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# Mining Sector CSR Behaviour: A Developing Country Perspective

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## Abstract

The study examined the nature of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Ghana's gold mining sector, the relationship between company-specific CSR programmes and the initiatives or agreements firms are signatories to. It further analyzed the views of key stakeholders (managers, regulators, mining support organizations, communities, district assemblies and the NGO community) about community-focused CSR in the mining sector. The role of stakeholders in mining company CSR was also examined. Three multinational gold mining companies in Ghana were selected using a criterion-based sampling technique. A qualitative approach, employing document reviews, focus group discussions, stakeholder meetings and structured interviews were used to examine firms' community-based CSR initiatives and levels of stakeholder involvement within the process. All three companies had launched community development projects that were implemented through tri-sector partnerships. These partnerships were to enhance the economic livelihoods of communities affected by their operations. The study concluded that the effective implementation of international voluntary initiatives, government initiatives and regulations, programme-collaboration among companies and strengthening of partnerships will enhance CSR focused on improving community livelihoods.

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**Keywords:** Corporate social responsibility (CSR), tri-sector partnerships, stakeholder, community development, multinational firms, mining, Ghana

**Paper type:** Research paper

## Introduction, Problem Statement and Study Objectives

Mining in Ghana accounts for 5% of the country's GDP, with gold accounting for over 90% of total mineral exports (Mbendi, 2009). Relevant regulatory institutions in Ghana are the ministry of mines and energy, minerals commission, geological survey department, mines department, lands commission, chamber of mines and the environmental protection agency.

Ghana has been a producer and exporter of gold since the sixteenth century and has at some point been considered the second largest gold producer in Africa. The gold mining sector is however saddled with problems such as using outdated machinery & techniques, increasing trend of health related diseases associated with mining, community conflicts, settlement displacements, high levels of unemployment, increasing corruption, noise pollution, high levels of prostitution, tax breaks and complex government regulations. The gold mining sector is plagued with companies ranging from small scale to large scale. Gold deposits in Ghana can be found in Tarkwa, Obuasi, Prestea, Bogoso, Damang, Aboaso, Kenyase, Ntronang-Abrem and Bibiani.

Even though gold is considered a major metallic mineral in Ghana, the activities of companies in this sector continue to have a degrading impact on the country's environment (Windfuhr, 2000; Boateng, 2006; Kunateh, 2009; Koranteng, 2008). The activities of companies during and after the extraction of gold lead to the destruction of surrounding fauna and flora. Mining companies' destructive behaviours include the pollution of water bodies, air pollution, pollution of surface and ground water, increasing soil erosion, leaching,

etc. According to Mbendi (2009), about 12% of Ghana's forest cover has been destroyed by mining activities in the country.

Mining is an industry that has been dogged by low levels of credibility and a lot of social opposition. Global, regional and local opposition to the activities of the extractive industry have initiated a change in the behavior of mining firms towards the societies in which they operate. Mining companies are being urged to ensure that their corporate social responsibility programmes address the diverse needs of communities, the environment and the economy (Obara & Jenkins, 2008). Companies are currently conscious of the impacts of their operations on their employees, communities, the natural environment and civil society as a whole. Good corporate reputation, healthy community relations and silencing the voice of critics have gained prominence as companies attempt to retain their social license to operate and manage unforeseen risks. To respond to stakeholder concerns and pressure from civil society, corporations are required to leave positive environmental and social impacts in their operational areas (Kolk, 2000). Indeed, according to Idemudia (2011) if we are to better understand *CSR impact on society* as opposed to *CSR impact on business*, then the beneficiaries' perceptions and experiences of CSR needs to become central to analysis.

Mining firms in Ghana embrace the fact that they have a responsibility to all stakeholders. They demonstrate their commitment by being philanthropic. In the wake of mining companies being philanthropic, civil society continues to suffer the consequences of mining activities. Raising questions on how effective mining company CSR

programmes are. Hence this study draws concern to the fact that CSR activities within the mining sector carry equal significance during firm operation and closure. This study highlights the behavior modifications needed to ensure effectiveness of the CSR activities carried out within the mining sector. When mining sector CSR is viewed as a social contract it becomes imperative then that mining company CSR initiatives should be commensurate with the compensation paid by society as a result of mining company activities.

Different organisations view CSR activities differently. Whereas some may consider it to be a moral obligation to society with no returns expected, others may view it as a strategic activity that could enable them to gain legitimacy or protect their profits. Yet others may also view it as a moral stand in order to protect or sustain the environment. These differing perspectives may arguably underscore why companies undertake different types of CSR activities, with some focusing on issues in the community, whilst others focus on the environment. Additionally, others may focus on issues at work or in the marketplace, whilst others consider compliance with standards to be the best CSR activity.

