

Actors, Alliances and Power in Negotiations

Unequal Distribution of Mining Benefits in Tarkwa's Gold Mining Area of Western Ghana

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, zu untersuchen, wie verschiedene gesellschaftliche Akteure handeln, um Zugang und Kontrolle über Gewinne im Bergbausektor zu erlangen. Am Beispiel von Tarkwa, einem Goldabbaugebiet in West-Ghana, zeige ich, wie die entsprechenden Beteiligten im Rahmen von gesetzlichen Maßnahmen in der Post-Struktur-Anpassungsprogramm-(SAP)-Ära handeln und welche unterschiedliche Strategien zum Erreichen und Sichern ihrer angestrebten Ziele¹ sie entwickeln. Diese Verhandlungen gestalten maßgeblich die regionale Vorgehensweise bei der Verteilung von Ressourcen und Gewinnen innerhalb des Bergbausektors, bei der die Interessen der Bevölkerung in den Bergbaugebieten zumeist unberücksichtigt bleiben. Die Ziele meiner Arbeit sind:

1. Das Verständnis für historische Entwicklungen und gesetzliche Reformen, die derzeitige Gestalt des Goldabbaus in Ghana bedingen, zu fördern.
2. Die Identifizierung der Hauptbeteiligten und deren Rollen, Interessenlagen und Machtpotentialen bei der Ausgestaltung regionaler Entscheidungsprozesse in Tarkwas Bergbausektor.
3. Das Aufzeigen der verschiedenen Strategien und Taktiken anhand von Fallstudien des Aushandlungsprozesses von Gewinnen aus Tarkwas Bergbausektor.
4. Das Herstellen von kausalen Zusammenhängen zwischen diesen Verhandlungen, deren kommunalen Umsetzung und den Modellen von Ressourcenkontrolle und -verteilung in Tarkwas Goldabbau.

Kapitel 1: Historische Entwicklungen und rechtliche Reformen in Ghanas Goldabbau-Sektor: *Entwicklungen und Auswirkungen in regionalen Bergbaugebieten*

Der Goldabbau ist ein wichtiger Wirtschaftssektor Ghanas, der seit der Kolonialzeit eine zentrale Rolle in der sozioökonomischen Entwicklung² des Landes spielt (Akabzaa, 2008:1). Im Laufe der Zeit hat dieser Wirtschaftszweig eine Serie von rechtlichen Reformen durchlaufen. Die jüngsten waren Teil eines Struktur-Anpassungsprogramms der Weltbank und des Internationalen Währungsfonds (IMF), welches von der Mehrzahl der afrikanischen Bergbaunationen³ Mitte der 1980er Jahre übernommen wurde (Akabzaa, 2007). Diese Reformen wurden vor dem Hintergrund eines ökonomischen Verfalls jener Länder angeregt, wobei der Bergbauindustrie als potentielles Vehikel zur Veränderung der ökonomischen Situation Priorität zukam (World Bank 1999; 2002). Gemäß des „Mining and Development“-Gutachtens der Weltbank von 2002 sollten diese Reformen ein Umfeld schaffen, in dem die Gewinnung von Rohstoffen in nationales Vermögen für eine wirtschaftliche Erholung und Entwicklung umgewandelt werden kann (World Bank 2002; 22). Die aus diesen Reformen resultierenden Maßnahmen beinhalteten die Anregung von finanziellen Investitionen in diesem Wirtschaftszweig und die Einführung moderner Bergbau-Technologien (IFC, 2002; Songso, 1994). In Ghana führten diese Reformen auf der makroökonomischen Ebene zu gestiegenen ausländischen Investitionen in die Bergbauindustrie (vorwiegend durch die Übernahme aller staatlichen Bergwerke⁴). Daraus resultierte schließlich auch eine steigende Produktion von Rohstoffen für den Export (Akabzaa und Darimani 2001; Coakley 1999).

¹ Die Formulierung angestrebte Ziele verwende ich synonym zu Interessen. Diese beinhalten ökonomische, politische, kulturelle oder sogar individuelle (unsichtbare) Interessen.

² Der derzeit führende Exportzweig

³ Beispiele dafür sind: Tansania, Botsuana, Mali, Guinea und Elfenbeinküste

⁴ Beispiele für die Übernahme von Bergwerken durch ausländische Firmen sind: Obuasi, Prestea, Tarkwa, Damang, Bogoso, Akym und Iduapriem (vgl. Akaabzaa und Darimani 2001: 24)

Allerdings hatte der entstehende Gold-Boom zur Folge⁵, dass sich die Bevölkerung in den Bergbaugebieten mit zunehmenden Umweltzerstörungen und damit verbundenen schwerwiegenden sozialen Folgen konfrontiert sah (Dummet, 1989). Zeitgleich wurden die aus den Reformen resultierenden Vorteile oder Chancen auf wirtschaftliches Wachstum ungleich verteilt, wobei die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung nicht davon profitierte. Dies ließ für viele Autoren nur den Schluss zu, dass der Bergbau eher Fluch als Schatz für die Bevölkerung Ghanas war (vgl. Akabzaa und Darimani 2001; Asklund und Eldvall 2005; Ballard und Glenn 2003; Gadzekpo und Waldman 2005). Sich häufende Fälle von negativen sozialen und ökologischen Effekten des Bergbaus und soziale Konflikte als Resultat einer ungleichen Verteilung von Gewinnen führten schließlich zu neuerlichen Reformen in Ghanas Bergbausektor. Diese ebenfalls von der Weltbank finanzierten Reformen zielten darauf ab, staatliche Behörden im Bergbausektor zu etablieren, um eine nachhaltige Entwicklung des ghanaischen Bergbaus auf einer ökologisch einwandfreien Basis durch den Einsatz verbesserter Technologien und gestärkten Bergbau-Organisationen zu sichern (World Bank, 2002:34). Als Ergebnis dieser Reformen wurden Behörden wie die Bergbau-Kommission (mit umfassenden Verantwortlichkeiten für den Betrieb von Bergwerken) und die „Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (zuständig für die Einhaltung ökologischer Vorgaben im Bergbau) aufgebaut. Weiterhin wurden regulierende und unterstützende Behörden wie das „Geological Survey Department“, die „Chamber of Mines“, das „Mines Department“, die „Lands Commission, das „Land Valuation Board“ und die „Forestry Commission“ mit jeweils unterschiedlichsten Aufgaben in Ghanas Bergbausektor etabliert (Akabzaa und Darimani 2001; Ghana’s Mineral Commission 2007).

Im Laufe dieser Reformen gab die Regierung ihre Rolle als Eigentümerin der Bergwerke auf und konzentrierte sich stärker auf eine regulierende und fördernde Funktion in diesem Wirtschaftszweig (vgl. Zusammenfassung Kapitel 3). Diese Reformaktivitäten schafften es allerdings nicht, das Problem der ungleichen Verteilung von Gewinnen innerhalb der Bevölkerung der Bergbaugebiete angemessen anzugehen. Ebenfalls vermochten sie es nicht, dass ökologische Vorgaben des Bergbaus in Ghanas Bergbauregionen beachtet wurden.

Diese Reformen und deren Auswirkungen sind in der Literatur gut dokumentiert (vgl. Jonah 1987; Coakley 1999; World Bank, 1999; Aryee, 2000; ECA, 2002; Akabzaa, 2000; Akabzaa and Darimani 2001). In diesem Kapitel konzentriere ich mich auf die Fragestellung, inwieweit diese Reformen und deren Umsetzung die kommunale Dynamik der Entscheidungsfindung und Ressourcenverteilung in den Bergbaugebieten Ghanas beeinflussten⁶.

1. Durch diese Analyse stelle ich fest, dass wie bereits erwähnt, die Reformen nicht stark genug dazu beitrugen, zunehmende Fälle von Umweltzerstörung und sozialen Konflikte in Bergbaugebieten Ghanas zu bewältigen. Meine Forschungsarbeit und Belege aus der Literatur zeigen, dass es in der Zeit nach 1986 (Post-SAP-Ära) zu einem Anstieg an Umweltproblemen und sozialen Konflikten in den Regionen kam, die zwar vom Bergbau abhängig, jedoch von Vorteilen ausgeschlossen waren.
2. Die Reformära weckte das Vertrauen internationaler Investoren in den ghanaischen Bergbausektor und führte somit zu einem Bergbau-Boom, der Ghana eine gewisse Vormachtstellung im Goldabbau in Afrika und der gesamten Welt einbrachten (World Bank, 1999). Dies lässt sich generell an der Zunahme der Rohstoffexporte und im Speziellen an dem anhaltend hohen Stellenwert der Goldexporte in der Gesamtwirtschaft Ghanas erkennen.

⁵ In meiner Arbeit definiere ich die Folgen des Bergbaus sowohl als nachteilige ökologische Effekte, wie z.B. Verlust von Land, Wasserverschmutzung, Zerstörung von Wald, als auch als soziale Auswirkungen, z.B. kulturelle Verwässerung, interner Wettstreit um Ressourcen, Verlust kulturellen Lebensstils usw.

⁶ Der einzige mir bekannte Autor, der dies versucht hat ist Dummet (1980). Er bewertet den Einfluss einer 1943 von der Kolonialregierung erlassenen Bestimmung über Quecksilber auf die soziale Dynamik in kommunalen Bergbaugebieten der Goldküste.

3. Die Reformen hatten insbesondere auf kommunaler Ebene eine Auswirkung auf die sozi-politischen Dynamiken, da sie zu einer veränderten Praxis der Ressourcenverteilung auf der Basis neuer Machtverhältnisse führte.

Kapitel 2: Gegenüberstellung von Segen und Fluch in Bergbaunationen:

Eine Übersicht zur Debatte in der Forschung

Meine Untersuchung konzentriert sich hier auf den in Kapitel 1 beschriebenen Entwicklungskonflikt. Ghana ist der weltweit zehntgrößte und in Afrika der zweitgrößte Produzent von Gold. Während die Goldproduktion derzeit die meisten Devisen erbringt und einen zentralen Wirtschaftszweig für die sozioökonomische Entwicklung darstellt, bleiben die Bevölkerung in den Bergbaugebieten von Armut betroffen. Der Wirtschaftszweig verursacht zudem negative ökologische und soziale Entwicklungen (Fluch), die oftmals jene Bevölkerungsgruppen betreffen, die nicht von den Gewinnen profitieren können. Dieses Dilemma ist nicht auf Ghana beschränkt, vielmehr betrifft es auch viele andere Bergbaunationen Afrikas bzw. der gesamten Dritten Welt (vgl. Akabzaa und Darimani 2001; Action Aid, 2006). Sozialwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen beschäftigen sich daher damit, dieses komplexe Problem zu verstehen und Antworten oder Erklärungen für diese endemische Krankheit im Bergbau der Dritten Welt zu geben.

In diesem Kapitel gebe ich einen Überblick zu theoretischen Diskussionen, welche die sozialwissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen zum Bergbau in Afrika und der Dritten Welt beeinflussten. Darüber hinaus wurden drei verschiedene wissenschaftliche Ansätze vorstellen und analysieren (vgl. unten), welche sich jeweils mit dem Problem der ungleichen Verteilung von Gewinnen aus dem Bergbau in Entwicklungsländern auseinandersetzen und diese völlig unterschiedlich erklären. Auf der Grundlage dieser Analyse schlage ich ein theoretisches Konzept vor, welches ich begleitend zur Analyse meiner Daten verwende.

Debatte um das „Erbe der Kolonialzeit“ – Bei diesem Ansatz ist die ungleiche Verteilung von Gewinnen, die zur Verarmung der Bevölkerung in den Bergbauregionen führt, verknüpft mit dem Erbe der Kolonialzeit (vgl. Decker, S 2001; Dummet 1980). Es wird postuliert, dass eine koloniale Ressourcensteuerung entwickelt wurde, um eine zentralisierte Kontrolle und einen darauffolgenden kommunalen Ausschluss zu gewährleisten. Da die meisten afrikanischen Länder lediglich post-koloniale Verwaltungen übernahmen, setzten sich somit dieselben Strukturen der Ressourcensteuerung durch. Dies führte zur Kontrolle und Vermögensbildung durch lokale Eliten, die als Überbleibsel der Kolonialregime und Vertreter des Neokolonialismus wahrgenommen werden (Suleiman, 2003). Die politische Elite (neue Kolonialisten) übernehmen die gleichen Strategien – „teile und herrsche“ – der vormals englische Kolonien, um zum Beispiel kommunalen Widerstand zu unterdrücken, während sie zeitgleich Bündnisse durch Lokalverwaltungen errichten, um die Kontrolle über rohstoffreiche Gebiete zu erlangen (Terray, 1974). Die namhaftesten Vertreter dieser Sichtweise sind (Suliman, 2003; Terray und Austin, 2004; Wilks, 1975 und Mamdani, 2001).

Debatte um den „Fluch der Rohstoffe“ – Untersuchungen mit diesem Blickwinkel vertreten die Auffassung, dass eine ungleiche Verteilung der voraussichtlichen Einnahmen aus dem Bergbau Ursache eines „Paradoxons des Überflusses“ ist. Dieses Paradoxon, welches auch als Fluch der Rohstoffe bezeichnet wird, geht davon aus, dass Länder und Regionen mit einem Überfluss an Bodenschätzen weniger Wirtschaftswachstum und schlechtere Entwicklungsergebnisse als Länder mit weniger natürlichen Ressourcen erzielen (BICC, 2006; Paes, 2007; Ross, 2002; Volker, et al 2006). Verschiedene Argumente werden angeführt, um dieses Phänomen zu erklären: so wird angenommen, dass dieser Fluch z.B. durch einen Rückgang in der Konkurrenzfähigkeit anderer Wirtschaftszweige, durch Missmanagement bei der Verwaltung der Bodenschätze oder drittens labile, unwirksame,

instabile, autoritäre bzw. korrupte Organisationen zustande kommt. Es wird ferner diskutiert, dass sich aufgrund von Ressourcenüberschuss eine „habgierige“ Gruppe herausbildet, die getrieben wird von dem Ziel, die Kontrolle über die zu erwartenden Einnahmen aus diesem Wirtschaftszweig zu gewinnen. Demgegenüber entsteht in diesem Prozess eine „geschädigte“ Gruppe, welche versucht dieser Unterdrückung zu entgehen. In den meisten Fällen wurden die Argumente des Fluchs der Rohstoffe dazu benutzt, soziale Ausgrenzung, die Entstehung von Kämpfen um Bodenschätze und Konflikte in Entwicklungsländern zu erklären. Prominente Beispiele dafür sind der Kongo, Angola, Sierra Leone usw. (Billion, P.L, 2003). Die Nutzung militärischer Macht ist eine gebräuchliche Strategie, um Widerstand zu unterdrücken oder die Kontrolle über wertvolle Ressourcen und Erträge zu gewinnen. Forschungsarbeiten dieses Ansatzes wurden u.a. durchgeführt von (Paes und Wolf-Christian, 2005; Volker et al, 2006; Ross, 1999; Billion, 2003; Ballard und Glenn, 2003; BICC, 2008 und Fatal Transactions, 2009).

Ansatz der politischen Ökologie – Auf der anderen Seite fassen politische Ökologen die ungleiche Verteilung aus Gewinnen von Rohstoffabbau als ein Ergebnis eines Machtkampfs gesellschaftlicher Vertreter (z.B. Bauern, Bergarbeitern, Nichtregierungsorganisationen) auf, die von konkurrierenden Interessen gelenkt werden (Bryant und Bailey 1997). Diese Akteure verfügen über unterschiedliche Machtpotentiale, festgelegt durch soziale Stellung, wirtschaftlichen Besitz und politische Zugehörigkeit, die sie zum Erreichen der angestrebten Ziele einsetzen. Dieser ungleiche Machtkampf um die Nutzung ökologischer bzw. natürlicher Ressourcen produziert Gewinner und Verlierer, da ein Akteur seine Interessen befriedigt, während der andere kompromittiert wird. Aus Sicht der politischen Ökologie, werden natürliche Ressourcen als umstrittenes Terrain bzw. als politisierte Umwelt angesehen, in denen aus diesem Grund gesellschaftliche Interessen verhandelt werden. Detaillierte Ausblicke von (Raymond Bryant (1997; 1998) und (Paul Robbins, 2004) postulieren weiterhin, dass ökologische und soziale Kosten, die mit der Nutzung von Ressourcen verbunden sind, Folgen der Interaktion zwischen Mensch und Natur sind.

