihood schemes and enhancing skills acquisition. But such initiatives should not be delivered as a 'token' by expert design based on technical competencies alone. Efforts should be made to ascertain the peculiarities of each mining community in implementing such schemes and members should be part of the scoping, designing and implementing of such schemes to ensure that it is responsive to local conditions and self sustainable.

9.6 Conflict Resolution Framework

It is often said in Ghana that disputes that involve too many actors is difficult to solve especially because of the assumption that complexity of the network makes

resolution challenging. However, there is the need to make the resolution process more encompassing, involving, and inclusive and mutually trust worthy. Current mechanisms sideline actors such as the NGOs and other civil society groups who possess' enormous knowledge of local communities, the Municipal Authorities among others. The process can also be quite bureaucratic and time consuming. As it is said, justice delayed, is justice denied'. It is important to simplify the processes and make it more engaging to include all relevant parties. The framework should also be developed with a particular sensitivity to local community peculiarities and a more distributed system than concentration on certain core actors.

Again, these resolution strategies are applied within local communities with already existing informal systems of consensus building, negotiation, institutional norms and values. It will be expedient to embed the frameworks within existing localized informal systems so that local people could associate with such frameworks and not be alienated to them. Traditional authority, family systems, cultural values and institutions should not therefore be considered as third party issues, as indicated in the existing framework, but functionally integrated into the early stages of the resolution process.

9.7 Re-conceptualize the Role of Conflicts in Relational Discourse

It is unsurprising for conflict situations in a region where acute conflicts has had damaging consequences on the social and economic frames of society, to be discarded, avoided, feared and resented. Indeed acute conflicts exert lethal consequences than any calculable benefit. However, it is important to consider a manifestation of conflict as positive phenomenon. To clarify further, conflict in its early stages where actors and players manifest diverging interests, incompatible goals and protest. A critical consideration of conflicts could provide enormous information and knowledge on understand systems, actors interests, goals, approaches and mechanisms for resolution. In every aspect of development and human progress, mining, communities or political systems, conflicts are inevitable. However, they also provide a tool for comprehending actor interrelations, weaknesses in any system and the goals that different groups may present on the decision making table. These are very important in

transformation of societies, systems and fostering development across different dimensions of human society. A lot can be done after the manifestation of conflict than before and the whole evolution of human society attest to this.

10. Conclusion

The nature of mining activity implies that conflicts are bound to ensue especially in the context of large scale multinationals companies operations in local impoverished communities. Though the discussion of environmental conflicts in developing countries such as Ghana have been met with enormous caution and skepticism; it is also possible that these issues provide the starting points for looking broadly at how positive connections could be established with mining, environment and community development. Mining has truly degraded the environment, dramatically changed social and cultural paradigm of local communities and contributed to the current poor state of the mining communities such as the Obuasi area. It is also noticeably true that these mining companies have contributed to the development progress of their catchment areas. Many communities have seen schools, hospitals, water facilities and roads which never existed before mining activity. Nonetheless, the study has revealed that mining induced conflict basically stems from the company-community interface. The case is particularly true for large scale mining operations effect on the habiting space of local people, their livelihood sources and the changes to their social ties due to mining. The response sometimes violent, lawful or even justified illegality shows that the disputes cannot simply be oversimplified as an environmental phenomenon but rather induced by the environmental disruption and acted within a social relationship. Hence, issues of compensation, displacement, resettlement and health impacts cannot simply be addressed with a certain strategic framework.

There is the need for community sensitive innovation in large scale gold mining, a more engaging decision making process, improved resource governance and an active local community planning. Though disputes have been comparatively less violent and damaging, current efforts within the company-community interface will significantly frame how things evolve into the future. Will there be more

aggression by local communities leading to severe conflict or disputes will be properly resolved and mitigated. Again, does the current state of the company-community relationship in the gold mining sector offer any lessons for other extractive areas like Ghana's new oil sector which in other African countries has seen acute conflict and devastation?