Consequently, researchers have propounded a number of CSR models that seek to capture the various responsibilities of firms. For instance, Carroll (1991, 2004) introduced four variables (economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic) in his model for assessing CSR practices; whilst Lantos's (2001) model considers ethical, altruistic and strategic variables. Crane, Matten & Spence, (2008) also introduced a *contemporary model* which groups CSR activities into four compo-

nents: the Marketplace, Workplace, Environment and Community. Additionally, Wood's CSR model (Wood, 1991) looks at principles, processes and policies; whilst Meehan, Meehan and Richard's (2006) 3C-SR model measures a firm's CSR using three variables: consistency, commitment and connections. Galbreath (2009) also structures his framework within the strategic scope of a firm, including a firm's long-term objectives (mission), internal and external impact on a firm's mission (strategic issues), a firm's markets (markets), products and/or services needed (customer needs), available internal resources (assets, skills, competences, relationships, finance and facilities – resources) and a firm's performance within competitive markets (competitive advantage). Owen and Kemp (2012) draw on the revised “Asset-Based Community Development” (ABCD) approach that highlights the existing collective capacities of a community as a basis for collective action for addressing problems of community development. Lastly, a study by Idemudia (2009b) also revealed that the corporate–community foundation model is more effective than the in-house corporate–community investment model and offers better space for community participation. These models offer various angles from which the activities and performance of corporations are judged and viewed.

CSR has gained impetus and credence in the mining industry as the fundamental approach by which the challenges facing the industry, especially in areas affected by mining operations, are being addressed (Garvin, McGee, Tomic & Aubynn, 2007). In the mining industry, CSR goes beyond impact mitigation to include enhancement of economic and social benefits of operations (Yakovleva, 2005). Financial

accountability, charitable giving, community development through philanthropy and tri-sector partnerships, worker rights enhancement and environmental management are at the forefront of mining sector CSR. Mining firms have begun to show their responsibility to the environment and society by adopting policies and initiatives for improving their performance in these areas and also contribute to sustainable development in the communities affected by their operations.

Currently, there are two major types of CSR (referred to as the vital components of CSR by Mullen (1997) and Buchholtz, Amazon & Rutherford (1999) undertaken by mining companies in Ghana: while some companies are involved in philanthropic activities like providing for development and other financial needs of communities, others engage communities in activities aimed at growing and strengthening local economies to be self-sustaining after termination of mining operations.

In Ghana, mining companies are adopting some or all of these strategies to demonstrate their responsibility to society. However, what these companies are required to do, what they have done and/or are currently doing, how they are doing them and what remains to be done are questions that need to be answered. The effectiveness or success of past and present CSR initiatives in Ghana's mining sector in enhancing quality of life of communities affected by mining are yet to be analyzed. The present study seeks to build on Visser's (2006), which observed that not much research has been carried out on CSR in Africa's mining sector.

The general purpose of the study was twofold, to:

(a) Examine the nature and effectiveness

of programmes being adopted by mining companies for promoting community development in the communities where they operate; the point here being to ascertain whether the community development initiatives of the three case study companies qualify as sustainable and if so what the criteria would be to make that determination

(b) Examine the viewpoints of important stakeholders including, corporate managers, regulatory officials, mining support organizations, community leaders and members, district assemblies and the NGO community.

Mining firms in Ghana embrace the fact that they have a responsibility to all stakeholders. They demonstrate their commitment by being philanthropic. In the wake of mining companies being philanthropic, civil society continues to suffer the consequences of mining activities. Hence, this study draws concern to the fact that CSR activities within the mining sector carry equal significance during firm operation and closure. This study highlights behaviour modification needed to ensure sustainability of the CSR activities carried out within the mining sector. When mining sector CSR is viewed as a social contract, it becomes imperative then that mining company CSR initiatives should be commensurate to the compensation paid by society as a result of their mining operations. The institutional framework within which firms operate is by no means irrelevant. As Dashwood and Pupilampu (2010) noted, the institutional context in a developing country like Ghana influences the CSR policies of firms based on local conditions.

## Literature Review

### Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR has been defined variously by companies, international institutions, governments, and the research community. These definitions have the same central theme, as vividly depicted by Carroll's (1979) pioneering definition of CSR as a firm's simultaneous fulfilment of its economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities to its stakeholders by making profit, obeying the law, and being ethical and a good corporate citizen (Carroll, 1991). Thus in the CSR parlance, corporations are expected to properly balance the different economic, legal, ethical and social responsibilities that they confront in the business environment, and in certain situations voluntarily go beyond their immediate financial interest and the mere compliance with mandatory obligations of the legislation or other rules of the game (Halme, Roome & Dobers, 2009; Kuznetsov, Kuznetsova & Warren, 2009; Windsor 2006).

The current wave of interest in CSR, according to Jenkins (2005), dates back to the early 1990s when societies were growing weary of the increasing power of corporations, which posed great threat to national sovereignty, social development and the environment. This led to society's demand and attempt to rein in and regulate the activities of corporations and the growth of corporate power. Major companies in the US responded by pushing the CSR agenda with the argument that businesses could operate economically, responsibly, and ethically within the legal framework, and contribute to social and environmental development; all without the coercive pressure from governments, international institutions and society (Jenkins, 2005). International institutions such as the

United Nations (UN) and the World Bank, as well as all governments with time, have added their support to the promotion of CSR by developing CSR standards. Judging by the increasing trend of international standards such as ISO, GRI G3 Guidelines, and the UN Global Compact, it is arguable to suggest that CSR has so far won the endorsement of governments, society and international institutions (Halme et al., 2009). Corporations in other parts of the world have also adopted CSR as an important agenda in their business operations.