Die Auseinandersetzung über das koloniale Erbe hat in der Tat eine Schlüsselrolle bei der Ausgestaltung der Diskussionen zur Wirkungen und Folgen von Rohstoffgewinnung in Afrika eingenommen. Zum Beispiel beschäftigt sich Botswana in einer staatlichen Untersuchung mit den Bergbaurichtlinien, die von der Kolonialregierung übernommen wurden (Mamdani, 2003). Die Erörterung des kolonialen Erbes ermöglicht ein besseres Verständnis bzw. einen historischen Blick auf die Entstehung der heutigen Ressourcenkontrollierenden Regime und weist ihnen die Rolle zu, die der Kolonialismus in Afrika spielte. Zusätzlich stimmt es zweifellos, dass die meisten der unabhängig gewordenen afrikanischen Länder die „kolonialen“ Machtstrukturen übernommen haben ohne deren Rechtmäßigkeit und Anwendbarkeit im jeweiligen Kontext wirklich zu hinterfragen. Einige Autoren haben sogar behauptet, dass die Unabhängigkeitsbewegung größtenteils von Führern gelenkt wurde, die ihrerseits ein Produkt des Kolonialregimes waren. Diese propagierten mit der Machtübernahme bei der Unabhängigkeit den gleichen Ansatz der zentralisierten Kontrolle, des kommunalen Ausschlusses und der Ansammlung von Ressourcen zu eigenem Profit (Mamdani, 1989). Ein Kritiker dieser Position, besonders in Bezug auf den Bergbausektor, ist William Ascher. (Ascher, 1999) geht davon aus, dass die Argumente des kolonialen Erbes überholt und überbewertet sind. Er argumentiert, dass es fünf Jahrzehnte nachdem die ersten Länder in Afrika unabhängig wurden an der Zeit ist, dass die Regierungen Verantwortung als Schlüsselfiguren der Beschlussfassung übernehmen. Er stellt dabei fest, dass Willkür und Korruption autoritärer Machthaber ressourcenreicher Länder für das Missmanagement der Ressourcen verantwortlich sind. (Bryant und Bailey, 1997) führen an, dass bei einer Konzentration auf neo-koloniale Tendenzen in den unabhängigen afrikanischen Ländern, die aufstrebende Rolle von NRO, multinationalen Firmen, Forschungseinrichtungen, Medien und traditionelle Machthabern als

Schlüsselfiguren übersehen werden. Denn gerade diese Organisationen beeinflussen Nutzung, Kontrolle und Management in den Bergbauländern Afrikas.

Andererseits liefert die Debatte über den Fluch der Rohstoffe nützliche Hilfestellungen, um Konflikte um Ressourcen vor allem in Krisengebieten oder autoritären Regimen zu untersuchen. Die Argumente wurden beispielsweise dazu verwendet, die Wechselwirkungen zwischen den verschiedenen Akteuren bei den Diamantenvorkommen im Kongo darzustellen. Dort nutzen etwa verschiedene mächtige Gruppen Erdölgewinne, um Konflikte durch Militarisierung und Warlords anzuheizen. Ähnlich wie die Debatte um das koloniale Erbe sieht dieser Ansatz fehlender Regulierung, abwesende oder repressive Regierungen oder die ungleichen Verteilung von Gewinnen als Grund für die Zunahme von Umweltzerstörung in den Bergbaugebieten dieser Länder. Dieser Ansatz unterlässt es dabei, ein Verständnis für die ungleiche Verteilung der Gewinne zu liefern oder die Faktoren hinter den sozialen und ökologischen Problemen in relativ friedlichen bzw. gedeihenden Demokratien wie Ghana zu erklären. Ein gemeinsamer Aspekt, den Vertreter beider Schulen teilen, ist die Auffassung, dass die ungleiche Verteilung der Gewinne und das Problem der Armut der Bevölkerung in den Bergbaugebieten auf ein Versagen von Regierungen zurückzuführen ist, welche ich in meiner Arbeit als unvollständig und einseitig verstehe.

In Kapitel 2 lege ich politisch-ökologische Ansichten von Bryant und Bailey (1997) und Robbins (2004) als umfassende theoretische Basis dar, auf der diese Untersuchung entworfen wurde. Das Buch „Third World Political Ecology“ von Raymond Bryant und Sinead Bailey gibt eine Einführung zu einem Forschungsgebiet, das versucht, ein integriertes Verständnis der Dynamik des Umweltwandels in der Dritten Welt zu entwickeln. Durch das Aufzeigen von Beispielen, die ausschließlich aus Ländern der Dritten Welt kommen, erklären Bryant und Bailey die Entstehung und Charakteristik von Umweltproblemen, welche Teile von Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika beeinträchtigen. Paul Robbins „Political Ecology: Critical Introduction to Geography“ gibt einen kritischeren Überblick zu dem Bereich der politischen Ökologie, der anstrebt, Politik, Ökonomie und soziale Aspekte mit Problemen der Umweltaufsicht und des ökologischen Wandels zu verbinden. In diesem Buch legt er die Geschichte der Entwicklung der politischen Ökologie unter Einbeziehung der Herausforderungen, denen dieses Gebiet gegenübersteht, dar.

Die genannten Autoren versuchen mit der traditionellen politischen Ökologie zu brechen (vgl. Blaike 1985, 1975), welche in der Analyse Umweltprobleme und ökologischen Wandel Priorität vor sozialen Belangen betrachtete. Der Ansatz der politischen Ökologie ist dafür kritisiert worden, dass stets ein starker Focus darauf gelegt wurde, wie ökologische Ressourcen angeeignet wurden, jedoch dem „politischen“ Aspekt der Ressourcennutzung und -kontrolle und deren Einfluss auf die Rekrutierung sehr wenig Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet wurde. (Bryant und Bailey, 1997) verschieben diesen Ansatz durch die Nutzung des Konzepts der „politisierten Umwelt“, während Paul Robbins (2004) den Rahmen einer Argumentationskette nutzt, um zu zeigen, wie soziale Dynamiken durch die Interaktion von verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Akteuren den Zugang, die Nutzung und die Kontrolle natürlicher Ressourcen beeinflussen. Diese Theorie ist eingebettet in ein Paradigma der Macht und beinhaltet, dass die Nutzung bestimmter Ressourcen konkurrierende oder zeitweise widersprüchliche Interessen unterschiedlicher Akteure hervorbringt, die ungleiche Machtpotentiale besitzen (Bryant und Bailey 1997). Die „politisierte Umwelt“ oder die Argumentationskette sind daher der Schauplatz, in dem Ressourcen verteilt und Entscheidungen zur Kontrolle in einem als „ungleicher Machtkampf“ bezeichneten Prozess gemacht werden. Politische Ökologen erkennen die Rolle von Normen zur Regulierung menschlichen Verhaltens an, wenden jedoch ein, dass in Situationen strittiger Ressourcen, der ungleiche Machtkampf die Art der Entscheidungen und Ergebnisse bestimmt, jedoch nicht die gesetzmäßige Handlungsweisen (Rebecca (1995); Renting et al (2003); Munton

(1996)). Entsprechend dem Verständnis der politischen Ökologie bildet die „politisierte Umwelt“ die Plattform, um diese Machtkämpfe wahrzunehmen und auszutragen.

Dies setzt voraus, dass Wissenschaft die Beteiligten, ihre Interessen und deren spezifische Machtpotentiale, die sie im Verhältnis zueinander besitzen, in einem gegebenen Zusammenhang unterscheiden kann. Wie vielen anderen Makrotheorien fehlen der politischen Ökologie spezielle Werkzeuge, um ein bestimmtes Verhalten von Beteiligten oder soziale Prozesse zu erklären (vgl. Watts 2001). Ich übernehme daher Agenten-orientierte Werkzeuge (vgl. Long und Long 1992), um eine Analyse der Akteure vorzunehmen (vgl. Kapitel 3); Denkansätze zur Beziehung von Staat und Gesellschaft, um den Kampf der Bevölkerung gegen Aktivitäten der Bergbaufirmen zu diskutieren (vgl. Kapitel 4) und die strategische Gruppentheorie (vgl. Evers und Gerke 2009 & andere) – (vgl. Kapitel 5), um eine tiefgehende Analyse von Machtpotentialen durchzuführen, die eine Rolle bei der Ressourcenkontrolle und -aneignung in den Bergbauregionen spielen.

Kapitel 3: Akteure und deren Interessen im Bergbaugebiet von Tarkwa

Tarkwa ist ein Goldabbaugebiet im Westen von Ghana. Es ist der „Goldkammer“ des Landes und wahrscheinlich das Gebiet mit der höchsten Bergwerksdichte in Afrika (Akabzaa und Darimani 2001; TWN 2004). Derzeit sind hier die vier weltgrößten goldabbauenden Unternehmen neben einigen kleineren Betrieben angesiedelt. Eine Statistik der „Minerals Commission of Ghana“ zeigt, dass sich bis zu 23 Bergbauunternehmen, davon acht große Tagebaubetriebe, Langzeitverträge in diesem Gebiet gesichert haben. Tarkwa beherbergt außerdem knapp 270.000 Einwohner, die auf Ackerbau zur Existenzsicherung angewiesen sind (GSS 2003). Als Teil der Reform des Bergbausektors Ende der 90er Jahre dezentralisierten die Aufsichtsbehörden der Regierung ihre Tätigkeiten und richteten als Teil der Reformauflagen eine Vertretung pro Abbaugbiet, Tarkwa miteingeschlossen, ein. In diesem Kapitel bezeichne ich die Akteure als Individuen bzw. Gruppen von Individuen, die in einem Netzwerk ihrer Organisationen agieren.

Es lässt sich feststellen, dass der Bergbausektor Tarkwas ein umstrittenes Terrain dar stellt, in dem die Bevölkerung um Zugang zu dem gleichen Land kämpft, welches auch die Bergbauunternehmen beanspruchen. Die Bevölkerung in diesen Regionen ist jedoch keine homogene Gruppe, sondern kann auf der Basis kultureller Identität, ökonomischem Verhalten und Ethnizität unterschieden werden. All diese Unterschiede spielen eine Schlüsselrolle bei der Herausbildung der Interessen verschiedener Gruppen in den Bergbaugebieten. Ein Beispiel dafür sind etwa die konkurrierenden Interessen zwischen einheimischen und zugewanderten Bevölkerungsgruppen in den Bergbaugebieten. Es lässt sich deutlich beobachten, dass die mit dem Bergbau verbundene Zunahme von Umweltproblemen und stärker werdende kommunale Proteste gegen Aktivitäten von Bergbauunternehmen zu einer Aktivitätszunahme ziviler Gesellschaften, v.a. von NRO, führt, die den Anspruch erheben, als Mittelsmänner der Gesellschaft zu handeln. Ein Gemisch aus Interessensverbänden und Lobbyisten spielt eine Schlüsselrolle als „Beschützer kommunaler Interessen“, wohingegen einige Entwicklungs-NRO versuchen, die Kluft zwischen privaten Unternehmen und kommunalen Gemeinschaften zu schließen. Ein Anspruch, der wie in Kapitel 5 gezeigt wird, neue Möglichkeiten aber auch Herausforderungen mit sich bringt (Volker, et al 2006). Eine wichtige Beobachtung ist zudem, dass die Fähigkeit der behördlichen Regulierung, ihre Aufgaben effektiv auszuführen, nicht nur durch mangelnde Leistungsfähigkeit eingeschränkt wird, sondern auch durch das Dilemma, zwischen den dualen Aufgaben von Umweltschutz und Wirtschaftsförderung abwägen zu müssen. Außerdem bieten Bodenschätze in ländlichen Gebieten wie Tarkwa traditionellen Herrschern – vor allem Stammesführern – die Möglichkeit, Kontrolle und Einfluss auf kommunaler Ebene wiederzugewinnen. Angesichts der technologischen

Veränderungen in den Bergbaugebieten, vor allem der Wechsel vom Untertagebau zu komplexen Tagebaumienen, gewinnt auch die Rolle von Fachwissen und Wissensentwicklung an Einfluss.

Die Interessen, die jeder Akteur in diesem umstrittenen Terrain repräsentiert, regeln diese Verhandlungsbühne, aber die Macht, die sie besitzen, beeinflusst die Ergebnisse und Entscheidungen. Trotz des Focuses auf kommunalen Vertretern lässt sich feststellen, dass kommunale Entscheidungen auch durch die Tätigkeit externer Vertreter, z.B. Universitäten, internationale NRO, Geberorganisationen und großen Unternehmen, beeinflusst werden. Die Symbolik dieser Interaktion ist nicht einfach gleichzusetzen mit gängigen Erklärungsansätzen zur Beeinflussung lokaler Entscheidungen durch globale Aktivitäten. Vielmehr interagieren hier bestimmte Tätigkeiten externer Handelnder direkt mit der kommunalen Dynamik und beeinflussen somit das kommunale System, um ein angestrebtes Ziel zu erreichen (Moore 1978). Darüber hinaus zeigt dieses Kapitel, dass obwohl die gesetzlichen Netzwerke oder Regularien tatsächlich das Verhalten von Handelnden lenken, diese Organisationen auch Raum für Ausnahmen zulassen. Um eine Entscheidungsfindung als Ergebnis eines Machtkampfs besser darstellen zu können, schildert das Kapitel 4 das Fallbeispiel eines Entschädigungskampfs.

Kapitel 4: Die Schlacht ist gewonnen – Fallbeispiel des Kampfs der Bevölkerung in Tarkwa im Jahr 2001

Um den Anstieg von sozialen und ökologischen Problemen als Ursache von sozialen Konflikten in Bergbaunationen entgegenzutreten, ist die Zahlung von Entschädigungen an die Opfer auch in Ghana gesetzlich verankert worden (Akabzaa 2000; Volker 2006; Obara und Jenkins 2006; Kwame, et al 2006). In Ghana sind der Umgang mit Entschädigungen in den Kapitel 73 und 74 des „Minerals and Mining Acts“ (703) aus dem Jahr 2006 festgeschrieben. Die Schlüsselaussage darin ist, dass die Höhe der Entschädigung durch Vereinbarungen festgelegt wird, die zwischen den Inhabern der Schürfrechte (z.B. Bergbauunternehmen) und den rechtmäßigen Besitzern der Ressourcen (z.B. Bewohner der Bergbaugebiete) ausgehandelt werden. Der Kampf um Entschädigung ist daher sehr gut geeignet, um die Interaktionen und Verhandlungen der Akteure zu studieren.

In diesem Kapitel argumentiere ich anhand des Fallbeispiels eines Zyanid-Austritts, der in Tarkwa im Jahr 2001 zur Verschmutzung des Großteiles der Trinkwasserressourcen der dort ansässigen Bevölkerung führte. Dieser Störfall mündete in Verhandlungen zwischen fünf betroffenen Gemeinden und der GFG, einem südafrikanischen Unternehmen, dem ein großer Tagebau in Tarkwa gehört. Dieses Kapitel beschreibt den sozialen, ökonomischen und ökologischen Kontext, in dem sich das Bergwerk befindet und in dem die Verhandlungen stattfanden. Auf der Grundlage von Erinnerungen meiner wichtigsten Gesprächspartner, Berichten der Medien, Regierungsstatements, Berichten von NRO und Unternehmen, beschreibe ich den Fall, um zu zeigen, wie verschiedene Gruppen von Akteuren die Gegebenheit wahrnehmen und definieren; sofern sie sich für die Angelegenheit interessierten. Ich beschreibe außerdem die Schlüsselereignisse, die den Verhandlungen vorausgingen, die 2003 zu einer Einigung über Entschädigungen führten.

Durch die Analyse der Verhandlungen lässt sich feststellen, dass im Unterschied zu der vereinfacht dargestellten Gesetzgebung im „mining act“ die tatsächliche Entscheidungsfindung im Bergbausektor ein komplexer Wettbewerb und Machtkampf zwischen verschiedenen Bevölkerungsgruppen, NRO, Bergbauunternehmen und Behörden ist, die alle versuchen, das endgültige Ergebnis zu beeinflussen. Zusätzlich ist dieser Entscheidungsprozess nicht linear wie bei der Verhandlung zwischen gleichberechtigten Partnern, sondern ihr liegt eine ungleiche Machtverteilung zugrunde, bei der die kommunale

Bevölkerung Einfluss durch Bündnisse mit regionalen NRO gewinnen muss, um Bergbauunternehmen zu Entschädigungen zu zwingen. Regionale NRO entwerfen verschiedene Strategien, z.B. öffentliche Kampagnen, Werbeprogramme, öffentliche Proteste und Gerichtsverfahren, um Aktivitäten und Entscheidungen der Bergbauunternehmen zu beeinflussen. Zusätzlich haben lokale Interessenverbände Bündnisse mit internationalen Lobbyisten aufgebaut, die internationale Kampagnen gegen die Geschäftstätigkeiten der Unternehmen lancieren. Die Unternehmen nutzen auf der anderen Seite ihre behördlichen Genehmigungen und Partnerschaften zur Verwaltung, um „stillschweigend“ Widerstand durch die ansässige Bevölkerung zu unterdrücken. Man kann daraus ableiten, dass jede Gruppe der Hauptakteure in diesem Konflikt Koalitionen eingeht, um Handlungsfähigkeit zu mobilisieren und Verhandlungsstrategien zu entwerfen.