References

- [1] Actionaid (2006) *Gold rush: the impact of gold mining on poor people in Obuasi in Ghana* [online] available at: www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib [Assessed 15 April 2013]
- [2] AngloGold Ashanti (2012) *AGA Sustainability Report, 2011*. [online] available at: www.aga-reports/11 retrieved on [Assessed 14 March 2013]
- [3] Arthur P. (2012) Avoiding the resource in Ghana: Assessing the options in natural resources and conflict: Towards environmental security *In: Shnurr M. A and Swatuk L.A. (eds.) International Political Economy Series*. Pelgrave Macmillan: London
- [4] Auty R. M., (1993) *Sustaining development in the mineral economies: The resource curse thesis*, London: Routledge.
- [5] Barton, B., (2005), *A global/local approach to conflict resolution in the resources sector: The Case of the Tintaya Dialogue Table*, unpublished Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis. Tufts University, Boston, MA.
- [6] Bebbington, A., D. Humphreys Bebbington, J. Bury, J. Langan, J.P. Muñoz and M. Scurrah (2008a) *Mining and social movements: Struggles over livelihood and rural Territorial development in the Andes*, *World Development*, 36(12), pp. 2888-2905.
- [7] Bebbington, A., L. Hinojosa, D. H. Bebbington, M. L. M.L. Burneo and X. Warnars (2008) Contention and ambiguity: mining and the possibilities of development, *Development and Change* 39(6), 887–914.
- [8] Brockington, D. and Sullivan, S. (2003) Qualitative research. *In: Scheyvens, R. and Storey, D., Development fieldwork: A practical guide*. London: SAGE Publications.
- [9] Calvano, L. (2008) *Multinational corporations and local communities: A critical analysis of conflict*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82(4), pp. 793–805.
- [10] Davis, G., Tilton, J., (2003) *Should developing countries renounce mining?* Working paper. Colorado School of Mines.
- [11] Epps, J., Brett, A., (2000) Engaging stakeholders *In: Otto, J.M., Cordes, J. (eds.) Sustainable development and the future of mineral investment*. France: UNEP.
- [12] Garvin, T., T. K. McGee, K. E. Smoyer-Tomic and E. A. Aubynn (2009) Community-company relations in gold mining in Ghana, *Journal of Environmental Management* 90, pp. 571–586.
- [13] Haber, S. & Menaldo, V. A. (2007) *Do natural resources fuel authoritarianism?* Stanford Center for International Development, Working Paper 351.

- [14] Hall P. (2009) *Planning in the past, present and future: 21st century reflections*. Seminar on 50th Anniversary Celebrations, College of Environmental Design. University of California, Berkeley.
- [15] Hilson, G. (2002) The Environmental Impact of Small Scale Mining in Ghana. Identifying problems and possible solutions. *The Geographical Journal*, Vol., 168, pp. 55-72.
- [16] Jenkins, H. (2004) *Corporate social responsibility and the mining industry: Conflicts and constructs*. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 11, pp. 23–34.
- [17] Kemp D., J.R. Owen, N. Gotzmann, and C.J.Bond (2010) *Just relations and company–community conflict in mining*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 101, pp. 93–109.
- [18] Lawson E.T and Bentil G. (2013) *Shifting sands: changes in community perceptions of mining in Ghana*. Springer.
- [19] Mensah V (2009) *The role of corporate social responsibility on sustainable development: A case study of the mining community in the Obuasi municipality*. Unpublished thesis.
- [20] Ochieng Odhiambo, M. (2000) *Oxfam Karamoja conflicts study: A Report*. Oxfam: Kampala.
- [21] Ofei–Aboagye S, Nii Moi T, Al-Hassan S, Akabzaa T, Ayamdoo C. (2004) *Putting miners first: understanding the livelihoods context of small-scale and artisanal mining in Ghana. Factors involved in increasing the contribution of ASM to poverty reduction targets*. Synthesis Report, Centre for Development Studies. University of Wales: UK.
- [22] Ross, M (2001) *Extractive resources and the poor*. Oxfam America Report.
- [23] Sovacool, B. (2010) The political economy of oil and gas in Southeast Asia: heading towards the natural resource curse? *Pacific Review*, 23(2), 225–259.
- [24] Veiga, Scoble and McAllister (2001) *Mining with communities*. *Natural Resources Forum*, 25 (2001), pp. 191-202.
- [25] Verheye, W.H., (1997) Land use planning and national soils policies. *Agricultural Systems* 53, pp. 161–174.
- [26] Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (2013) *Mining is destroying livelihoods in Ghana* [online] available at: www.wacamgh.org [Assessed 11 March 2013]
- [27] Whiteman, G. and K. Mamen (2002) Examining justice and conflict between mining companies and indigenous peoples: Cerro Colorado and the Ngabe-Bugle in Panama, *Journal of Business and Management* 8(3), pp. 293–329.
- [28] Yelapaala and Ali (2005) Multiple scales of diamond mining in Akwatia, Ghana: addressing environmental and human development impact. *Resources Policy*, 30 pg. 145-155