The business case view suggests that organisations engage in CSR activities as a strategic move to build corporate image and maximise other benefits such as profits (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). Indeed, there are widely-cited findings that suggest that society tends to reward organisations that are considered to be socially responsible in various ways, which make corporations benefit more from their CSR activities in terms of reputation-returns or profits (Arli & Lasmono, 2010). Other benefits cited in the literature include the possibility of other stakeholders investing and/or seeking employment in the organisation because of its CSR activities (Sen, Bhattacharya & Korschun, 2006; Du et al., 2010). It is thus arguable to imply that although firms could engage in CSR purely on moral or ethical grounds, they normally do so to build up reputation and enhance corporate profit or shareholder gain (Kuznetsov et al., 2009). This may account for the increasing inclusion of CSR on corporate board agenda and discussions (Lockett, Moon & Visser, 2006).

However, there is equally substantial literature revealing that CSR can and should actually be a force for social good by

companies contributing to the enhancement of society, including environmental conditions (Halme et al., 2009). Some also suggest that CSR can and should lead to a 'win-win' situation, by adopting initiatives that serve both the needs of society and the bottom lines of businesses (Du et al., 2010). The view is better depicted by Arli & Lasmono (2010), who stressed that a company must meet four fundamental responsibilities to be considered a socially responsible company. The first is that the firm should make efforts to meet shareholders expectations of making a profit and to expand. Secondly, the company should be law abiding and operate within the legal framework of society. Thirdly, a socially responsible business has to respect the rights of others and meet the expectations applied by society to do what is right, just and fair. Lastly, it should pursue philanthropic activities by contributing and supporting the broader community to improve the quality of society. CSR in this sense will not seek to only maximise profit, but also ensure that society is served, protected and not disadvantaged or exploited.

### CSR in the Developing World

As a result of increased surveillance and criticisms of corporate activities especially in developing countries, and the growing recognition of stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997), many corporate managers are responding to stakeholder interests by channeling resources to promote CSR. These stakeholders including insurers, customers, affected local community groups, employees, governments and investors have created critical incentives for corporations to act responsibly (Clarkson, 1995; Marsden, 2000; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Waddock, Badwell & Graves, 2002). In the mining

industry, some employers support CSR interventions such as progressive labor relations policies, health, safety and improved workplace amenities. Mine workers are able to form unions that act as a strong voice to compel firms to adopt CSR policies (Walton, 1997).

Additionally, due to its social and developmental aspects, the international development literature has welcomed the CSR concept (Natufe, 2001; Walker, 1998). In the area of development, the growing number of development agencies in the government and NGO sector is providing assistance to development related CSR projects undertaken by companies. This initiative is popularly known as tri-sector partnerships and usually involves the company providing the funds while the development agencies plan and implement the programmes. Organizations like the World Bank (2002) also suggest that CSR represents a conduit for community economic development, environmental protection, improving health and education, and other activities.

However, critics argue that in the developing world common CSR approaches such as philanthropy and community development are insufficient to deal with the challenging issues of development. They argue that because the most important issues are not identified and effectively addressed, any interventions are short-lived (Visser, McIntosh & Middleton, 2006). Also the voluntary and therefore unregulated nature of CSR has not been too helpful for the developing world. Critics also point out that CSR is only seen through the business lens and does not positively connect the business world with development challenges as may seem to be portrayed by CSR proponents (Blowfield, 2005). Others suggest that in an effort to

merge CSR with development, CSR is sometimes presented as a profit maximization initiative and this often erodes the actual intent of CSR (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005). Also, as business and development become intertwined through CSR, there is the danger that checks and balances on irresponsible business will go unnoticed. Newell (2005), who looks at the relationship between the company and local communities emphasizes that due to power inequalities between the companies and local communities, the lesser receives very little attention from the greater.

Corporate social responsibility is also seen to have negative consequences such as cases of bribery and corruption especially in developing countries (Jenkins, 2004) with sometimes unfulfilled promises. Frynas (2005) has criticized CSR implementation for its lack of human resources, failure to involve beneficiaries and integrate initiatives into a larger development plan. At the community level, CSR efforts have often been driven by protests, demonstrations and dialogue and this has often led to some form of amicable settlements between the company and communities (Newell, 2005). Some NGOs also refer to CSR moves as 'greenwash'- just a desperate attempt by corporations to improve their environmental and social image without any real changes on the ground (e.g. TWN, 2002). Blowfield (2005) nevertheless admits that some companies now apply same home country social and environmental standards in developing countries.

### Theoretical Framework & Research Questions

*Community-based consultative (CBC) approach to mining*

Galbreath (2006) identified four CSR strategies that organizations pursue in

other to achieve their corporate objectives including: the shareholder strategy; the altruistic strategy; the reciprocal strategy; and the citizenship strategy. The shareholder strategy represents an approach to CSR as a component of an overall profit motive, one that is focused exclusively on maximizing shareholder returns. *The altruistic strategy* suggests that business firms are not responsible to society, but rather that the obligation of social responsibility falls upon the managers of business firms. *The reciprocal strategy* is best viewed as "enlightened self-interest". This CSR strategic option is pragmatic in that it seeks to resolve the conflicts between economic objectives and intense social, moral and environmental expectations of society. The citizenship strategy takes on a broader scope than the previous strategic options for CSR. Here, a business firm recognizes that various stakeholders have different interests and expectations, including customers, employees, suppliers, specific communities, shareholders, the environment, and so on. The underlying assumptions surrounding the citizenship strategy is that organizations recognize the existence of different expectations from several stakeholders within the community (community members). Organizations are thus expected by the community to behave as good citizens. Drucker (1946) earlier proposed the view that when organizations are viewed 'as citizens within the community' then it is responsible for other members within the society. The citizenship strategy of CSR calls for the use of the CBC project approach (Galbreath, 2006).