Dieser Machtkampf beeinflusst die regionalen Entscheidungsprozesse und die Kontrolle von Ressourcen. Zunächst kam es zur Entstehung von regionalen Interessenvertretungen wahrnehmen, die eine grundlegende Rolle in der Entscheidungsfindung der örtlichen Bergbaubevölkerung spielen. In Tarkwa sah man z.B. die Entstehung starker Organisationen, die behaupteten, lokale Interessen zu schützen. Diese Organisationen haben starke internationale Beziehungen und Beteiligungen, die sich durch öffentliche Kampagnen und Finanzverflechtungen herausgebildet haben und die somit eine Schlüsselrolle in der Gestaltung kommunaler Politik in den Bergbaugebieten einnehmen. Der Kampf um Entschädigungen führt ebenfalls zu einer Neudefinition von Einfluss und Macht Stammesältester. Diese nehmen eine direktere Rolle im Kampf für die Rechte der lokalen Bevölkerung ein. Dadurch erhalten sie zum einen die Möglichkeit ihren regionalen Einfluss wieder geltend zu machen, zum anderen aber auch die Möglichkeit, persönliche Vorteile zu erlangen (Berry 2002). Der Machtkampf zeigt auch die Komplexität der Entscheidungsfindung in seinem politischen Umfeld. Entscheidungen wurden nicht in offiziellen Plätzen oder Sitzungsräumen oder im Einklang mit rechtlichen Vorschriften getroffen, sondern in sehr informellen Plätzen (z.B. nächtliche Treffen in Hotels, bei Veranstaltungen von Unternehmen, auf Fluren etc.). Dieses Verhalten ist auf die Verhandlungsstrategien der Akteure zurückzuführen. In den meisten Fällen sind die Ereignisse in diesen informellen Plätzen nicht dokumentiert, sie spielen aber eine Schlüsselrolle bei der Ausgestaltung der Verhandlungsergebnisse. Durch die Analyse dieses Falles ist es ebenfalls möglich festzustellen, wie Verwaltungs- und Regierungsbehörden für die Legitimation der Aktivitäten mächtiger Akteure, wie vor allem Bergbauunternehmen, instrumentalisiert wurden, wobei sie eine sehr untergeordnete Rolle bei der tatsächlichen Entscheidungsfindung spielten.

Kapitel 5: Der Krieg ist verloren – Der Entstehungsprozess eine Entschädigungsabkommens

Dieses Kapitel baut auf den Schlussfolgerungen aus Kapitel 4 auf, in dem über fünf Gemeinden berichtet wird, die im Jahr 2001 vom Austreten von Zyanid betroffen waren. Mit Unterstützung einer lokalen Interessenvertretung (öffentliche und internationale Lobbyisten) wurde im Dezember 2003 ein Entschädigungsabkommen erzielt. Dieses Abkommen wird als Sieg für die Gemeinden aufgefasst. Dabei sollte allerdings nicht außer Acht gelassen werden, in welchem Ausmaß die betroffenen Gemeinden überhaupt die sich aus dem Entschädigungsabkommen ergebende Unterstützung in Anspruch nehmen konnten und können.

Evers und Gerke (2009) argumentieren, dass das Einbringen von Hilfsgütern in eine Gesellschaft, die einem technologischen Wandel unterliegt, die Entstehung von sogenannten strategischen Gruppen fördert. Die Hilfsgüter können dabei von Entwicklungsgeld über humanitäre Hilfen und sozioökonomische Investitionen bis hin zu Waffenlieferungen reichen. Die strategischen Allianzen, die sich in diesem Zusammenhang herausbilden,

umfassen Akteure unterschiedlicher sozioökonomischer Gruppierungen. Allen Gruppen gemeinsam ist aber das strategische Ziel des Erlangens und der Kontrolle langfristiger materieller Gewinne aus den verfügbaren Hilfsgütern. Neue Hilfsmittel generieren folglich ein Machtvakuum und einen neuen Schauplatz für Machtstreitigkeiten. Die dabei entstehenden strategischen Gruppen beeinflussen aufgrund ihrer Schlüsselrolle, wer etwas auf welche Weise bekommt. Sie besitzen die Macht das sozio-politische und wirtschaftliche System so zu gestalten, dass auf lange Sicht optimale Bedingungen für die Akquise von Hilfsgütern geschaffen werden (Evers & Gerke, 2009:4).

In diesem Kapitel beschreibe ich den Entstehungsprozess des Entschädigungsabkommens unter verstärkter Beachtung der Beteiligung und des Einflusses verschiedener Akteure auf die Einführungsstrategie. Gleichzeitig diskutiere ich, in welchem Ausmaß die betroffenen Gemeinden den Kompensations-Deal in Anspruch nehmen. Meine Analyse basiert auf eigenen Feldbeobachtungen, Interviews mit verschiedenen Gruppierungen und Berichten von Nichtregierungsorganisationen, Unternehmen und Regierungsorganisationen.

Es lässt sich festhalten, dass durch das Entschädigungsabkommen bzw. über die dadurch in die Regionen eingebrachten Hilfsgüter, eine Plattform für einen neuen Machtkampf und, wie Evers und Gerke (2009, verschiedene) argumentieren, eine Umgebung für die Formation strategischer Gruppen geschaffen wurde. Anhand dieses Falles lässt sich die Entstehung von strategischen Gruppen aus NRO, Universitätsdozenten, traditionellen Machthabern und ghanaischen Unternehmensfunktionären nachzeichnen, die trotz ursprünglich verschiedener sozialer und ökonomischer Interessen von einer gemeinsamen Strategie bestimmt werden: Zugang und Kontrolle von Vorteilen aus dem Entschädigungsabkommen. Es lässt sich aufzeigen, wie diese Gruppierungen, das Zustandekommen des Entschädigungsabkommens beeinflussten und wie sie untereinander Koalitionen bildeten, um die Bedingungen für eine langfristige Akquise der Hilfsgüter sicherzustellen. Ein hochrangiger Universitätsdozent schaltete sich beispielsweise beim Entwurf der Grundsätze für die Einführung des Entschädigungsabkommens ein, wobei er vorschlug, eine spezielle NRO als Fachgruppe einzurichten, die sich mit alternativen Entwicklungsprogrammen zur Existenzsicherung beschäftigt. Besagte NRO entwickelt diese Programme, wobei sie dem „Professor“ eine Trainings- und Beratungsrolle sowie Pilotprogramme mit den Stammesältesten zuteilt. Die eben erläuterte Wechselbeziehung zwischen den Akteuren stellt ein Beispiel für Strategien dar, wie sie in der strategischen Gruppentheorie erklärt werden.

Außerdem wirft dieses Kapitel Fragen über die Art von gesellschaftlichen Auseinandersetzungen in den Bergbauregionen auf. In meiner Untersuchung beobachtete ich, dass im Implementierungsprozess die betroffenen Gemeinden lediglich geringfügig involviert waren. Kommunale Stimmen wurden dadurch nahezu ausgeschlossen. Zwei Jahre nach Beginn des Implementierungsprozesses zeigen sowohl meine Ergebnisse als auch die Berichte Anderer (OECD, Watch; Curtis 2008), dass das Entschädigungsabkommen nicht auf die Interessen der betroffenen Gemeinden eingeht. Trotz dieser Ergebnisse gab es von den entsprechenden Interessengruppen nur geringfügige Antworten, Reaktionen oder Beteiligungen. Wie Bryant und Bailey (1998) argumentiere auch ich, dass gesellschaftliche Auseinandersetzungen, wie in Kapitel 4 diskutiert, für die Interessengruppen eine weitere Möglichkeit bieten ihre eigenen Wünsche (z. B. finanzielle Interessen, internationale Anerkennung) zu fördern. Aus Kapitel 5 kann ich herleiten, dass die Interessengruppen Erfolg als Sicherung der Entschädigungsleistungen definieren. Dabei antizipieren sie nicht die Probleme und Kämpfe, die durch das Entschädigungsabkommen aufgezeigt werden. Dieses Versäumnis kann man durchaus auch dem internen Kräftespiel der meisten kommunalen Gruppen Ghanas, dem „Ad hoc-Projekt“-Ansatz für gesellschaftliche Auseinandersetzungen sowie den gegensätzlichen Interessen der Geber und internationalen Partner begründen.

Kapitel 6: Schlussfolgerungen – Wer kümmert sich um die Vorräte?

Diese Arbeit entwirft ein eher negatives Bild, was die Interessen der in den Bergbaugebieten ansässigen Menschen und die Umwelt in den Abbaugebieten betrifft. Unter Verwendung des Fallbeispiels Tarkwa zeigt die Arbeit, dass trotz der Regulierungsversuche der Regierung und Geberorganisationen, wie z.B. der Weltbank, sich im Bergbausektor scheinbar nur wenig geändert hat, soweit es sich um die Verteilung von Hilfen und die Vermeidung von schädlichen Umwelteinflüssen des Bergbaus handelt. In der Tat wird durch die Arbeit gezeigt, dass das Rechtssystem und die Gesetzgebung sozial und ökologisch nachhaltige Investitionen nicht garantieren können, solange keine Freiräume für eine lokale Beteiligung geschaffen werden. Aber auch dies ist keine automatische Garantie, wie wir am Beispiel der NRO und der Stammesältesten gesehen haben, die eigentlich als traditionelle Schutzmächte der Interessen der lokalen Bevölkerung wahrgenommen werden, aber unter dem Druck wirtschaftlicher und politischer Interessen auch Kompromisse eingehen.

Darüber hinaus gibt es auch wenig Hoffnung für eine objektive wissenschaftliche Forschung, die die Politik in einem solchen Umfeld beeinflussen kann, solange sich Wissenschaftler auf die Publikation kommerzialisierten Wissens einlassen, das in der Folge von „dankbaren“ Abnehmern zur Legitimation ihrer Aktionen genutzt wird. Trotz dieser „tristen Realität“ bietet diese Analyse auch Ansatzpunkte für die sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung und einen strategischen Wandel im Hinblick auf das Verstehen und Definieren von Entwicklungsproblemen:

1. In der gesamten Arbeit wurde gezeigt, dass Interventionen oder Reformen im Bergbausektor auf eine einzelne „Einheit“ – die Verwaltung abzielten, jedoch unter geringer Berücksichtigung des eigentlichen Verwaltungssystems stattfanden. Dieser Reformprozess verfehlte die Sicherstellung eines ganzheitlichen Wandels, weil die Vertreter des „potentiellen“ Wandels es nicht schafften, dem Druck und den Verlockungen möglicher wirtschaftlicher Gewinne in diesem Sektor standzuhalten. Die Forderung eines besseren Verständnisses der Rolle, des Einflusses und der Interessen von Akteuren in diesem Sektor wird beispielhaft an sogenannten kooptierten NRO erläutert. Diese sind ein Ergebnis von Nachhaltigkeitsprogrammen und dem Ruf nach sogenannten „Public-Private-Partnerships“, die aber zu einem Ausschluss und weiterer Isolation kommunaler Interessen von den beabsichtigten Zielen führen.

2. Diese Arbeit zeigt theoretisch das Dilemma auf, das Sozialwissenschaftler bei der Konzeption von extrem komplexen Problemen betrifft. Zudem deutet es auf die Gefahr an, die Realität durch Modellierung des Verhaltens von Akteuren zu stark zu vereinfachen (Evers und Gerke 2009). Das jüngste Beispiel im Bergbausektor, das u.a. von der Weltbank, der Internationalen Finanz-Corporation, dem „Minerals Institute“ übernommen wurde, ist der sogenannte „Resource Governance Index (RGI)“, der im Wesentlichen versucht, das Risiko von sozialen und ökologischen Konflikten in Bergbaunationen der Dritten Welt durch Evaluationen auf Grundlage des Vorhandensein oder der Abwesenheit von gesetzlichen Vorschriften und Regularien zu quantifizieren. Ein hoher RGI bzw. die Wahrscheinlichkeit erhöhter Umweltzerstörung und sich daraus ergebender Konflikte werden in Abhängigkeit von der Art regulatorischer und gesetzlicher Rahmenbedingungen in den jeweiligen Ländern reduziert. Dieses vereinfachte Realitätsmodell ist irreführend, dennoch findet es vielfach Anklang bei Geberorganisationen.

3. Hinsichtlich der Möglichkeiten wissenschaftlicher Forschung, eine Veränderungsprozesse zu beeinflussen, liegt die Hoffnung bei Forschungseinrichtungen und Universitäten, denen es möglich ist, Synergien und Partnerschaften mit sogenannten „Research and Advocacy“-NRO in diesen Bergbaunationen oder den westlichen Ländern zu schließen und sich zusammen für Belange der Bergbaugebiete einzubringen. Ich gebe diese Empfehlung auf Basis der Schlussfolgerung, dass sich einige der Interessengruppen als Teil

der Zivilgesellschaft in Ghana beteiligen, in dem sie z.B. qualitativ hochwertige wissenschaftliche Forschung durch hochqualifizierte Akademiker (auch PhDs) durchführen. Viele dieser Forscher haben versucht, die Machtdynamik der Bergbauggebiete zu hinterfragen. Ihre Arbeiten fanden jedoch keine Beachtung innerhalb der etablierten Hochschulen (Pegg und Alissa 2002).

4. Aus Sicht eines Kapazitätsaufbaus gewinnt die nationale Entwicklungsagenda zum Schutz der Umwelt, die als ein Versuch angesehen werden kann, die Interessen von verarmten Teilen der Bevölkerung in den Bergbaugebieten zu vertreten an Bedeutung. Dies geschieht auch indirekt durch Partnerschaften zwischen akademischen Forschungsinstituten und „Research and Advocacy“-NRO sowie Regulationsbehörden wie z.B. der EPA.

Die Beschreibungen in dieser Arbeit spiegeln lediglich einen ausgewählten Bereich wider und zeigen daran exemplarisch wie Entscheidungsfindungen und Verhandlungen innerhalb des Bergbausektors ablaufen. Die Arbeit beansprucht nicht, die ganze Realität in Ghanas Bergbauindustrie zu erklären, aber sie nutzt den Fall von Tarkwa, um einige Aspekte aufzuzeigen, die in anderen Bergbauregionen näher untersucht werden könnten. Insgesamt kann eine Bergbauregion als ein komplexes Wechselspiel zwischen ungleichen sozialen Gruppen verstanden werden, die getrieben von verschiedenen kulturellen, politischen und ökonomischen Interessen, unterschiedliche Machtpositionen besitzen und versuchen, entweder jeglichen Widerstand zur Erreichung ihrer Ziele zu überwinden oder ihre Macht nutzen, um Einschränkungen zu bewältigen.

Abstract

The gold mining sub-sector is an important segment of the Ghanaian economy and continues to play a significant role in the country's socio-economic development (Akaabza, 2008:1). At the moment, Ghana is Africa's second leading producer of gold, and 10th in the whole world. The sub-sector is the country's leading foreign exchange earner, contributing close to 40% of its total exports, while making substantial contribution towards its GDP. While the government and other international financial institutions perceive the mining sector as a viable vehicle for fostering economic growth in Ghana, concerns are raised about its negative environmental impacts on the ecologically fragile ecosystems in mining areas (Dummet, 1989). In addition, the hyped benefits and opportunities associated with mining largely remain to the majority of local communities, who continue to languish in poverty as they pay the heavy price caused by the environmental degradation and other social costs (see Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Asklund and Eldvall, 2005; Ballard and Glenn, 2003; Gadzekpo and Waldman, 2005). These development problems in mining areas of Ghana, like in my other African countries have drawn the attention of researchers, policy makers and practitioners as they seek to understand the problem better and provide possible strategies for correcting the situation.

In the literature as well as in practice, governments and international finance institutions like IMF and World Bank have addressed or perceived the problems of mining from a governance perspective and most importantly engaged in legal reform as a solution to the problem. In Ghana, the most recent were the World Bank and IMF's part of the structural adjustment package adopted from the mid 80's through to the early 90's (Akabzaa, 2007). Under this thinking, reforms were instigated to provide an environment, where the extraction of mineral resources could translate into national wealth for economic recovery and development, through sustainable mining methods (World Bank, 2002; 22). In addition, the reforms would establish mechanisms to foster equitable distribution of benefits in mining areas through pro-active participation of local communities in the mining economy (IFC, 2002; Songsore, 1994).

This thesis however tells a different story. The measures under the reforms largely sought to contribute towards increased gold production to meet the growing global demand for gold in Europe and India. These demand created spaces for an influx of multinational mining companies, whose vast technologies, robust resources were seen as a vehicle for satisfying the ever-increasing demand for gold and gold related products on the world market. By the late 90s for example, all Ghanaian gold mines were foreign owned. The reforms contradictorily contributed to an increase in environmental degradation in mining areas, and created spaces for unequal distribution of benefits, with local mining communities reeling under the pressure of increased environmental degradation and poverty (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Coakley, 1999).

As local communities are further isolated, marginalized and excluded from active participation in mining economies, mining areas continue to become contested spaces where a minority powerful groups mobilize and wield power to meet their desired goals or desires. In this thesis, I do argue that unequal distribution of benefits in mining areas is an outcome of unequal power relations between societal actors seeking to protect their interests and not really a governance problem as largely perceived. I demonstrate that additional resources injected in mining areas either through community development funds, compensation and corporate social responsibility programs tend to serve the interests of a minority group who act with an aim of controlling and gaining access of these resources at the expense of local communities. Secondly, the frameworks established to ensure equitable distribution of benefits for example private-public partnerships, self or co-regulation programs only serve the needs and goals of these minority groups, while failing to effectively address the power dimensions in mining areas. This thesis is therefore grounded in a specific cultural context where extended case studies are developed from Tarkwa's gold mining area in Ghana to demonstrate and illustrate the complex social interactions that leads to unequal distribution of benefits in Ghana's mining area.

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Dedicated to Jackie, with Love.

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List of Abbreviations

GFG	Gold Fields Ghana Limited
WACAM	Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining
OICI	Opportunities Industrialization Centres International
MEST	Ministry of Environment Science and Technology
CEPIL	Center for Public Interest Law
LEJ	League of Environmental Journalist
YAG	Youth For Action Ghana
IMF	International Monetary Fund
USGS	United States Geological Service
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EITI	Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative
SGMC	State Gold Mining Corporation
ERP	Economic Recovery Program
UMAT	University of Mines and Technology
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
MMSD	Minerals Mining for Sustainable Development
PMMC	Precious Metals Marketing Corporation
AGA	Anglo Gold Ashanti
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
GSS	Ghana Statistical Services
MC	Minerals Commission
LVB	Land Valuation Board
FC	Forestry Commission
WRC	Water Resources Commission
BICC	Bonn International Centre For Conversion
IR	Incident Report
DCE	District Executive Officer
TWN	Third World Network

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a growing demand for the world's mineral resources (USGS, 2004). This demand has called for an increase in supply within a more liberal yet privatized global market. Mining multinational companies have invested heavily in developing countries to meet the global mineral demands. The results have been two fold: One, some mining countries have had a welcomed increase in national revenues (World Bank, 2002), and secondly, the large-scale investment in mineral production has brought along high environmental and social costs, - often referred to as the '*resource curse*' (Volker, et al, 2006). These *costs* override the hyped economic *benefits*, which are largely unequally distributed, with the majority of host communities⁷ and the environment that hosts these operations (Volker, et al, 2006). A common attempt to address the environmental and social conflicts in third world mining countries has been legal reforms in the sector (World Bank, 1992). In Africa for example, the most recent of these reforms are the World Bank and IMF's part of the structural adjustment package adopted by a majority of mining countries⁸ in the mid 1980s (Akabzaa, 2007). These reforms were instigated on the backdrop of economic decay in these countries, as well as an increase in environmental degradation as a result of mining operations. These reforms were presented as a strategy to rebuild the decaying African economy, social and environmentally sound mining as well as create spaces for equal distribution of mining benefits within these countries (World Bank, 1999; 2002). From this study and others, the reforms contributed to an influx in foreign investments in the mining sector of these countries, increased production of minerals, but led to an increased cases of environmental degradation and marginalization of mining communities from accessing the expected benefits (see Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Asklund and Eldvall, 2005; Ballard and Glenn, 2003; Gadzekpo and Waldman, 2005).

Research and policy efforts are therefore focused on trying to understand the dynamics within mining sectors or countries that underpin or explain why local communities continue to be excluded from accessing the benefits in mining areas. Argue that, legal reforms or perceiving these problems, as a governance problem without addressing the power spaces created by the actions of individual actors within the mining sector is self-defeating. My position in this thesis is that, the unequal distribution of benefits within the mining areas is an outcome of unequal power relations between actors (e.g. NGOs,

⁷ Host communities is a term used in mining sector and also in research to refer to the communities situated in mining areas (see Akabzaa, 2000; TWN, 2004; WACAM, 2004)

⁸ Examples of these countries include: Tanzania, Botswana, Mali, Guinea and Ivory Coast

government agencies, Mining companies, Universities) in these areas who engage in interacting with each other to meet their ‘special’ interests. These interests are not necessarily in line with those of the local communities, neither are they always focused on protecting the environment. Understanding this interaction of societal actors within the mining sector and how they go about to meet their various interests provides a better grasp of the process of community exclusion and unequal distribution of benefits.

I use the case of Tarkwa, a gold mining area of Western Ghana, to demonstrate how actors operating within legal mining reforms of the Post – Structural Adjustment Program era develop varying strategies to meet and protect their desired goals⁹. This actor interactions and relationships shape the local practices of resource allocation and benefit distribution within the mining sector, with the local communities being on the losing end.

My research objectives are as follows:

1. To provide an understanding of historical perspectives and the legal reforms that shaped the current state of Ghana’s gold mining sector.
2. To identify the major actors, their roles, interests and the power they possess in shaping local decisions in Tarkwa’s mining sector.
3. To determine the various strategies and tactics employed by these actors through examining case studies of the process of negotiating benefits within Tarkwa’s mining sector
4. To establish causal link between these negotiations and the local practices and patterns of resource control and distribution in Tarkwa’s gold mining sector

In chapter 1, I describe the state of Ghana’s gold mining sector. To understand the current trends and state of Ghana’s mining sector, I describe the legal reforms that have been recommended and implemented. Largely driven by the World Bank and IMF, I analyse the impact of these reforms on the mining sector as a whole, but most importantly on the local dynamics of decision-making and resource governance in mining communities. The data and information¹⁰ in this chapter is built around a thorough review of policy documents, and policy research reports. The works of researchers like Thomas Akaabza (2000,2001,2004 and 2009) greatly informs my analysis as well as NGOs reports like the Third World Network – Africa (2000, 2004, 2005),

⁹ Desired goals is a phrase I use to also mean interests. These include, economic, political, cultural or even individual (invisible) interests

¹⁰ A comprehensive methodology description is attached as an annex of this thesis

WACAM (2004, 2006) and CEPIL (official website) provide civil society insights into the legal and fiscal changes that have influenced and shaped the current state of Ghana's mining sector. I also reviewed government statistics from the Ghana Chamber of Mines, Minerals Commission and the EPA to provide a current account of gold production and a government's perspective on the changes that have taken place amidst the reforms in Ghana. The World Bank, Mining and Development Report of 1992 and the follow-up report of 2002 and 2004 provided insight based on the reform 'driver's perspective to the reforms. Anthropological work by Dummet (1980) and Terray (1974) on the Gold Coast of Africa (present day Ghana) as well as written notes by early travellers and traders provided a valid source of descriptive understanding of the social, political setup of my communities and traditional aspects of mining, resource control and exchange during colonial or pre-colonial times. My field observation, interviews with a wide section of respondents also generated much needed information on the impact of mining in these areas.

A key conclusion from the description and analysis in chapter 1 is that, despite the reforms in Ghana's mining sector had created an environment for increased mineral production as well as spaces for private sector engagement, but reduced government involvement in the mining sector. Secondly, during this era of reforms (1986 – date) Ghana has experienced increased cases of environmental degradation, social conflicts in mining areas and growth in despair among communities who feel excluded from the benefits generated within the sector (Akabzaa, 2004, Akabzaa, 2009). The second finding is supported in the literature and in practice too. The only divergence is in how the problem is defined and presented in the literature. Chapter 2 is a discussion of the various perspectives presented in social science research to explain this phenomenon of unequal distribution of benefits in mining areas. The three perspectives that I identify and review include 'colonial legacy arguments', the 'resource curse debates' and 'political ecology' approach, where I show how proponents of these approaches have attempted to theorize on the question of unequal distribution of benefits in mining areas of the third world. From these theories I do observe that the protagonists of the colonial legacy and resource curse agenda still place emphasis on legal failures and government incapacities as the source of exclusion and therefore recommends governance reform through reforming legal mineral regimes in developing countries, enforcement of legislation and creation of accountable institutions to ensure equitable distribution of benefits. My position through out this thesis however holds a different view from theirs.

This view is held by the political ecology school as presented by Bryant and Bailey (1997) and Robbins, P., (2004). Raymond Bryant and Bailey Sinead's book, 'Third World Political Ecology' provides the necessary insights into this research field that aims to develop an integrated understanding of the dynamics of environmental change in the Third World. By drawing on examples from throughout the Third World, the two authors presents a more critical survey of the field political ecology, which connects politics, economy and social aspects to problems of environmental control, ecological change and resource distribution and exchange. From their perspective, that unequal distribution of benefits within mining areas is not as a result of government failure or missing legislation or enforcement, rather an outcome of power struggle between multiple actors positioned in such areas and whose primary goal is to protect their overarching interests. The interaction of various actors is characterised by unequal power relations, meaning the more powerful actors tend to meet their preferred desires at the expense of the less powerful ones. These power relations can be analysed at all levels, from community, company level, government or even NGO level. I align my study to this perspective which forms the overall foundation upon which my thinking and conceptualization of my research problem is based. The information in this chapter is largely a thorough review of literature sources as well as experiences from my pre-dissertation work. A central outcome of my theoretical analysis is that the unequal distribution and exclusion of local communities from benefiting from mining areas can only be understood through a thorough analysis of the actors who influence decisions in these areas, the interests they represent and the power they posses to meet desired goals. While political ecologists refer to such a space as 'politicized environment' I refer to it as a 'negotiation space'.

Chapter 3 presents the negotiation space, which is a theoretical creation of a contested arena defined by key actors who play various roles in the mining sector. I use the gold mining of Area where I identify and map the interests represented by each actor in the area. The actors include local communities – differentiated along ethnic, social and economic lines, NGOs, government agencies, mining companies, traditional rulers and Universities as the key players. Each of these actors represents a specific interest (s) and their interaction and participation in this sector is driven by the desire to meet and protect these interests. I do find out too that these actors command varying levels of power based on their social positions, material wealth, political affiliation as well as the networks they have access to. This unequal power dimension is critical in understanding

the process of exclusion, inclusion as well as distribution of benefits. The chapter is built upon primary and secondary sources of information. I relied on government agency reports (e.g. Minerals Commission, Ghana Website, Ghana Chamber of Mines), which provided information on the regulatory agencies, their mandate and their roles in mining areas. These reports also provided a current official account on the concentration of mining operations in Tarkwa and Ghana as a whole. My field observations, semi structured interviews and community surveys generated an understanding of the activities of NGOs, Research institutions and other mining support institutions in the area. Through field surveys and qualitative semi structured interviews, I gained knowledge about the social, economic and political characteristics of local communities in Tarkwa.

In chapter 4, I build upon the conclusions generated from chapters 2 and 3 about the role of actors and their ability or inability to meet their interests Tarkwa's gold mining sector. I use a case of a cyanide spill that occurred in the mining town of Tarkwa in 2001, polluting a local community water source. This incident prompted negotiations for compensation between five affected communities and GFG, a South African company that owns a large-scale surface mine in Tarkwa. In the chapter, I describe the social, economic and ecological context within which the mine is located and where the resultant negotiations took place. Based on the recollections of my key respondents, media reports, government statement, NGO and company reports, I describe the case, to show how various groups of actors perceived and defined their reality; in as far as the incident was concerned. I also present the key events that preceded the negotiations leading to the compensation agreement reached in 2003. In each event, I demonstrate how various actors interact one with the other, and how individually or in coalitions, they influence the final outcome of the negotiation process. From this chapter, I find out that coalitions and power networks do play a central role as vehicles for overcoming the unequal power relations, where bargaining power is mobilized and wielding influence over others. These coalitions, though temporary and dynamic, play a key role in shaping decision making in a process that falls outside of the formal legal processes of decision-making. In this chapter, the role of lobby groups as a category of NGOs is highlighted and their growing influence in community struggles discussed.

In chapter 5, I build upon the conclusions from chapter 4, where I describe the process of implementing the compensation deal reached after the cyanide spill. Using this case, I once again I use the compensation case and implementation of the compensation deal to demonstrate how local communities were excluded from gaining access to the benefits presented by the deal. Using the strategic group theory as fronted by Evers and Gerke (2003, 2005, 2009) I argue that the compensation deal injected new funds into the mining area creating the formation of strategic groups, whose primary goal was to capture these resources for their personal gains. I show how university lecturers, company officials, NGO representatives and traditional rulers build coalitions as strategic groups to influence the implementation of the compensation deal to meet their material interests. In this chapter, I show that this social dynamic of strategic group formation and articulation of special interests marginalizes the interests of the majority of local communities whose concerns fail to receive the needed priority. This process is largely a social dynamic of societal actors engaged in protecting interests which are not line with those of the local communities and the environment, hence the inequality in these areas. This chapter is built upon primary sources of information where I record the recollection of key informants who either witnessed, participated in the implementation of the deal. I also interviewed with local community members who were affected by the spillage and who expected returns from the compensation deal. During my fieldwork, I also observed and recorded accounts of the compensation implementation process through visiting project sites and interviewing the key drivers of the implementation process (e.g. EPA, company officials, NGOs and traditional chiefs).

Finally chapter 6 draws sums up my work, by drawing together the key conclusions from the previous five chapters. I state that my thesis attempts to prove my theoretical inclines that unequal distribution of benefits which characterises mining sectors of developing countries is an outcome of the power relations among various societal actors, engaged in meeting specific interests. These interests are in competition or conflicting with each other and the power or ability of an actor to meet their interests is likely equivalent to their other failing to protect theirs. I use this chapter to show that the theoretical dilemma for research in mining areas like many other natural resource sectors is the unit, levels and spaces of analysis. The complexity of decision making for benefit distribution does not just lie in the complex nature of actors, their interests and power, but also the multiples units of actor analysis, the various levels and overlaps of actor engagements and the spaces that these interactions create (formal and informal) as arenas for decision

making. These complex social dynamic explains the process of exclusion. I link my conclusions to the current trends globally where legal reforms through self or co-regulation of the mining sector have failed to adequately address the social problems in mining areas of the third world. I argue that this thesis does not claim to represent the Ghanaian gold mining case, as each region and mining area has varying local and unique contextual differences, but it does generate some useful understanding of social interactions and how actors out manoeuvre existing legislation or use the spaces created by legal governance structures to legitimize actions and meet hidden interests. This thesis also demonstrates that mining sector reforms in Ghana like in many other mining countries of Africa were externally driven by the World Bank and sought to serve external interests of the global mineral markets, but in doing so ignored the local concerns of communities and environment that bore the cost of the investments. Attempts geared at ensuring equity and sustainable mining for example corporate social responsibility programs, Kimberly process, the EITI programs among others failed to create spaces for community participation and local involvement in the management or benefits accruing from the mining sector. At the local level, the failure of lobby groups as a community intermediary to translate community struggles into social movements for change is also brought to discussion, while the scope for scientifically sound research to influence policy is minimized in the mining sector which is characterised by overpowering economic and political interests. From this thesis, simple answers or recommendations for change are not provided. However a better presentation of reality is established which might influence how research and policy debates define problems in and prescribe solutions to mining countries of the third world.

CHAPTER 1 MINING SECTOR REFORMS IN GHANA

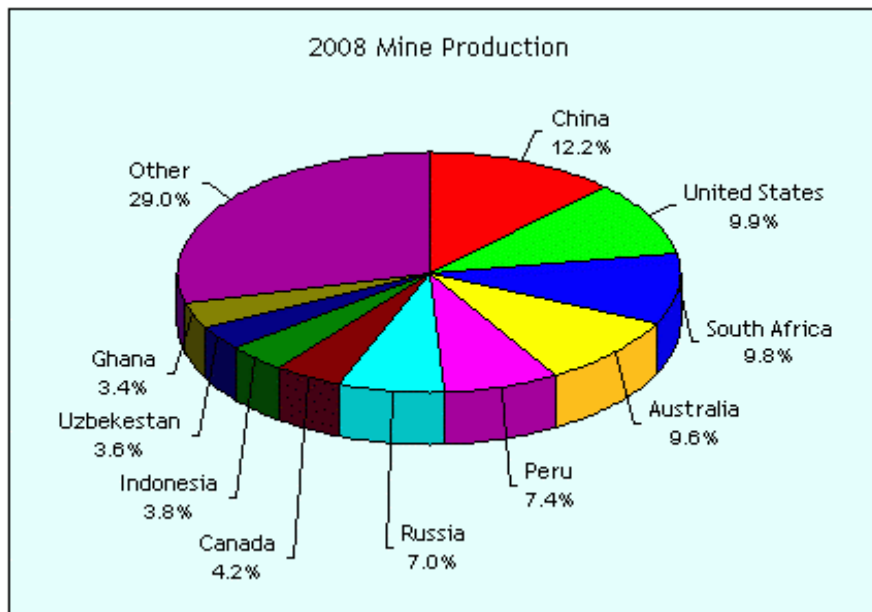
Understanding the Impact on Social Dynamics in Local Mining Areas

The gold mining sub-sector is an important segment of the Ghanaian economy and has played a significant role in the country's socioeconomic development since the colonial period (Akabzaa, 2008:1). At the national level, gold accounts for 95% of the total minerals exported from Ghana, contributing 40% of the government's foreign exchange revenues (see table 2) (Minerals Commission, 2007). Over the past three decades, gold production in Ghana has increased drastically, a factor linked to the legal reforms that led to increased foreign investments and influx of mining multinationals into the sector (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). This increase in production has propelled Ghana to the world's 10th leading producer of gold and therefore key player in the global supply chain (Gold Sheet, 2008) (see figure 1). Alongside the gold boom, mining areas characterised by increased social and environmental problems, as we shall see later in this chapter. In addition, the benefits expected from these flourishing sector are controlled by a small minority group, who use their power and influence to exclude and marginalize the majority of poor communities, who are left reeling under the weight of the environmental and social costs of mining (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

In order to get a better grasp of the dynamics within Ghana's gold mining sub-sector, I use this chapter to discuss the historical perspectives and legal reforms that have shaped the mining sector. I categorize these reforms into three main groups; Pre-independence, Post Independence and Post SAP categories. In the literature, these reforms are well documented and presented in as far their impact to the national trends of gold production is concerned (see, Jonah, 1987; Coakley, 1999; World Bank 1999, Aryee, 2000; ECA 2002; Akabzaa, 2000; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). My chapter however concentrates on discussing local social-political changes that have been brought along by these reforms in mining areas and how these have contributed to shape the patterns and practices of decision-making, resource governance and control in mining areas¹¹.

¹¹ The only author that I know of who has attempted to do this is Dummet (1980) who assesses the impact of the 1943 mercury ordinance introduced by the colonial government and the impact it had on social dynamics in local mining areas of the Gold Coast.