### Voluntary Initiatives and Tri-sector Partnerships for Community Development

Tri-sector partnerships describe the type of agreement that may exist between the gold

mining company, government, community leaders and NGOs necessary for the implementation of a CSR project (Warhurst, 2001). Tri-sector partnerships have also been described as a project model/framework between power brokers in the community and sometimes influential groups within the global economy (Warhurst, 2001). Members within a tri-sector partnership all stand to gain some leverage from the management of the CSR project within the economy. For instance the gold mining company secures the goodwill of community members and political powers enabling them to have access to resources within the community. NGOs and community members present grassroots community challenges which ensure that CSR projects are effective. In addition, NGOs and community members use the partnership as a conduit to advocate for better conditions and have their grievances met. Government also gets a better appreciation of how feasible and enabling existing policies are in preserving the mining industry, ensuring transparency and accountability (Warhurst, 2001). The Construction Industry Board (1997) have raised the argument that organizations that venture into tri-sector partnerships have done so also because of some perceived value returns and level of risk. Before embarking on tri-sector partnerships a company would normally run an assessment to ascertain the level of risk and value returns involved. When company assessments reveal that community leaders are not organized, there are high level of corruption in government and a heightened state of social unrest within the community as against very low project returns it may not be advisable to engage in tri-sector partnerships due to undesirable project returns.

Waddock (2006) found in a 2003 survey of chief executives of the world's largest corporations that the increasing prominence of CSR in global firms is evidenced by the rate of its institutionalization in society. This emergence has spawned the creation of CSR organizations and adoption of CSR related discourse and policies among governments, NGOs, businesses, international institutions and society as a whole. Some of these organizations are: The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD); the Mining and Minerals for Sustainable Development (MMSD) project; and the International Council of Mining and Metals (ICMM). Others are the United Nation's (UN) Global Compact; the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Accountability (AA1000); and the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI).

Although adoption of codes of conduct has been ongoing over the past decade (Kolk, Van Tulder & Welters, 1999; Williams, 2000; Mamic, 2003), the practice and effectiveness of these codes remain questionable (Kolk et al., 1999). While Smith and Feldman (2003) report that a World Bank estimate in 2003 revealed that over 1000 multinational corporations had adopted codes of conduct, Utting (2002) reports that only a few hundred of the over 60,000 multinational corporations seriously implement codes of conduct and issue triple bottom line reports.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the creation of formal and informal relationships between business, NGOs and governments. Such relationships according to many authors can be attributed mainly to economic globalization, with its consequent increases in environ-

mental and social issues (Herrmann, 2004; Eweje, 2006). Companies no longer expect environmental and social issues to be the sole responsibility of the government. In the mining industry, companies that have embraced the sustainable development agenda have moved from the traditional company initiated and implemented social responsibility interventions to the formation of partnerships with development NGOs, local and national government agencies and mining communities (Yakovleva & Alabaster, 2003).

Hamann (2003b) points out that one of the ways by which mining companies can fully embrace CSR is the formation of tri-sector partnerships between government and civil society or NGOs for development. These partnerships bring together the core competencies of all sectors so that capabilities can be exploited for maximum impact as they complement each other. Though questions remain regarding the degree of interaction that should exist between these partners, the adoption of these partnerships are being promoted by the sustainable development drive that calls for an integrated approach to business, environmental and social issues. Muthuri et al., note that questions remain around how corporations innovate so that they are able to perform their roles as expected by their stakeholders and how corporate social action guarantees community livelihoods and security; whilst for Eweje (2007), a critical question that still remains in these partnerships is the definition of responsibilities between government, private sector and society. Partnerships are thus not without flaws. As Banerjee (2001, p. 45) notes:

*“Partners in resource development assume two things: first, both parties are relatively equal in their power and access to resources,*

*and second, all indigenous communities are in favour of mining on their lands. Neither assumption is valid in all cases”.*

## Research Questions

Based on the objectives of this study and the foregoing theoretical viewpoints the following research questions are developed to guide the study:

- *What is the nature and effectiveness of programmes being adopted by mining companies for promoting community development in the communities where they operate?*
- *What is the extent to which companies in partnership with government and NGOs achieve their CSR goals?*
- *What role are mining sector regulatory bodies and other support institutions playing to ensure that mining companies are socially responsible to communities in which they operate?*

## Methodology

### Design

This study was designed using the case study qualitative approach. It employed relevant methods such as document reviews, focus group discussions, stakeholder meetings, and interviews to provide a rich and detailed insight (Creswell, 1998) into CSR perspectives. The choice of qualitative over a quantitative method for this particular study is that the qualitative method is more useful to achieve the objectives of the research (McKeganey, 1995). In the quest to gather insight into the community-based CSR strategies of the mining sector in Ghana the case study approach was used to facilitate the holistic review and interpretation of issues surrounding community-based CSR strategies of the mining companies. Additionally, the case study method permitted the collection of additional data that can serve as data source in further

studies (Vissak, 2009; Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case study approach provides a holistic description of the phenomenon through the narrations given by the participants. The design of the case study was limited to mining companies in the western region of Ghana, and who had been in operation for more than ten years.