Diagram 1-1: World's top 10 leading producers of gold in the world



Source: Gold Sheet International, 2008

1.1 MINING SECTOR REFORMS

In this chapter;

1. I discuss briefly the main reforms in three main periods: Pre-independence, Post – Independence and Post SAP era. I also analyse the impact of this reforms on the gold-sub economy as well as their impact on local social and political dynamics in Ghana's mining communities. The cases and examples are largely drawn from Wassa West District.
2. I briefly discuss the consequences of these changes in the mining sector especially in regards to the state of water and land resources in local mining communities.

1.1.1 Pre-Independence Reforms to 1956

Ghana's mining history dates back to the 12th C, hence its name, the Gold Coast of Africa. Mining operations along the coast were undertaken largely through underground shafts and gold was amalgamated using mercury (Dummet, 1980). By the time the colonialists were arriving to the Gold Coast, Ghanaian mining regions especially the Ashanti and the Western regions had established 'golden' empires built upon gold exchange, trade networks and partnerships with neighbouring merchants from Ivory Coast and other African and Arabic countries (Terry, 1974)¹². These trade links and partnerships shaped by the gold rich soils of the Gold Coast contributed largely to the

¹² The majority of the early traders on the Gold Coast included the British, Portuguese and Arabs who established contacts with middle-men and the kings of Ashanti for Gold (see Dummet, 1980)

influence and power of the kings and the chiefs, who also controlled vast amounts of farm lands and people.

These traditional rulers played a vital role as custodians of rural resources and labour based on the mandate they had to control and rule. Labour in African mines was largely communally organized, which reduced the costs of gold production, but was also a strategy by the chiefs to gain total control over the people and resources. During this era, the wage system adopted also played a key role in building solidarity among the mining communities. According to anthropological writings of Dummet (1980), wages were mostly paid in kind and labour was reciprocated in the seemingly equal distribution of benefits to the whole village. Community members worked in the mines, based on their identity and the chiefs ensured that the household or village needs were taken care of in return. This way, conflicts over wage payments or distribution of benefits were reduced or contained. It is only in rare occasions, for example in Ashanti region where slaves were captured from other regions and forced to work on the mines. This was however very rare and not widespread (Terry, 1974:50). By the time colonialists reached the gold coast of Africa, the Wassa Kingdom of Western Ghana and the Ashanti Kingdom had established very strong and powerful entities based on control by village chiefs, robust gold production and marketing chains as well as influential networks in the sub-region and abroad. This was set to change with the coming of the colonial regime.

The immediate goal of the colonial government was to gain control of these mineral-rich resources. To do this however, a strategy was needed to reduce or undermine the influence of chiefs as well as break down the solidarity established by the communal and family ties in these areas (Terry, 1974). The **Mercury Ordinance of 1933** was therefore the law that might have weakened these local structures. Through this legislation, the use of mercury by African miners was regarded illegal and the promulgation of the Mercury Law began the process of criminalization of the African miner. With use of mercury banned, African mining operations were impaired and cracks began to appear in what had been a solid system of production and trade. The mining sector could not meet the demands of the trader partners in Ivory Coast for example, and the African middlemen who relied on commission for exchange were also getting restless. Without mining, the chiefs did not have the same influence and control over their subjects, because they did not have leverage in terms of labour demands any more. In the meantime, the colonial regime through its 'divide and rule' approach, was sowing seeds of division among the chiefs by making offers for those interested to join the colonial administration as part of

the 'indirect rule' strategy. The effects of the indirect rule approach will be discussed later, but with this new law, the authority of the chiefs, who previously held massive influence and control over land and people, was reduced. Secondly, the law isolated the chiefs from their people, who opted to work on the colonial mines because of the freed labour and lastly, the solid chieftaincy institution experienced cracks as some among the chiefs were tempted to accept the offer to collaborate and act as colonial spies and stooges (Terry, 1974).

Having gained relative control of rural resources and dominion over the chiefs and people, the colonial government embarked on a special goal of advancing British mining interests at the Gold Coast and the sub-region as a whole. Akabzaa (2007) argues that British mining¹³ companies formed a significant pressure group at that time to influence both the Colonial Office in London and the governor in Ghana to enact the Mercury Law. Because of this pressure from home, the colonial regime was forced to facilitate an influx of British mining operations into the mining territories to ensure self-sufficiency of the British Empire (Akabzaa, 2007; 22). This was seen by Terry (1974) as a resemblance of modern day privatization of African mining sector with governments conditioned to create a conducive environment for foreign investments largely to meet the growing global gold demands in the West, but not necessarily to address local development problems.

Mercury Ordinance Law of 1933 as a key reform before independence, can be linked to the current mining set up in Ghana as one can argue that the law established the foundations upon which criminalization or illegalization of African mining operations and indigenous, small-scale gold mining was started. This edging out of Ghanaian gold producers only came to an end in 1989 when the Small-scale Mining Law was enacted to give legal status to the sector again, though new form of criminalization was begun for those who could not meet the conditions of the law, as we shall see in section 1.1.3.

A debate still rages on in terms of whether the mercury ordinance weakened the influence of chiefs or whether it indeed empowered them even more. Terry (1974) holds the view that this reform process weakened the chiefs largely because they lost control over the mineral-land as well as influence over the subjects who became slaves, working on colonial mines. He posits further that chiefs were weakened because of the

¹³ Although a concession for mining bauxite in the Awaso area was obtained in 1926, production only started in 1940-41. This was when other sources of bauxite were cut off from the Allied forces in the early part of World War II. British Aluminium Company Limited, acting as agents for the British Ministry of Aircraft Production, started exploitation of the Ayawaso deposit. Similarly, exploitation of manganese in Ghana started in 1916 at the request of the Wartime Ministry of Munitions, as manganese was in high demand for war purposes (Akabzaa, 2007: 22)

cracks that emerged within the institution of chiefs or the kingdoms due to the divide and rule approach adopted by the colonial regime. Some of the chiefs were co-opted by the colonial government into its local administration, though this was to ensure continued support and cordial relations with the local communities. The divide and rule strategy complimented the indirect approach adopted by the British colonial government as perceived by Terray who argued that traditional solidarity was weakened as local decision makers were captured in the process. In some cases, this exposed the communities to slavery and also weakened their ability to effectively resist colonial rule. Though Dummet (1980) and Berry (2002) agree that indeed the reforms before independence weakened the two kingdoms, they contest the view that the ordinance weakened the chief as such. Both argue that the opposite did happen. In their opinion, the colonial regime bestowed power too much power to the local chiefs who continued ruling on their behalf under the indirect system of colony administration. Co-opting chiefs was the only strategy the British could employ so as to gain total control of labour, access to rural resources as well as build social capital to ensure minimum resistance. Sara Berry states that, the institution of chiefs might have been weakened, but those chiefs who were co-opted into the colonial administration enjoyed reasonable amount of power and went on to play a key role in controlling these rural resources after the colonialists left.

In terms of the impact of pre-independence reforms to the gold production levels, the banning of indigenous gold mining through the Mercury Law did boost the mining sector as more labour was freed. The period between 1933 to 1952 saw increased mine output (Akabzaa, 2007). This was however short lived as the emergence of major new gold producing countries, for example Botswana, Tanzania, Nigeria created increased competition to Ghanaian gold. Dummet also argues that the growing struggle for independence created a political risk leading to investor disquiet.

1.1.2 Post Independence Reforms to 1986

After colonial rule, most independent governments of Africa engaged in a process of assuming total sovereignty and control over its borders and natural resources. Ghana set the pace for the continent, and the era between 1957 and 1986 could be termed as an attempt to ensure large-scale nationalization of mineral resources, renegotiation of existing arrangements and the creation of state enterprises and numerous commodity producer associations to oversee the management of mines and mining operations (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001: 45). An immediate attempt by the Nkrumah government

to control gold resources for example was the formation Gold Mining Corporation (SGMC) in 1961, which immediately assumed ownership and management of the main gold deposits and mining plants in Bibiani, Tarkwa, Prestea, Konongo, Obuasi and Dunkwa from British companies.

During this era, the government's cardinal objective in the acquisition of these mines was to centralize control of these resources, generate income for re-building and maintaining the newly independent state and finally creation of employment for the Ghanaian population. Thus, state mines were subject to government intervention for purposes often unrelated to efficiency or economic probity (Akabzaa, 2007; 34). Like with the colonial regime, the post – independence government had to deal with the issue of overcoming the influence and dominion of chiefs in rural mining areas. As discussed in section 1.1.1, by the time the colonialists were leaving Ghana, rural areas largely remained under the dominion of traditional chiefs (Dummet, 1980), who in contrast to what many thought, still assumed a lot of control and power. The power by the Chiefs especially in strategic areas like mining villages provided a key threat to the post independent government, driven an overall goal to centralize decision making and gain total hegemony over valuable resources and people. The post-independent government also needed to establish a strong presence and gain recognition among the electorate in rural areas so that to sustain their rule during the elections.

The first approach was to review the legislation drawn by the colonial government, which placed any land rich in minerals in the hands of the executive in trust for the people of Ghana. This caused a stir in mining areas as unlike before when the chiefs had total control, the president now had leverage in lands or areas deemed viable for mining. In 1961, by establishing the SGMC, the government was making a statement at the local level, that a new regime was in place to oversee the extraction of minerals and collection of revenues in mining areas. SGMC for example was in charge of managing the Tarkwa Gold mining, re-negotiating mining contracts, employment opportunities as well as identifying mining land, a responsibility that had for a long time been a domain of chiefs (Dummet, 1980). Berry (2002) argues that this approach like that of the colonial regime, was Nkrumah's tactic to alienate and weaken chiefs, by capturing the aspects that reflect their power and influence. While doing so, he still made attempts to integrate some chiefs as allies to his local government, a decision perceived to be Nkrumah's strategy to have stooges who can serve the interests of the local party elites in these areas. Off course, he still needed the support from chiefs, because being one of them, he was aware

of the influence and power they command in most rural areas (Terry, 1974).

This era of state-owned mining was however plagued with, or constrained by, lack of investment and exploration. The state-owned mining enterprises were under-capitalized and became increasingly obsolescent. Lack of investment, maintenance and modernization left these state-run mines uncompetitive. The SGMC was operating at a loss and had to close the Bibiani and Konongo mines. By the time SGMC was being purchased by GFG, the Tarkwa mine had not been in active operation in close to 5 years (WACAM, 2004). The mining sector, which had accounted for close to 24% of Ghana's exports at independence now accounted for only 15% in 1978 (see table. From production peaks in the 1960s, gold output fell to 5.97 million oz in the 1970s and even further in the 1980s to only 3 million oz. Other minerals suffered a similar decline. This was one of the main reasons for the declining availability of foreign exchange during the latter period (see Akabzaa, 2009:23). The stagnation was worsened by the economic recession that crippled a larger section of African countries in the 70's and early 80's. By 1985, there were no significant investments in Ghana's gold mining sub-sector. Output in almost all the mines declined and the sector contributed relatively little to gross national earnings.

Table 1-1: Gold Production Trends (1963-1986)

Year	Gold - Ounces
1963	911 663
1964	912592
1965	851 090
1966	708 906
1967	724 134
1968	757 346
1969	750 435
1970	714 442
1971	693 770
1972	710013
1973	731711
1974	709 550
1975	583 103
1976	515 654
1977	531 084
1978	465 651
1979	387 730
1980	437 669
1981	349 870
1982	335 724
1983	276 659

1984	282 299
1985	299 615
1986	287 124

Source: Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001

1.1.3 Post 1986 Mining Sector Reforms

The decline in the mining sector after independence was attributed to several factors. The World Bank for example linked it to the failure of the post-independent state to adequately attract sufficient funds to manage the mines, low technology and skills as well as declining grade of gold ore. The Structural Adjustment Report of 1984 stated that the mining sector crumpled due to: “lack of foreign exchange to maintain and rehabilitate the mines; lack of capital investment for mining skills; infrastructure deterioration, particularly shortages of rail capacity for manganese and bauxite; mining company financial problems due to the greatly over-valued currency and spiralling inflation; a declining grade of gold ore; the exhaustion of high grade manganese ore; the depletion of the more lucrative diamond mines in many areas; high absenteeism and low worker discipline; and pilfering, illegal panning and smuggling of gold and diamonds” (World Bank 1992:34).

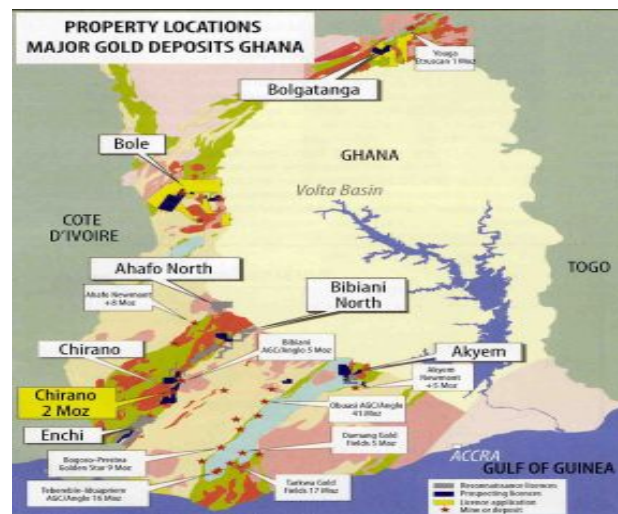
The mining sector reforms that started in 1986 therefore formed part of the macro-economic policy reforms of the economic recovery programme (ERP) initiated in 1984. These reforms however targeted important sectors or those perceived by the reform-drivers as having potential to steer economic growth in these countries. In Ghana, the gold mining sub-sector was ear marked and pick out as a potential vehicle for economic recovery alongside other mining countries of Africa (World Bank, 1992). The mining related reforms after 1986 aimed at:

- Strengthening and reorientation of government support institutions for the mining sector.
- Privatisation of state mining assets.
- Enactment of environmental laws and other mining sector legislative changes

An important policy outcome from these reforms was the disengagement of the government from the management, direct control and ownership of the mining sector. The map below shows that all the five key mines that were acquired by the government at independence were sold to private owners, mostly foreign companies by 1990. The government relinquished its role as owner of mines by systematically selling its shares in these mines to the private sector. The largest of these companies was the Anglo Gold Ashanti and Tarkwa mines which the government fully sold off in 1993 and 1995

respectively. Before them, both had been under receivership by Anglo Gold (present day Anglo Gold Ashanti) and Gold Fields Ghana, both South African mining giants.

Maps 1-1: Showing Key Mining Areas in Ghana, Acquired from the State



Source: Minerals Commission, 2007

The impact of the post – 1986 reforms on local dynamics in mining areas was manifold. In a separate section, I will look at the ecological consequences caused as a result of increased gold production during this era. But for now, I will focus on how these reforms, changed the social dynamics in terms of the actors and key players who currently shape the decision making processes in mining areas. The first one was the introduction of foreign multinational companies into the local mining scene. These new players brought along new technologies of mining, increased demands for land and other natural resources as well as new labour practices into mining areas. In Tarkwa for example, the acquisition of Tarkwa mine by Gold Fields Ghana, not only meant new management style in place, but also introduced surface mining based on hauling and heap leach methods, that had a gross demand and impact on land resources (WACAM, 2005). The reform processes provided concessions (see box 1) to attract foreign investors who also enjoyed relative power based on the legal right to land under contract in these areas. The first impact was on the land question where close to 12 villages needed resettlement (GFG, 2007) to pave way for these new mining methods. The immediate consequence therefore was the transfer of land ownership from the communities to the mining companies. According to the Minerals and Mining Act (703) – Section 72, the owner of the mining right holds the right to use the land under contract for purposes he deems fit according to his contract’. The implication of this legislation is that irrespective of the amount of land under contract, the mining companies have the

power vested in the mining right to deny access to any other user, even if the land is not under active mining at that point in time (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

Box 1-1: Favourable Fiscal reforms and Concessions for Increased Foreign Investment in Ghana's Mining Sector
<p>One significant aspect of the reforms is the fiscal liberalization of the mining sector through various provisions of PNDCL 153 and its amendments, PNDCL 122 and L.I. 349. The Minerals and Mining Law provided a wide range of concessions to investors. For example, a holder of mineral rights should be granted the following benefits: Exemption from payment of customs import duties in respect of plant, machinery, equipment and accessories imported specifically and exclusively for the mineral operations and may after establishment receive additional relief from payment of customs and excise duties as provided in the Mining List;</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemption of staff from payment of income tax relating to furnished accommodation at the mine site; • Personal remittance quota for expatriate personnel free from any tax imposed by any enactment for the transfer of any external currency out of the country; • Exemption from selective alien employment tax under the Selective Alien Employment Tax Decree, 1973 (N.R.C.D. 201);
<p>Deferment of the payment of registration and stamp duties for a period not exceeding five years, to be granted by the Minister for Finance in consultation with the Minister for Mines and Energy, where they are satisfied that the circumstances prevailing at the time of the application for the benefit, justify such deferment. One most significant feature of the Minerals and Mining Law is the scaling down of corporate income tax liability and the provision of more specific fiscal allowances that aim to reduce the general tax liability of mining sector operators. For example, corporate income tax, which stood at 50-55% in 1975, was reduced to 45% in 1986 and further scaled down to 35% in 1994. Initial capital allowance to enable investors to recoup their capital expenditure was increased from 20% in the first year of production and 15% for subsequent annual allowances in 1975 to 75% in first year of operation and 50% for subsequent annual allowances in 1986. The royalty rate, which stood at 6% of the total value of minerals won in 1975, was reduced to 3% in 1987. Other duties such as mineral duty (5%), import duty (5-35%) and foreign exchange tax (33-75%) that prevailed and contributed significantly to government revenue from the sector until the reforms were all scrapped. Apart from these, a holder of a mining lease may be permitted by the Bank of Ghana to retain a minimum of 25% of the operators foreign exchange earnings in an external account for the purpose of procuring equipment, spare parts, raw materials and for dividend payment and remittance in respect of goods for expatriate personnel, among others. Each company negotiates directly with the government the exact percentage that can be retained outside Ghana. The balance of revenues is returned to an account with the Central Bank of Ghana to cover operating costs, further capital expenditure and taxes etc. In addition to the law, the Bank of Ghana also guarantees the holder of a mining lease the ability to convert cedis to US dollars for the following purposes of distribution of either dividends or net profit resulting from investment made in Ghana with a convertible currency. Remittance of funds resulting from the sale or liquidation of assets, operations or interest associated with investment. Typically, gold is sold directly to refiners in Switzerland and the revenue is held in an account there. All these reforms have contributed to the influx of foreign investments in Ghana and also a drastic flow of foreign investment funds</p>
<p>Source: Akabzaa, 2008; 34</p>

The impact of this new ownership arrangement is that it created a new power balance in mining areas, with mining multinationals assuming a place of influence based on the legal right to mine. While traditionally, the village chiefs (Odikro) did play a key role in managing village farm lands as custodians, the influx of multinationals and their large scale demand for land excludes Odikro as negotiations are restricted to the legal owner of the contract and the government. Dummet (1980) argues that traditionally, the village chiefs (*Odikro in the Western Region*) played a key role in allocating land for any investment in rural areas. After independence, the government acquired most of the mines though local control was left under the jurisdiction of traditional chiefs. Under the new Law after the reforms, all mineral-land is vested president in trust for the people of Ghana, meaning that the president has the legal power to acquire any land deemed viable for mining and also issue mining contracts on the same land to an investor (Akabzaa, 2000). The partnership between the government and foreign companies in mining areas isolated the chiefs and created a new pattern of social exchange and interactions, as we shall see in other chapters of this thesis (Dummet, 1980; TWN, 2004).

The reforms after 1986 also created spaces for new technologies, which brought along a new power dynamic in terms of social actors in mining areas. The new technologies were introduced as through foreign mining companies and investors whose goal at that time was to increase production of minerals for profit maximization (see Aryee, 2004; Ghana Chamber of Mines, 2003; Minerals Commission, 2007). Besides achieving this goal as we have already discussed, the introduction of new technologies, meaning new mining methods and demand for new skills shaped the social characteristics that currently influence decision making in mining areas (see later in chapter 4 and 5).

For example, the introduction of cyanide heap-leach and bio-oxidation made viable the processing of low-grade material, reducing the amount of waste. This however made the mining, exploration and gold processing procedures more complex (US-EPA, 2004). For the first time in Ghana's mining sector, cyanide was used to amalgamate gold from the mined ore. These new methods of mining required specialized skills, new regulations as well as expert knowledge to deal effectively with the problems associated with the shift (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

The immediate changes in mining areas was evidenced by the high in-migration of prospective or potential skilled labourers seeking to fill the jobs created by the new approaches to mining. As a consequence, local communities employed in large mines are retrenched because of their limited knowledge and skills. On the other hand, the need to generate a knowledge base on these new technologies as well as an expert pool to fill positions within the mining companies, creates space for universities for example UMAT to be established in the area. At the same time, new technologies create social and environmental problems that are new to such areas. A good example is the cyanide spillage, which by the time the first one occurred in 1998, there wasn't any legislation directed towards management of this highly toxic component (EPA, 2005). The increase of unknowns within the mining areas created space for the emergence of experts, both within government for example the EPA, non-governmental agencies for example Centre for Environmental Analysis and other academic institutions. The influx of skilled labourers, experts and scientists from Universities brought a new dynamic in as far as labour divisions are concerned.

The social struggle that emerged as a result of these reforms was not limited to competition between experts and the skilled labourers, but also between the migrants who settle in these areas, with the hope of securing meaningful employment in the mines. Traditionally, mining operations relied on family labour and communities enjoyed good representation in terms of employment in these mines. Mining operations were labour intensive and did not require high skills and training as compared to the recent surface mining methods. Introduction of the new technologies and the influx of skilled labourers already create inequalities in terms of employment for the majority of local communities whose literacy levels are low (WACAM, 2004). The problem in such cases is compounded by the fact that land resources are not as abundant as before because of the more resource – intensive surface mines. Because of high wages and the lucrative nature of mining, agriculture as a mode of income generations has subsequently been abandoned. Unfortunately, the formal mining sector however cannot accommodate the majority of those seeking opportunities, relegating some to engage in the 'illegal' mining practices or remain unemployed (Akabzaa, 2000).

While discussing the question of illegal mining, the SAP part of the mining sector reform sought to contain what the World Bank referred to as the “Unregulated”, mining sector in developing countries (World Bank, 2002). In the Mining and Development Report of 2002, the Bank states that, the low gold grade from most developing countries is as a result of unregulated mining, mostly by the use of traditional methods or rudimentary approaches (MMSD, 2001). In 1989, Ghana government promulgated the Small Scale Mining Law, which continued the criminalization of any unregistered mining operations in Ghana, as the Mercury Ordinance of 1933 had done. Under this law, every small-scale mining operation had to acquire a licence provided by the Minerals commission (Small Scale Mining Law, 1989: Section 4).

To understand the impact of this reform process, it is important to place galamsey mining in perspective. Mining is a historic activity in Ghana, which as mentioned in section 1.1.1 dates back to the 12th C. Most of the small-scale mining activities were organized at village level and played a key role as part of the social, economic and political component as well as a way of life in traditional mining communities. The chiefs (Odikro) played a key role in identifying appropriate sites, sourcing for labour as well as making payments. By virtue of the fact that chiefs owned the land, in trust of the people most of the mining sites were in control ownership of the village chiefs who assembled labourers and determined the payment scheme. Together with his or her elders, the chiefs identified appropriate middlemen to market and sell the gold, while strategies for distributing benefits were established based on the customs of the traditional council (Dummet, 1980). Small-scale mining operations provided a source of income for the local communities, but also played a key role as a source of power and local control for the chiefs (Dummet, 1980).

The small-scale mining law of 1989 had a direct impact of this social structure and political set up. One, by banning any unregistered mining operations; they destroyed a traditional mode of life practiced by most mining communities even before independence. To local communities, galamsey work was part of their identity. Secondly, the law created opportunities for individual commercialization of mines in these areas, mostly by the wealthy local elite who could afford to pay the USD 15,000 registration fee (Small Scale Mining Law, 1989). These were individuals that, irrespective of where they came from originally, were able to secure mining rights on any piece of land and source for labour as well as use their own strategies to market and sell their gold. For those who could not afford this process, they were either relegated to working on the mines as

casual labourers, being paid on commission, or continue engaging in what is now referred to as *illegal* mining. While traditionally, the chiefs controlled revenues, the small-scale mining centre was established to play this role and that of the middlemen was taken over by the precious metals marketing corporation (PMMC).

The reforms also involved the establishment of government regulatory agencies to enforce the reviewed mining codes (see box 2). The World Bank's Mining and Development Report of 2002, in which the implementation of these reforms were documented, intimated that government's hope for transforming the mining sector in to a source for national wealth was through establishment of regulatory agencies to enforce the reviewed laws and hold the sector accountable. The formation of government support agencies to the mining sector comprised the second phase of the reforms was aimed at addressing the problem of increased environmental degradation and marginalization or impoverishment of mining communities. One key condition in the implementation of these reforms was that all these agencies should decentralize their operations, by having a physical presence in all the key mining areas.

Box 1-2: Mining Legislation and Subsequent Formation of State Regulatory Agencies

The Reforms led to subsequent establishment of legislation. These included:

1. Minerals and Mining Law was created in 1986 to enforce the attraction of foreign investment
2. Additional Profits Tax Law and the Minerals Commission Law of 1986 respectively; the Minerals [Royalties] Regulations, 1987 – to legislate on behalf of mining communities in terms of benefit sharing
3. Small-Scale Mining Law was created in 1986 to regulate and prohibit artisanal gold mining
4. Investment Promotion Act of 1994 to promote external production as well as financing of the mining sector. The formation of Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC)
5. The Environmental Protection Agency is formed in 1994 to ensure environmentally sound exploration programs.
6. Environmental Assessment Regulations of 1999 which makes EIA a priority for all mining investment programs

The following agencies were established to enforce the above legislation:

1. The Ministry of Mines and Energy. It oversees all the aspects of the national mining sector and gives mining exploration leases.
2. Minerals Commission [formed 1984] administers the Mining Act recommending mineral policy, promoting mineral development, advising the Government on mineral matters, and serving as a liaison between industry and the Government.
3. A Small-Scale Mining Department [1989] regulates and promotes small scale mineral production
4. The Precious Minerals Marketing Corporation [PMMC] 1989 for development of small-scale gold and diamond mining in Ghana and its trade.
5. The Ghana Geological Survey Department which conducts geologic studies
6. The Mines Department is the governmental authority established to deal with issues relating to mine safety.
7. The Environmental Protection Agency is formed in 1994 to ensure environmentally sound exploration programs.

Source: (Akabzaa, 2000:34)

1.3.1 Impact on Gold Production

The reforms discussed in this chapter did achieve positive results with respect to investor perception of the investment environment in Ghana and the volume and value of mineral output (World Bank, 2002). The country fast became a citadel of commerce and mining in West Africa. Internationally, Ghana is known now to be among a few selected African countries with the most attractive geological and investment environment. Comparative geological ranking of African countries placed Ghana second after South Africa and 10th in the whole world (Akabzaa, 2008:19; Gold Sheet International, 2007). The commercial, legal and political risk assessment by the World Bank (2002) was categorized as being good enough for large-scale investment alongside Botswana, Tanzania, Morocco and South Africa. A separate survey by the International Investment Conference indicated that the country had moved from 7th position in 1992 to 4th in 2002 on the list of emerging markets in Africa, with the explosion of local and foreign mining in the country an indicator of the success. In terms of actual statistics, there has been a fast growth of the mining sector and especially in terms of gold production and its contribution to government income (see table 1-2 below).

Table 1-2: Gold Mining Sector Performance (1986-2007)

Exports	1984	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Gold (US\$)	103.3	201.6	647.3	702.0	617.8	689.1	803.1	840.2	945.8	1277.25	1733.80
Total Minerals Export (US\$)	115.3	242.3	678.9	756.0	691.4	753.9	893.6	880.0	995.2	1371.7	1815.40
Total Exports (US\$)	567.0	896.7	1431.2	1936.3	1867.1	2015.2	2602.6	2739.2	2836.2	3726.7	4194.7
Minerals as % of Exports	20.34	27.5	47.44	39.40	37.03	37.41	34.33	32.10	35.10	36.80	43.30
Gold as % Total of Exports	18.22	22.48	45.23	36.26	33.09	34.19	31.90	30.7	33.30	34.30	41.30
Gold as % of all Mineral Exports	89.59	83.20	95.35	92.87	89.36	91.40	92.90	95.50	95.0	93.1	95.5

Source: Akabzaa, 2009; Minerals Commission, 2007

1.2 Impact on Land and Water Resources

While the reforms contributed to increased mineral production, there was and is growing concern about the state of the environment, which the communities rely on, for their food and income. Akabzaa (2000) argues that the flip side to the mining boom in Ghana has been the increase in cases of negative social and environmental effects of mining (World Bank, 2002). He states that, despite the elaborate reforms in the sector and increased foreign investments, the mining sector continues to destroy land and water, which local communities depend on for their livelihoods. The social and ecological effects of mining in Ghana's mining sector are well documented and largely understood. Academicians, NGOs and media practitioners (See Akabzaa, 2000; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Akabzaa, 2008; Action Aid, 2006; Oxfam International, 2003; MMSD, 2001, Various local and international media groups, etc) have covered the topic quite well and there is very little argumentation on whether or not the extraction of minerals causes negative consequences of mining. From these reports, analysis and my own field experience, land and water are the main casualties of any mining operation, which has far reaching social and economic consequences to mining communities (Volker, et al, 2006; Akabzaa, 2000; MMSD, 2002; World Bank, 1992).

1.2.1 Water Pollution Effects of Mining

Due to the technological changes in third world mining sector, chemicals such as cyanide, mercury, and sulphur dioxide are now a common component used during ore processing. These chemicals constitute a major pollutant of surface and ground water in these countries, with a direct impact on the availability of safe water for domestic or non-domestic uses. Chemical pollution of water also occurs through the misuse, mishandling and poor storage of explosives. Besides the chemical components that pollute water, heavy metals from mining operations contribute to water pollution. The presence of such heavy metals above the normal threshold can be injurious to human health and the environment, particularly aquatic life. The main concern of the communities has been potential cyanide pollution of surface and ground water resources by large-scale surface mining operations (Akabzaa, 2000). Samples taken from a stream in the Teberebie village resettled by GFG confirmed the community's concern about water pollution. The stream draws its water within the concessions of GFG. Analysis of the sample showed augmented levels of cyanide matter (126 counts/100ml), suspended solids (16mg/l), and low pH of 5.11 (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001: 48).

Table 1-3 below shows that between 1986 when the reforms were implemented to the period, 2007 when I completed my fieldwork, a total of 8 major cyanide spillages were reported to have occurred in mining areas of Tarkwa District (EPA, 2007). A singular case of a spillage that occurred in Tarkwa was the one in 2001. A detailed analysis of this case is made in chapter 4. In short this spillage occurred from GFG containment pond leaked into the river causing death to fish and a health risk to the communities who consumed the water. Because of the danger posed community members did not use the river for domestic or non – domestic users. The company responded in a very casual manner promising to provide alternative sources of water in the form of boreholes and wells. This was perceived as an attempt by the company to shy away from taking the full costs of their actions and actively engage in addressing the issue of mining and its impact on water resources in the area. After two years of protracted protests and negotiations, the affected communities with support from local and international NGOs reached an agreement for compensation with GFG. One of the items of compensation was provision of boreholes. Sadly enough and as we shall see in chapter 5, most of the wells remain in deplorable condition and are as heavily polluted as the stream. For instance, none of the six wells at Abekoase and Huniso villages are in satisfactory condition. Similarly, wells at Tebe, Pepesa and Samahu produce very little water due to a lowering water table. The communities without alternative sources of drinking water continue to depend on the polluted Arsuman River, posing a great risk to their health.

Table 1-3: Number of water pollution related incidences in Tarkwa (2003-2007)

Water Pollution Incident	Number of Reported Incidents	Year when incident was reported	Mine Owner
Cyanide spillage	1	1998	GFG
	1	2001	GFG
	3	2003	AGA
	3	2006	Golden Star Resources
Mining Concessions in Forested Areas	1	1998	GFG
	2	2002	AGA
	3	2004	Golden Star Resources
Cases of polluted underground water sources e.g. wells	Multiple	Various years	GFG, AGA, Golden Star

Source: Field Survey, 2007; Akabzaa, (2000, 2001, 2004); WACAM (2004); TWN (2004); various local newspaper reports (see section under media reports in references), Ghana EPA reports

1.2.2 Gold Mining and Land

In addition to water, land is one most valuable capital for the people of Tarkwa. Inhabitants of Tarkwa rely on farming for food production and income generation. The crops grown include an assortment of vegetables, starches like maize, cassava and yams. Traditionally, the Western region has also been known for cocoa production as well as Palm Oil trees as the main cash crops. While local communities depend on land for their survival, large-scale mining companies rely on the same land for their mining activities. According to Akabzaa and Darimani (2001), considerable areas of land and vegetation in Tarkwa have been cleared to accommodate large-scale surface mining activities. His study on environmental impacts of mining in Tarkwa in 2001 showed that, surface mining concessions have taken over 70% of the total land area of Tarkwa. To place this discussion in perspective, it is important to draw a comparison between an underground and modern (post-Reform) surface mine in as far as land demands are concerned.

In Tarkwa for example, after the reforms, all the mines acquired from the government adopted open cast, surface methods of mining. In underground mining, shafts were drilled underneath the earth protecting the fertile top surfaces for farming and other land related uses. In this case, underground pits were not resource intensive, as 99% of the mining takes place underneath the earth surface (Project Underground, 2004). Surface mines on the other hand demanded large tracks of land. When the Tarkwa mine was acquired for example, 12 communities were displaced to accommodate mine development which includes the construction of heap leach facilities, tailings dams, open pits, mine camps, roads as well as resettlement space for the displaced communities [GFG, 2004].

Table 1-4: Land related Cases in Mining Tarkwa's Mining Area (1998-2006)

Land Related Issue	Incidents Reported	Year when incident was reported	Mine Owner
Community Displacement without resettlement	2	1998	GFG
Community Relocation, Settlement without proper compensation	5	1998, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2007	GFG, AGA
Reported conflicts between Galamsey and large scale mining company security over mining land	7	1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2007,	Golden Star Resources, AGA, GFG

Source: Field Survey, 2007; Akabzaa (2000, 2001, 2004, 2009); CEPIL, 2004, WACAM, 2004, EPA Reports, GFG – Various Reports, Various local newspaper articles, online sources

1.3 Changing Social Dynamics and Patterns of Benefit Distribution

At a glance, this chapter shows that the reforms as implemented in Ghana were largely foreign driven. We have seen how the World Bank and IMF induced the SAP with a primary goal, to serve the interests of the global gold market, but not necessarily the societal and environmental concerns of local communities (Akabzaa, 2009; Coakley, 1999). In addition, this chapter also demonstrates the changes in terms of social characteristics in mining areas, particularly the influx of NGOs, academic institutions, government regulatory agencies, mining multinational companies and local migrants who continue to play a key role in the decision making processes in these areas. Another conclusion, which is drawn from this discussion, is the observation that despite the attempts to reform the legal mining sector of Ghana, social conflicts as a result of increase in environmental degradation and unequal distribution of benefits have been on the increase. In the following brief sections, I connect these conclusions, especially the last two, which then sets the foundation for chapter 2, which looks at the theoretical perspectives that have guided social science research on third world's mining sector.