### Case Studies

Given that case studies remain the prevailing instrument through which CSR practices are communicated, this method was chosen to provide deeper knowledge and understanding of how CSR is undertaken and the level of stakeholder engagement during the process. Three companies are selected from Tarkwa in the Wassa West District of the Western Region of Ghana for this research: (*Company A: a multinational (MNC) based at Tarkwa; Company B: a multinational (MNC) based at Damang; and Company C: a multinational (MNC) based at Iduapriem*). The selection of these companies is criterion-based; specifying selecting participants that meet a pre-determined criterion (Mason, 2002). Firm CSR approach is the main criterion used to select these companies. This is because the researchers wanted to explore in detail and understand (Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002) the CSR approaches being used by these companies.

Prior to the selection of these companies, a series of correspondences were made between the researchers and a number of mining companies in Ghana. The purpose of the research was made clear to all of these companies. In the end, the selected companies were chosen taking into consideration data collection costs, accessibility and willingness of companies to participate fully in the research process, and sufficiency of data. Neighbouring communities affected by the operations of

these companies are included in the study based on the fact that they are the most impacted. As stressed by Rickson et al., (1995) the impact of mining is most severe on communities physically close to the mine, decreasing as the physical distance from the mine increases. Additionally, the participating companies are located in close proximity to one another, thereby allowing for a comparison of their CSR approaches. It also afforded the researchers the opportunity to ascertain whether these companies act independently or cooperatively in regard to their CSR practices in the Tarkwa area.

### Rationale for Selecting Study Site

The study was carried out in the Wassa West District of the Western Region of Ghana. The district is one of the leading producers of gold in Ghana. The district was selected for the study because, first, it hosts eight multinational gold mining operations and one manganese mine. This is the largest concentration of mining activities in any area in the country (Hilson & Potter, 2003). A third of the land area is under concession to large-scale mining with 50% of mines operating in Ghana located here (Hilson & Nyame, 2006). Subsistence farming is the main economic activity of the local people living in the mining communities. Small scale mining is also another source of economic livelihood for people in the district. The operations of these small scale operators are however restricted due to large scale mining activities. Though the district is known for natural resource production namely; mining, timber and cocoa which generates a lot of wealth, it has been reported that very little of these financial gains reaches the mining communities and as a result poverty continues unabated (Akabzaa & Daramani, 2001). There are also a lot of conflicts between mining

companies and communities in the district over issues of compensation, local employment, environmental degradation, societal disintegration and social responsibility. There are a total of 24 communities affected by the operations of the three companies. The total population in the communities fringing *Company A* is about 20,000 (*Co. A. Community Relations Department, 2006*); that of *Company B* is about 10,000 (*Co. B. Community Relations Department, 2006*); whilst for *Company C* the population is about 7600 (*Co. C. Mine Presentation to Media, 2006*). A map of Ghana showing the study area is included in the appendix (Figure 1).

### Participating Companies

*Companies A & B, both multinationals*, make up a Group of Companies that has been in operation in Ghana for more than 10 years. The Group, which has two subsidiaries in Ghana, is owned by a large South African based conglomerate. In Ghana, the Group is currently the leading gold producer and globally, is the fourth largest gold producer. In Ghana the companies have gained a reputation for actively assisting affected communities and the nation as a whole with various CSR interventions. *Company C, another multinational*, is also South African owned and is a subsidiary of the second largest gold producer in the world. It is located close to *Company A* and has also been in operation in Ghana for more than 10 years.

### Procedure

*Review of documents:* Company reports were reviewed to provide an insight into general company operations as well as specific CSR interventions and activities. These enabled the researchers to build a full and complete CSR profile of each participating company. Relevant reports published by state organizations, Non governmenten-

tal/civil/community-based organizations were also studied to understand the role of these organizations in mining sector CSR behavior of companies.

*Interviews:* In-depth interviews were conducted with different stakeholders involved in the selection and or implementation of CSR initiatives. In all, 25 stakeholders were interviewed. The interviews were used to gather in-depth information about the role these stakeholders play in making companies socially responsible. Interviewees were selected from the companies, communities, EPA, District Assembly, district hospital, Chamber of Mines, Minerals Commission and Opportunities Industrializations Centers International (OICI) – a development NGO. Three interview guides were used for the interviews. Through in-depth interviews, the researchers were also able to employ follow-up questions to achieve depth of answers as well as the reasons, feelings, opinions and beliefs behind answers (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003).

*Focus group discussions:* A homogenous sampling method where participants are chosen to give detailed insights into a particular phenomenon (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002) was employed in the selection of participants for focus group discussions. For this study, participants were beneficiaries of ongoing CSR programmes and they presented the opportunity for deeper understanding of community perspectives on the performance of the CSR programmes being implemented by the participating companies. These individuals were all selected from the communities currently benefiting from the programmes being executed by the three mining companies. Ongoing programmes are mainly alternative livelihood projects

being implemented by the companies in partnership with OICI. The main goal of these projects is to achieve sustainable community development and empowerment. In each of the three mining communities, there were 8-12 participants.

## Findings

### Company (A, B & C) Reviews

This section presents the findings from the review of company CSR programmes - company mission statements, CSR reporting, channels of CSR activities and the key characteristics of the CSR programmes. These are presented in Table 1 below. The reviews showed that all three companies share key characteristics in stakeholder engagement and community development: all three mining companies have taken proactive steps in the areas of adoption of international initiatives, reporting, and partnerships with industry members, government agencies, NGOs and communities. In the area of CSR reporting, with the exception of the AA1000SES standard, all the companies comply with similar guidelines, including the GRI, the South African Mining Charter and King's Code for Corporate Governance ([www.dme.gov.za](http://www.dme.gov.za)). In addition, companies A and B also comply with the South African King's Report on Corporate Governance, and due to the

listing of their parent company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange they also use the Socially Responsible Index to integrate the principles of socially responsible investment and sustainability into their practices.

With regard to community relations, all three companies have established community relations departments and community consultative committees to address community issues. These initiatives have enabled the companies to give more attention to communities affected by their activities than was the case in previous years. This move also supports the companies' current assertion in their reports that they are responsible companies and concerned about the welfare of the communities affected by their operations. Although the community relations departments were established about 10 years after the companies had commenced operations, the research revealed that a number of pressures forced the companies to focus on social issues beyond compensation and take into consideration community needs and concerns. For example, *Company A* at Tarkwa established a Community Relations Department in 2002, after it had faced intense public criticisms over a cyanide spill incident in 2001.

Table 1: Findings from Company Reviews

Firm	Review findings
A&B	<p>These companies state in their mission statements that they are committed to promoting mutually beneficial relationships; and that their vision is "to be a leading, globally diversified, precious metals producer through the responsible, sustainable, and innovative development of quality assets" The companies also have in place Ethics Policy Statements which stress their commitment to ethical and fair business dealings while promoting a non-sectarian and non-political corporate culture which is socially and environmentally responsible. In the area of disclosure, the companies commit to ensuring that there is complete, fair, accurate, timely and explicable disclosure in all public communications and reporting to regulatory bodies. The <i>companies</i> categorize their social reporting into the key areas of ethics and</p>

Firm	Review findings
C	<p>governance, occupational safety and health, labor practice, environment and community in line with GRI guidelines. The two companies as a group established a Foundation in 2003 to provide funding for community and national assistance projects during the operational as well as closure phases of their mines. Through this Foundation, the Group launched a 5-year Community Development Programme (CDP) for the primary stakeholder communities (PSC) represented by the 16 communities affected by the operations of <i>Company A</i> at Tarkwa and <i>Company B</i> at Damang. The programme is dubbed Sustainable Community Empowerment and Economic Development Programme (SEED). This collaborative approach was perhaps possible because <i>Companies A &amp; B</i>, although separate mines, belong to the same group.</p> <p>The mission statement for this company states that “we consistently strive to create value for everyone with a stake in our company, by finding and mining gold and by developing the market for our product.” The <i>company</i> currently categorizes its social reporting into the key areas of ethics and governance, occupational safety and health, labor practice, environment and community in line with GRI guidelines. With assistance from the International Finance Corporation the company funded the development of a Community Development Plan (CDP) in 2005 in order to promote sustainable community development and to identify sustainable economic livelihood development initiatives for communities affected by its operations. The main objective of this plan is to establish a model for sustainable social and economic development for mining communities to mitigate the impacts of loss of employment and infrastructure in the event of mine closure. A central focus of the CDP is the <i>Hand-in-Hand Programme</i>, an alternative livelihoods initiative, aimed at improving the economic and social well being of affected communities during and after cessation of mining operations.</p>

Source: Field Data

All three mining companies have also designed similar community development programmes for alternative livelihood projects and have contracted the Opportunities Industrialization Centres International (OICI), a non-governmental organization, to implement programmes that target the entire population of communities affected by the activities of the companies' operations. The OICI which specializes in community development initiatives has been operating in Ghana since the early 2000s and has been active in the mining areas under study for a number of years. It was selected by the companies as a “technically qualified, honest, independent broker” to execute their (companies') community develop-

ment programmes in collaboration with the members of the communities fringing the mines.

Thus, whilst *Companies A and B* want to improve the quality of life of 30,000 people including 5,000 youth, Company C aims to improve the livelihoods of about 7,500 people with an emphasis on the 25% (about 2,500) youth population. The companies use different budgeting structures for allocating funds for community development programmes. *Companies A and B* fund their SEED programme through their Foundation which was established with a US \$1 levy on every gold ounce produced and 1% of pre-tax profit. Annually, about US\$1,000,000 goes into the Foundation. For *Company C*,

its *Hand-in-Hand* fund forms 3% of its operating profit which comes to about an annual contribution of US\$150,000. The duration of the programmes also differ - five years for *Companies A&B* and three years for *Company C*.

### SEED – Sustainable Community Empowerment and Economic Development Programme

Forty-three (43) communities are targeted to benefit from the SEED programme. The programme was launched in November 2005 and scheduled to end by November 2010. The goal of SEED is to improve the livelihoods and quality of life of the poor and vulnerable members of the commu-

nity by 2010. Some of the objectives under this programme are; the provision of micro-credit for business creation, to increase food and animal population, invest in education, increase local contracting, and develop sustainable exiting strategies, etc.