Changes in Social Dynamics

From the chapter we also observe a rapid change in the local dynamics and emergence of societal actors, all seeking to establish a presence and represent their interests in mining areas. The reforms conditioned mining countries like Ghana to provide favourable fiscal investments, concessions as well as conducive legal and political environment to attract foreign investments). In addition, the reforms were also aimed at developing governmental agencies or support institutions in the mining sector to ensure sustainable development of Ghana's mining sector on an environmentally sound basis through the application of improved technology and strengthened regulation (World Bank, 2002:34). As a result of these reforms, agencies like the minerals commission was established as a one-stop shop for mining operations and the EPA as the agency charged with the responsibility of ensuring that environmental principles are upheld within the mining sector. In addition, the Geological Survey Department, the Chamber of Mines, the Mines Department, the Lands Commission, Land Valuation Board and the Forestry Commission were integrated as regulatory and support agencies with varying roles in Ghana's mining sector (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Ghana's Mineral Commission, 2007).

As new technologies were injected into the sector, the need for new skills and knowledge created space for expert in the form of labour as well as academic practitioners in mining areas, introducing a new interest group to the sector. NGOs have also established a presence in mining areas, acting either on behalf of mining communities as lobbyists or collaborating with companies as contractors to implement corporate social responsibility programs. The mining reforms in Ghana have therefore played a key role in providing spaces within which the local social dynamics in mining areas have been shaped. As we saw in this chapter, influx of mining multinationals for example creates a new power balance, just as government agencies do. Mining areas have therefore evolved into a negotiation space or arena defined by multiple actors. These actors play various roles and represent varying interests, which is vital as we try to understand the state of resource use and benefit distribution in mining areas.

Resource Use and Struggle for 'Scarce' Benefits

In section 1.2, I showed that despite a focus of legal resource governance and reforms within the mining sector, social and environmental problems were on the increase in mining areas of Ghana. Land and water related conflicts due to competition of these resources and destructive nature of the mining sector respectively, became a common feature. The MMSD Project results of 2002 found out that mining reforms in Africa, had been successful in propelling Ghana into a gold giant in the world, but had failed to ensure a conducive environment for protecting local communities, who inevitably suffer the effects of mining. In this report, MMSD also finds that, the success of the mining sector was falsely measured in terms of the royalties, foreign exchange income and other revenues paid by mining multinationals directly to the company or after export of gold, but not necessarily the amounts that trickled back to the local communities. A research study conducted by Action Aid in 20 mining countries produced shocking revelations, which indicated that mining communities contribute still lag behind in terms of individuals residing under the poverty line, despite the amount of wealth contained in these areas. In Tarkwa for example, these report indicated that compared to the rest of the Ghanaian communities, the Wassa West District which is awash with mining activities has over 56% of its population residing below the poverty level. The illiteracy levels are an astonishing 67% and unemployment levels are high too. In the same report, Action Aid reveals that, most of the benefits made available to local communities either through compensation, resettlement fees, community development funds or projects under corporate social responsibility programs do not seem to be accessed by the majority of the poor sections of the communities. Two key findings are therefore uncontested in the literature and have greatly influenced social science research in mining areas of the third world.

One, it is rarely contested that mining operations do cause negative social and environmental problems in mining areas (Akabzaa, 2008). Secondly, it is generally agreed that the benefits or opportunities for economic growth promised by mining (e.g. employment, social or economic development programs) remain unequally / unevenly distributed, with the majority of mining communities on the losing end. Local communities do lose out on the benefits emanating from mining operations, while they continue to suffer under the pressure of the social and environmental problems associated with the extractive industry (Ballard and Glenn, 2003; Gadzekpo and Waldman, 2005). This has prompted some to argue that the mining sector in Ghana, just

like many mining countries remains more a curse to the majority of local communities than a treasure (see Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Asklund and Eldvall, 2005). The only dispute however, is the explanations behind this explanation. This dispute between social scientists trying to explain the theoretical perspectives underlying exclusion and marginalization of community and environmental interests in developing countries provides the focus of my chapter 2. In that chapter, I review the perceptions of three main schools of thought that have shaped social science research in mining areas and played a key role in determining policy debates in these areas.

CHAPTER 2 UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF MINING BENEFITS: Theoretical Dilemmas

For a long time, social science research in third world mining countries has focused on seeking to provide possible explanations behind the growing ecological problems associated with this extractive sector. Social conflicts have been argued to emanate from an increase in environmental degradation leading to resource scarcity, competition and hence conflicts. Current theoretical and empirical evidence continues show a different picture. This argument which is fronted mostly by political ecologists is that, natural resources on their own, however, do not cause ecological problems or conflicts, but their interaction with human activities (through various sectors of society), driven by various societal actors generate possibilities for environmental degradation, or even conflict (Brannon and Collier, 2003). With this argument, researchers have engaged on a journey to conceptualize, hypothesize and provide explanations behind the unequal distribution of benefits within the mining sector, not as a failure of legal governance regimes or growth in environmental problems related to the sector, but largely because of the demand and struggle to gain control and use these valuable resources by various societal actors. This argument has generated a growing interest not just in the links between natural resources and conflict, but also the linkages between various aspects of society and resource control and use. To better understand this theoretical perspectives, it is important that I discuss the a few other schools of thought that have influenced and continue to play a key role in shaping social science research on third world mining areas.

This chapter is therefore a review of the state of the art on mining in developing countries and focuses mostly on scholarly perceptions of the nexus between natural resource use and human interaction. Scholars have engaged in studying the impact of human interaction with ecological resources, which make massive contributions to conceptualizing the cost – benefit mismatch in mining areas. With a purposive bias towards research in Sub Saharan African (SSA) mining countries, these analyses provide a journey that perceptions of ecological problems associated with mining have undergone in the literature and some theoretical explanations to why local mining communities seem to languish on the losing end, while other minority groups continue to reap the benefits from this lucrative sector. In so doing, some of these perspectives have been used to explain why the mining communities remain extremely marginalized from mainstream development and show low probabilities for emerging from this unfortunate cage.

2.1 Colonial Legacy argument

Colonialism has never escaped the eye of researchers in discussions on the dynamics of SSA, particularly regarding the control and use of natural resources. Three central arguments have been advanced by authors who use the colonial legacy argument in understanding the cost – benefit dilemma in mining countries of the South.

One, Suliman Mohammed and others posit that colonialism led to the profound breakdown of local social structures and political systems that had previously ensured distribution of resources at local level (See Suliman, 2003). This was a strategic choice by colonial administrators who by default established thin centralized decision-making regimes around the governor and ensure strict control of valuable resources and labor. To purchase their social license and reduce risks of local resistance, they co-opted traditional chiefs and also selected some foremen purely for administrative purposes to exercise control on their behalf (Meredith, 2003). The British in particular, favoured a system of indirect rule, using African authorities to keep order, collect taxes and supply labour. The result was an erosion of local institutions of decision-making; as Turrey has argued, these administrators or chiefs emerged as a class of intermediaries paid to transmit government orders, hence becoming agents of colonial rule. The role they played was therefore far removed from their traditional position of protecting the interests and resources of their subjects.

Secondly, Asombang posits that the advent of colonialism in Africa was ushered into an era of resource-intensive “development”. This is because colonial regimes had a fixed term in each territory and their policy was very much geared at the realization of short-term commerce for their home economies after the war, through the exploitation of territorial resources and local labour. They argue that this resource- intensive approach was supported by the administrative approach as defined above, and after gaining political independence, African countries followed the same patterns of concentrating certain resources close to the ruling elite and excluding the masses to share worst resources. The activities of colonial land speculators and gold explorers in the Wassa West Region of Ghana, for example, allude to this case and the central location of the administrative staff of the governor in Sekondi, which is argued to have been awash with beauty in addition to other natural resources underneath.

The 3rd argument around colonialism and how it has been used to explain the cost – benefit mismatch in the mining sector of SSA countries is in regard to the technological change in gold mining and processing methods, and how this demanded special skills, thus influencing labour movements. Instigated by the works of Raymond Dumett's on gold mining in West Africa, the focus was on the impact of the introduction of underground shafts, as opposed to the African alluvial mining as a new technique and mining method. Dumett's like others (See Ballard, C & Glenn, B., 2003) posit that the introduction of underground shaft mining by the British colonialists in the Gold Coast created a new class of elite labourers in the region, destabilizing the wage structure as well as the local governance powers that heavily relied on control of resources and labour.

In mining African countries, introduction of underground shafts (was very labour intensive) meant that the colonial owners would demand more labour (e.g. Terray, E., 1974 & Austin, G, 2004). This way, they were forced to tap labour--at times using force from those miners working in alluvial sites owned by the African mine merchants and chiefs. This had double impacts: On one hand it destroyed the mining pattern, where labor was organized around family lines and where payments were organized based on family needs and village demands as a whole. Principles of individual wage negotiations were introduced especially as skilled African miners were recruited as foremen in colonial underground shafts. In argument two, colonial regimes gained control of valuable resources, and by introducing new technologies, they got their control of the labour as well as skill, both of which destabilized patterns of sharing and/or distributing benefits. Wilks (1975) adds that in situations where colonial regimes failed to secure sufficient labourers from within a given community, they imported labour from neighbouring regions in the form of slaves, or trained experts from Accra, for example, causing social problems regarding access to social rights land in the new villages. The introduction of expatriates as land speculators, mine prospectors and machine operators also played a key role in shaping a new social order in mining areas to date, visible in the rivalry between local and expatriate mine workers (McCaskey, 1984).

These three arguments are not only crucial in understanding the historical influence of colonialism in mining countries, but also some realities that exist in SSA mining countries that inherited administrations and policies left behind by colonialists. More contemporary African writers (see Mohammed Suliman, 2003 & Mahmood Mamdani, 2001) on Colonial Legacies have argued that post-independent African governments that

inherited such administrations by default, found themselves perpetuating the same colonial approach to governance. Mamdani, in his book, **Citizen and Subject** Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late colonialism, asserts that post colonial African regimes have created a society of “citizens” on one hand and “subjects” on the other (1996)--just like the colonial regime did. The “citizens” have access to decision-making power, and are able to influence and enforce norms, and hence to determine who accesses what and how; the “subjects” are basically conformers or *legitimizers* of the citizens’ actions. He argues further that the small educated elite produced during the colonial rule assumed power through struggle, but quickly became preoccupied with their own status, seeking to make individual gain as well as allocate massive resources to their allies too. This penetrated to local areas where post-colonial chiefs and their allies transformed into a local elite and an interest group that influences norms and monopolizes decision-making power to meet their individual interests, and not community interests.

These arguments provide some insight into post-independent colonial legacies and probably some insights into why existing post-independence regimes have failed to guide the process of benefit distribution to ensure equitable growth. Assuming that rules or legislation are norms of the game, proponents of the colonial legacy argument have argued that since the post-independence policies were a cut-and-paste of the colonial regime which was coined very much at meeting the strategic interests of the colonial masters, - the then owners of resources as well as the elite who controlled decision-making processes. These same policies have therefore been adapted and continue to advance the interests of those in power as well as the fellow allies at various levels of decision-making. The writings by Nkrumah and the Chiefs, for example, demonstrate how CPP--after forming the government in 1957--geared at reducing the influence and power of chiefs to put in place his political allies to control decision-making power at local level. Mamdani has argued that this is an example of “colonial” thinking that had adapted a new way of dividing and ruling as well as destroying existing systems of decision-making to exert influence.

Colonial legacy arguments therefore provide useful conceptual understanding of the distribution of benefits and costs in the mining areas, but largely fail to acknowledge the “inherent” power differences between various “individual” actors or “groups” of actors in decision-making spaces. While indeed policies or norms as rules of the game influence the allocation of benefits and can indeed determine who gets what and how, there are

individual powers driving specific interests that undermine the power of existing norms to influence decision-making. In addition, 50 years after independence in Africa, it becomes too late to blame the colonial regime exclusively, as other interests continue to play a central role in resource governance in the continent besides the colonial legacies. The role of Multinational agencies, Multinational finance institutions, NGOs, research institutions, the media, new technologies continue to enlarge the chain of explanation that is beyond the explanation by the colonial legacy position. William Ascher (1999) also believes that colonial legacy as an explanation might be outdated as it denies post independent African governments the opportunity to take responsibility as key players of decision-making and norm enforcement and that probably “self-reflection” and analysis of decision-making dynamics would provide a viable beginning to responsibility apportioning. Within my study however, colonial legacy arguments provide a useful social-political context as a background within which to understand my research area, especially the evolution of mining laws and policies, but not necessarily analytical tools for explaining the cost-benefit mismatch at local level mining communities.

2.2 Resource Scarcity and Resource Curse Debates

Besides the colonial legacy position--which shaped an era of research--discourse on resource scarcity and resource abundance has also been used to explain the cost-benefit mismatch in SSA mining countries. Starting with the resource scarcity debate--environmental stress and social inconveniences as driven by--among others--the works of Thomas Homer-Dixon. This debate has advanced the notion that unequal distribution of resources and benefits that accrue from the exploitation of resources stems from a wide range of reasons, the crucial one being environmental stress as a result of population explosion leading to increased pressure on available resources / benefits. In his award winning volume, *Environment, Society and Violence* Dixon synthesizes a wide range of international research projects in Africa to develop a detailed model of the sources of environmental scarcity and the social consequences that emerge as a result. Most of his work links environmental scarcity to population growth in sub-Saharan Africa, to show that scarcities (therefore unequal distribution of resources) stem from the degradation and depletion of renewable resources, the increased demand for these resources (because of population explosion), and/or their unequal distribution (Dixon, 2000). In his work, he links resource access and benefit distribution to the rational choice made by elites, competing over scarce valuable resources (caused by increased demand) and in the process excluding the vast majority from accessing the benefits.

While Mamdani would go ahead to directly critique Dixon's work using the colonial revelations on resource distribution, the latter's work has continued to influence research and practice in the field and is argued to influence policy at the higher level, given his ranking positions as advisor to the World Bank on issues related to Environment and Population Change. Mamdani (1996), for example, regards Dixon's findings as "simplistic" and argues that equating social and ecological costs emanating from resource use in Africa to resource scarcity and population explosion is failing to appreciate the context within which post-independence Africa is situated. As an extension to his work on citizens and subjects, Mamdani argues that unequal distribution of benefits--skewed access to resources--in Africa is a consequence partly of the colonial legacy inherited by present day Africa, and that analysis should be made with that in mind. According to him, resource-rich Africa does not provide the right context for the environmental stress or population explosion pictures as painted by Dixon. Akaabza (2001), writing on mining in Ghana, took case on a media report by the General Manager of a leading Mining Company in the Western Region when the latter argued that corporate social responsibility programs seem to fail to meet targeted results because of rapidly growing populations of rural mining populations.

The resource scarcity explanation exacerbated the debates on political elites who seek to exercise control over scarce resources at the expense of the majority of the populations. Proponents of the resource scarce school argue that the behaviour of elites who seek to control the channels of resource distribution are driven by a rational choice legitimized by the scarceness of the available resources in comparison to the demand at hand. Implicitly, their argument is that if there were reduced "mouths" to feed, the "cake" would be large enough not to warrant any "selfish" interests. The selfish interest, according to them, is driven by the scarceness of the resources or benefits to be shared as a result of the high number of people waiting to benefit.

Building from--or a counter to--the resource scarcity argument has been the resource abundance-resource curse position, adopted by many but advanced mostly by Ian Bannon, Paul Collier and Michael Ross, among others. Their central position has been that countries richly endowed with valuable resources tend to degenerate into social conflict or chaos because of the struggle between those few seeking to control the benefits from these resources, and those feeling excluded in the process. Unlike the resource scarcity agenda, these resource abundance proponents believe that the mismatch in benefit and cost distribution is driven pretty much by the greed of a few

owners of political, military or economic power, as well as the resistance ability of the majority of the aggrieved groups.

The greed versus grievance argument has therefore been central in explaining the resource curse link to mineral rich countries. The proponents of this school mostly allied to the World Bank (for example Bannon, Ross, Collier) have presented this argument as being key to civil wars in mineral rich countries like Congo, Sudan, Angola, Ivory Coast, to mention just a few. Bannon & Collier, in their book “Natural Resources and Violent Conflict”, argue that natural resources are never sole sources of conflict, but the presence of resource abundance provides an environment for greed to manifest, which then leads to grievance from those feeling marginalized.

According to their opinion, those in power driven by their greed for political hegemony use revenue and benefits from extraction of resources to broaden their influence within a given context. They could use military power like in the Congo in the 90s or Somalia over the black gold in the late 80s to oppress any resistance. The grieved groups on the other hand engage in mobilizing their power to counter the power of greedy. This chaotic process then determines who benefits and who loses as resource distribution is then locked in a battle between the two groups (Mansood & Tadjoeeddin, 2007).