### Interviews

This section presents in Table 2, the findings from the interviews held with government agencies (Minerals Commission, Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], and Chamber of Mines), NGO representatives, and participating company representatives.

Table 2: Findings from interviews

Agency	Interview findings
<i>Minerals Commission</i>	Officials of the Minerals Commission indicated that there is currently a problem of low rates of local employment by some mining companies. They noted that there exists weak collaboration between all the relevant mining sector regulators. They however stressed the importance of collaboration between the regulators and mining companies to enable the latter achieve significant results in their community CSR initiatives.
<i>National and District EPA Representatives</i>	The EPA faces a lot of capacity challenges in terms of human resources. As a result, the district office responsible for monitoring the activities of the companies in its catchment area (including <i>Companies A, B&amp;C</i> ) is unable to execute its mandate of conducting monitoring activities as regularly and effectively as required. The EPA also indicated that there is very limited collaboration between the various mining regulatory bodies and therefore an absence of synergy in activities. Although they intimated that the companies' alternative livelihood projects approach is better than the previous ad hoc community support initiatives, the need exists for all companies to establish a community relations policy to guide community affairs in the same way that they have environmental policies. The EPA also indicated that there has been a significant improvement in the companies' performance in environmental and social responsibilities
<i>Chamber of Mines (CoM) Representatives</i>	The CoM is committed to strongly encourage the adoption of contemporary sustainable community development-focused CSR initiatives industry-wide. For the CoM, the traditional ad hoc approaches used by the industry has failed to significantly improve communities and therefore it is time for the industry to design comprehensive community development plans to guide development in the various mining communities. They consider the formation of partnerships for community development like those initiated by companies A, B&C as well placed to yield better results. The CoM is therefore contemplating encouraging its member companies to engage development NGOs when

Agency	Interview findings
	planning for community development initiatives. They also stressed the need for CoM members to share experiences on successes and failures so as to increase the social responsibilities of the industry and to improve its image country-wide.
<i>{OICI} (NGO) Reps</i>	For the OICI, the ongoing alternative livelihood programmes have started very well and have a great potential of being successful but the companies must seriously address issues of programme sustainability.
<i>Company Representatives</i>	<i>Companies A, B&amp;C</i> officials unanimously acknowledged that in the past, community consultation before implementation of projects did not exist. Thus, CSR support activities were conducted based on the sole decision of each individual company. However, with the establishment of the community relations departments, coupled with the formation of the Community Consultative Committees (CCC), the situation has changed. Currently, all projects embarked upon by the companies involve the communities. All programmes are also selected and agreed upon through consultative meetings with community leaders and company community relations departments. Current approaches ensure the minimization/avoidance of conflicts and also enable companies to maintain their social license to operate. The rights of local people and local government officials have become more pronounced through these committees. Companies also greatly enhance their social license to operate if they give adequate attention to community relations. For the companies, senior management representation enhances their commitment to community meetings as well as the seriousness attached to community affairs. There is however the need for more company in-house CSR expertise, more internal dissemination of CSR information as well as CSR reporting.

Source: Field Data

## Focus Group Discussions

This section presents the findings of focus group discussions held with members of the communities in which the three

companies operate. Three major themes can be deduced from the discussions and these are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Findings from focus group discussions

Theme	Findings
<i>Programme Acceptance</i>	Generally, communities have welcomed the programmes initiated by the companies and have showed great interest in participating in them. The communities are impressed with the way the companies are involving them in the selection of new initiatives. Communities believe that these programmes will enhance the economic livelihood of beneficiaries and they are hopeful that many people will benefit from the programmes
<i>Adequacy of Resources</i>	The communities believe that inputs provided are not adequate, thus nullifying the ultimate goal of creating and sustaining alternative sources of economic livelihood. Communities fringing Company C's operations complained that loans provided are not enough and time given them to pay back loans was very short. The communities are also concerned about the level of their involvement during the implementation process of these programmes. They are of the opinion that if their input had been solicited during the

Theme	Findings
<i>Timeliness of Programmes</i>	<p>decision making process involving the provision of resources, the problem of insufficiency of resources may not have arisen</p> <p>The communities feel that the companies have deprived them of sustainable economic livelihoods for too long. They believe that if the companies had started their community development programmes at the outset of their mining activities, a lot of conflicts that arose between farmers and other community members on the one hand, and the companies on the other, over compensation packages would have been prevented. Also some of the community youth members who lost their livelihoods when they were deprived of their illegal mining activities have not left the community as is currently the case.</p>

Source: Field Data

## Discussions

Although the programmes are in the early stages of implementation, the current study allowed a preliminary formulation of responses to the initial research questions:

*What is the nature and effectiveness of programmes being adopted by mining companies for promoting community development in the communities where they operate?*

The goals of the SEED programme of *Companies A&B* and *Company C's* Hand-in-Hand community development programmes designed in consultation with the OICI and affected communities have a great potential to significantly improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries. The bottom-up approach being used by the firms and OICI, where communities are involved in programme identification, design, implementation and evaluation creates a sense of project ownership, builds local capacity and social capital and ensures achievement of economic growth, ultimately helping in project sustainability. However, there are challenges to the effective implementation of the programmes: the inadequacy of resources required to start off business ventures will not augur well with

programme sustainability; and failure to include communities in the decision making on how much funds to allocate for community development initiatives. Community involvement in future allocations may ensure that monies will be enough to start off business ventures.

*What is the extent to which companies in partnership with government and NGOs achieve their CSR goals?*

The establishment of community relations departments and community consultative committees has increased the voice of local communities to comment on company CSR initiatives and also strengthened engagement processes between the companies and their stakeholder communities. Current attention to community needs and concerns in a more comprehensive manner erases criticisms about the companies being only concerned about the environment. Hamann (2003b) suggests that there must be the development of an effective stakeholder engagement process based on the internal CSR strategy to link the image companies seek to present and their actual performance. Currently, there is no project that companies initiate for communities that does not involve the communities. Selection of programmes

through consultative meetings with community leaders, OICI and companies builds trust, ensures the minimization or avoidance of conflicts and also enables companies to maintain their social license to operate.

*What role are mining sector regulatory bodies and other support institutions playing to ensure that mining companies are socially responsible to communities in which they operate?*

In Ghana increase in corporate power over governments, communities and NGOs brought about by existing investment promoting incentives, and the weak capacity of the Environmental Protection Agency to effectively carry out its activities may undermine partnerships. Thus Idemudia (2007) supports the idea of an integration of partnership community development with strengthening of institutional capacity of local community and government agencies. Hamann (2003b) also points out that partnerships will be most effective if the rights of local communities to prior informed consent and authentic participation is ensured and pursued by all partners.

Regulations are critical for the long term preservation of community rights and interests. Ghana's current institutional capacity does not provide the necessary conditions required for socially responsible behavior from mining firms (Atuguba & Dowuona-Hammond, 2006). Apart from the EPA regulations which are skewed towards environmental protection and management, there are no incentives that will drive firms toward social responsibility. The EPA's weak capacity to effectively monitor environmental issues sometimes results in weak enforcement of environmental protection, thus compromising their ability to protect communities and the environment.

## Conclusions

The study's findings demonstrate that some gold mining firms in Ghana have taken actions to address the socio-economic needs of communities affected by their operations. These firms combine philanthropy with development-based approaches to achieve CSR, forming partnerships with relevant government agencies and development NGOs to implement programmes. The evidence indicates that these firms are being assisted by the government agencies, communities and NGOs to define, plan and execute development projects for economic empowerment in communities affected by their operations. The levels of stakeholder engagement processes have been raised, relationships between firms and stakeholders have improved and the different roles being played by all partners for development are evident. Adoption of voluntary industry, host country, as well as international initiatives and codes of conduct seem to have influenced the three firms' stance on CSR with changes to values, ethics, reporting and operational management. For example, the South African Mining Charter requirements are demonstrated in codes of practice of *Companies A, B and C* in the areas of community development. The strong support for AA1000SES by South Africa enhances the potential of effective stakeholder engagement processes between *Companies A&B* and their stakeholders.

Company-community relations lie at the heart of effective CSR in mining and are one of the major areas of conflict involving mining. It is therefore gratifying to note that the three mining firms are working to bridge gaps that exist between them and local communities. To enable the three mining companies to continue to cooper-

ate with communities in handling issues effectively, it is important for a culture of trust to be built between them and the communities. Good corporate citizenship involves the acquisition of information about stakeholder interests, understanding and responding to them (Zadek, 2001). Effective stakeholder engagement has to be encouraged both at the local and boardroom level but especially at the local level where the impacts of the project are felt directly.

### Recommendations

It is recommended in the first instance that the current CSR programmes be closely monitored by all stakeholders and civil society in order to provide an authentic, independent and broad assessment of programmes being undertaken by the three mining companies. There should also be top management involvement. Dashwood and Ptoplampu's (2010) findings strongly point to the critical importance of organizational leadership and learning as attributes necessary for sustainable CSR practices. Based on the interactions with the three mining companies, the study proposes that all heads of departments must be involved in the selection of strategies for CSR. All departmental members must be knowledgeable about what is being done on the social and environmental front. Internal bulletins must be used to update staff on current events in the CSR area, with such bulletins being circulated in the communities for them to be aware of what the firm is doing. Such information should be in the local language that can be readily understood by the local communities.

With regards to the Alternative Livelihood Programmes, the companies must continue to work together with the OICI to help their communities create ready markets for their products. They must also investigate the creation of capital streams in the form of microfinance or credit unions to ensure regular funds to make the projects more financially sustainable.

### Limitations of the Study

The early developmental stages of some of the current CSR programmes of the three mining companies prevent a full assessment of sustainability. Another limitation is the inability to validate independently the information obtained from the respondents. The element of self-reporting therefore made it difficult to completely verify the soundness of the information provided.

### Further Research

Since CSR strategies of the extractive industries may not be comparable to all other sectors of the economy such as the manufacturing, pharmaceutical, food industry and services, etc. it would be improper to make generalizations about industry CSR given that the impacts of each sector are different. A further area of study could involve a cross-industry comparison of CSR behaviour in Ghana. This would help society know and identify the different approaches being used by both local and multinational companies in the different sectors to meet social responsibility especially in the area of community development.

# APPENDIX

Figure 1: Map of Ghana showing Study Area (culled from Aubynn, 2003)



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