By greed, proponents to this debate hold that the elite or holders of political power engage in competition over valuable resources with an aim to gain total control and hegemony over them and the benefits that accrue from them. This process, however, generates relative and this grievance generates conflict because of unequal distribution of benefits. While Paul Collier argues that it might be difficult methodologically to determine greed or grievance, he alludes to the fact that it's possible that when one is acting in grievance, one can easily be gripped with greed. This position is used to explain the emergence of rebels and warlords as victims of grievance, but operating as the greedy actors once they take over decision-making power (Peas, 2005). The opposition of the aggrieved and confrontation of the greedy leads to the collapse of the social construct which leads to the bust of the system, anarchy and then civil disobedience, environmental degradation and social erosion (Mansoob & Tadjoeeddin, 2007).

Both the “resource scarcity” and “resource curse” discourses have provided useful explanations for civil war in mineral rich countries of SSA, like the Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia and Angola. Given the militarization of natural resources, counter militarization through militia groups and respective warlords has generated useful analytical tools as social scientists have analyzed the nexus between mineral resources and conflicts, while economists have quantified the economies of war in mineral-endowed regions.

Placing the resource-scarcity and resource-curse debates within regions of peaceful coexistence and ever-growing democratic cultures becomes a mismatch and therefore fails to provide useful analytical tools. The identification of desire for political hegemony and how resources are equated to political and economic control are useful tools and concepts when undertaking any analysis on actor behaviour. However, the focus on force through militarization and resource benefits being used to fuel violence and civil war so as to maximize control, as has been advanced by this school, fails to integrate the broader picture of resource distribution that goes beyond war or violence. These iterative scholarly works on resource management and governance have not been in vain and definitely strides have been achieved in contributing policy options for managing natural resources in a sustainable manner.

2.3 Political Ecology Perspective

Political ecologists have also made strides in providing conceptual tools for understanding the cost-benefit mismatch in resource-endowed, mineral-developing countries. The central argument in political ecology is that the access, control and use of ecological resources generates varying--at times competing--interests from diverse actors, and that the process of meeting these interests is at the core of the cost-benefit mismatch dilemma. Implicitly, political ecologists believe that the costs and/or benefits of the use of ecological resources is an outcome of the interaction between the resource and human beings (as actors), and that this nexus has to be unpacked if one is trying to understand the ecological problems and unequal distribution of benefits in the use of any natural resource (Blaikie, 1985).

Bryant (1998) in seeking to understand the conflict between farming communities and the Tanzanite mines in Tanzania--asked four different groups to define what the word “sustainable” meant. In his analysis, it was clear that the word “sustainable” meant something different to a tourist in Tanzania than it did to the head of a female-headed

household in Bukoba village. With four different groups, he received four different explanations. His analysis further revealed that the definitions or positions from the four groups on their perceptions of what constituted “sustainable” was simply a product of the value they attach to nature, resources or how they perceive reality.

While very subjective, these perceptions depict a hidden message locked in the interests that a given resource generates, which influences how various groups interact with each other. Locked in one room, his position would be that the four would seek to change each others’ world-view of what “sustainable” is all about and--most importantly--would develop unique strategies to do this. Some will be easily convinced, while others would want to defend their position and worldview. This process of advancing one’s interests, defending or compromising them is what political ecologists refer to as the “politicized nature of ecological resources or the environment.”

The human and ecological relations are therefore shaped by the sense of contest, struggle and conflict between various “resource users” as actors, as they seek to meet their goals or interests (Watts, 1990). By politics, I align with (Paulson et al, 2003) who defines politics as “the processes, practices and mechanisms through which power in its multiple forms is wielded and negotiated” (p.209). The political nature of human – environment relations is based on the interests that a given resource generates between the various users. In this case, politics becomes a process in which actors partake and play a central role in seeking to achieve total control of the resource and benefit distribution power (Hurrell & Kingsbury, 1992). Political ecology takes substantial positions that shape the foundation upon which my thesis is theoretically built. These positions include:

2.3.1 Mining Costs and Benefits as Outcomes of the Actor Interactions

The works of political ecologists or proponents of the theory have focused fundamentally on the intricate roles of actors in mediating local, regional, and global forces to meet their desired goals (see Walker, 1991; Bryant, 1998; Robbins, P, 2004; Rebecca, R., 1995). The outcome of decision making processes as well as distribution of benefits are in their totality a product of the interaction between actors who are driven by varying and competing interests, while possessing different levels of power at their disposal. In their analysis, they develop a critique to the early thinking that emphasized the role of the structure as a determinant for change and individual action. In this case, the structure could be shaped by norms, rules, patterns of exchange and even daily routines (Durkheim, 1959). The structure is embedded at different levels – local, national

or regional and governs the behaviour and actions of individual actors. Political ecologists only acknowledge the role of structures in as far as they enable or constrain the actions of actors, but maintain their argument that the embeddedness of structure at different scales, makes it accessible to individual actors who are constantly engaged employing their agency to out-manoeuvre and seeking to overcome the constraints presented by the structure (Rebecca, R, 1995; 239). The scope of actors in this sense is not limited to the local arena, but to the national, regional and international scales where forces are either exerted or contained.

Within the scope of my study, I define **Actors** as individuals or groups who are driven by an interest (common or competing). Actors as discussed above possess unequal levels of power but engage in a struggle to influence the state of affairs (Laube, 2007: 19). Actors are driven to act by the interests that they possess (Long, 1984), but their ability to act, influence the actions of other actors and overcome any restraints or limits presented by their social context lies in the power they possess (Ensminger, 1992; Laube, 2007; Long, 1984). Ensminger defines this ability to act as an actor's bargaining power and could include, but is not limited to their material wealth, social position, economic wealth, and knowledge base among others. The process of one actor meeting their desired goal (s) at the expense of another's lies in the ability of that actor overcoming the resistance put forth as well as the limits presented by the social structure where they are situated. This leads to the next foundation of political ecology – unequal power and competing interests between actors.

2.3.2 Patterns of Benefit Distribution as outcomes of Unequal Power Relations

The second foundation of political ecology is that of differentiation defined by the unequal distribution of benefits and costs emanating from the access and use of local resources. Bryant and Walker dwell on the aspect of differentiation and while placing the agency of actors at the realm of it argue that the distribution of benefits or exchange of costs within a given local context is a product of unequal power relations between individual actors and not a product of the structures of resource exchange (Bryant, 1998, Walker, 1991). In the analysis of unequal distribution of costs and benefits, both underscore the notion of interests that drive individual actors to act in a given way. Interests according to Bryant (1998) are a set of desired goals or targets, which influences him or her to engage in certain actions. Interests according to him do not necessarily have to be objective to a group's concern as he argues that there is nothing like a societal interest, as each individual within a given group or society is driven by a unique interest,

subjective to his or her context of position at that point in time. Walker in his analysis adds that interests are not static but keep changing depending on various factors.

One, he argues that the context within which an actor is situated determines his interests which means that the same actor placed in a different setting would probably be driven by a different interest. Secondly, the cultural context, daily behaviour and routines of an individual actor shape his or her interests. A rural community describes a mixed cropping community and whose land is communally used and owned along family lines would seek to protect this identity despite pressure for modern individual land ownership and prospective benefits of large scale farming for example. Within the same setting however, the role of traditional rulers who gain their social position on the basis of the control they exercise over land and their subjects might be driven by a different interest. The differentiation of local actors on the basis of their interests goes hand in hand with their agency to meet and protect their interests. Each actor is a power holder and has the agency or ability to act in a particular manner. This power is not distributed equally based on many factors including, but not limited to one's social position, material wealth, family size, economic wealth, level of education etc. The ability of an actor to act to overcome either the resistance posed by actors holding competing interests or manoeuvre the constraints posed by the structures of governance or exchange, depends on the power they hold in relation to other actors within that context. According to Long & Long (1992), this process involves either actors negotiating or struggling leading me to the next political ecology view.

2.3.3 Negotiations / Decision Making defined as an Unequal Power Struggle

While Bryant (1998) and Walker (1991) focused on actors and their agency, (Lighthall, 2001), Roberts (1995) and Munton, et al, (1996) were more concerned with the ways in which actors positioned themselves to wield their agency to overcome either resistance from fellow actors or structural constraints and limits. As mentioned in earlier sections, political ecologists acknowledge the role played by structures, in as far as enabling or constraining actor's actions are concerned. They believe that structures indeed provide incentives for actions, but only to meet specific interests. Actors however develop strategies and engage in activities to overcome the limits that structures poss. The limits could be in the form of laws or regulations that limit the boundaries within which certain action is agreed or allowed. The limits could also be in terms of the social setting that determines or limits the ability or agency of an actor to mine. The possibilities of an MP in a local mining community for example to own a small scale mining concession is

much higher than that of an employed youth within the same community. This could be because the MP has financial ability, but also because he has access to decision-making or regulatory structures in charge of issuing small scale mining permits. In this case the young man trying to pursue his interest might be constrained by his cultural context. Despite the limits and constraints, actors still pursue their interests and develop strategies to achieve their desired goals. Both focusing on conflicts over land use and exchange benefits find that arguments for structural determinism, where *romantitization* of laws or norms as rules of the game that govern the behaviour of individuals and that ensures problem solving and conflict resolution is limited.

It is limited in their opinion because it ignores the influence of actors and their ability to influence outcomes. Actors, both powerful and less powerful engage in negotiations to arrive at outcomes as a process of resisting the limits of constraints put across by existing social or political structures. This struggles are not simply an indication of the decision making process, but also a demonstration of how outcomes are negotiated and power relations constructed (Rebecca, R, 1995; 242). Munton in a separate study working in the coalmines of Cumbria explores processes responsible for producing a more socially differentiated Cumbrian society within the context of emerging global mining boom. With a focus on the local level actor dynamics, he examines the ways in which actors employ power resources deployed at various scales to affect the course of resource distribution and exchange (See Rebecca, R., 1995). His finding and which is a crucial foundation of political ecology and of relevance to my study area is that negotiations or the struggle as defined in this chapter and as will be presented in my dissertation is a power contestation between actors trying to redefine and redistribute benefits and costs while establishing a new social exchange pattern (Roberts, 1995; 243). Munton, et al, (1991) however argues further that negotiation outcomes which are defined as power struggles between actors driven by varying interests involve the formation and corporation in power networks or coalitions, which leads to the following other key foundation of the theory.

2.3.4 Coalitions as Spaces for Mobilizing and Wielding Bargaining Power

Another view of political ecology and which builds upon the one discussed above is how individual actors engage in overcoming resistance from actors with competing interests or limits or constraints by the social structure. Marsden (1990) and Marsden (2003) in his studies in rural mining communities of Western Europe identified incidences of dependence and interdependence between various actors. Within a given local context,

he argues, multiple social actors are drawn to each other for various reasons. First he argues that networks arise on the basis of shared interests. This way forces are joined together so that a higher influence is lodged. Secondly, networks emerge on the basis of shared problems. During his research, a common problem generated alliances between actors who were able to define the problem in a similar manner. A common characteristic however of all the alliances that were formed was that they always demonstrated the unequal nature of power relations within the local context. Actors though sharing the same interest or driven by the same problem aligned themselves with other actors whom they perceived as possessing the agency to contribute towards meeting their desired goal.

Marsden refers to these coalitions as 'power networks', which he perceives as being dynamic groups formed and reformed, so that power relations and social differentiation becomes 'both an outcome and a platform for further social struggle and negotiation'. Coalitions therefore become the means by which actors construct and sustain negotiations and power struggles. New issues, new actors and new power struggles only contribute towards the formation of new power networks leading to further differentiations and patterns of exchange. A third category of coalitions, which is not directly linked to the political ecology school, is that of strategic groups as presented by Evers and Gerke (2005). Unlike the category presented by Marsden, where coalitions are formed by actors holding common interests, strategic groups are formed by actors who come from different social-economic backgrounds and possessing different interests. They however define a common problem out of any given issue and position themselves within a given context to pursue their individual interests. According to the strategic group theory, anytime resources within a society become available as a result of a power vacuum or through technological progress, organizational change or a change in the geopolitical structures, there is a possibility that new strategic groups will be formed (Evers & Gerke, 2005:4). Like political ecology, the concept of strategic groups is embedded in the paradigm of power (Evers, 2006:5). Strategic groups like other forms of coalitions have the power to shape society, economy and the political system in a way that the long-term optimal conditions for acquisition of resources are created (see Evers, 2005). The process of strategic group formation and how they shape conditions for pursuing individual actor interests applies to my study and will be demonstrated in chapter 5 of this volume.

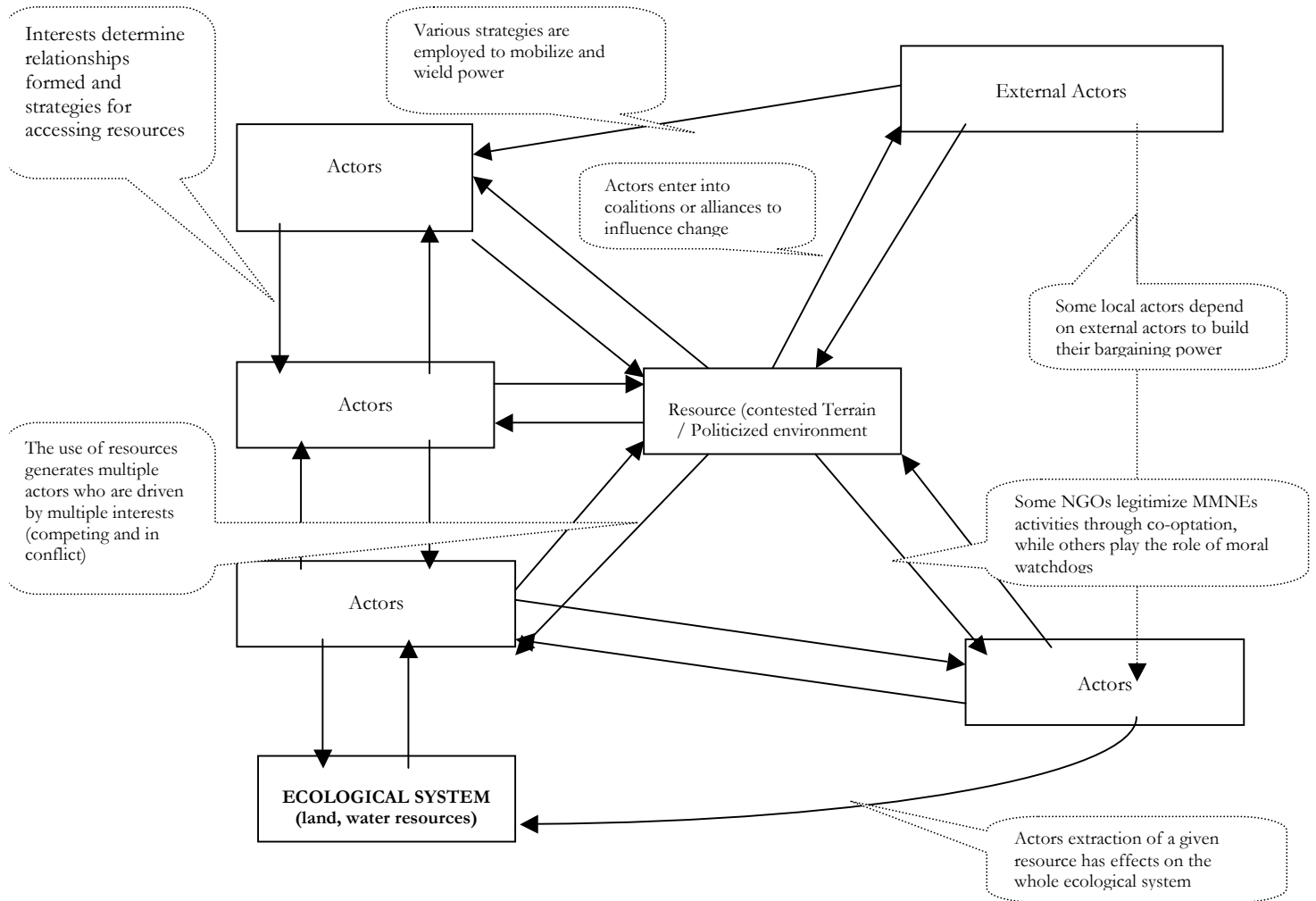
Conceptualizing a Negotiation Space (see diagram 2-1)

On the basis of this review, I do find that the theory of political ecology provides a better platform for unpacking the layers characterizing actors, their interests and power in resource management. Paul Robbins, a renowned Geographer and leading exponent of the political ecology school of thought coined the concept of “chains of explanation”, which is basically an arena of discussion making. The idea behind the chain of explanation is that each actor perceives or defines his or her reality differently. In his analysis, - Robbins argues that underlying every explanation is subjective perception embedded in a special interest that each explaining agent holds over the subject under explanation. The chains of explanation therefore describe the varying perceptions and interests by different groups of actors or interest groups, which needs to be understood if theory or research has to reflect reality. For example, a river carries different symbolic meanings to different people. For an investor, a river is a source of income as long as a dam can be constructed on it or whether portable irrigation pipes can be directed into the farms from at a few. For a religious leader, the river might be of cultural value, probably linked to ancestral heritage or site for worship and etc. These chains of explanation, which I define as negotiation spaces in my work provides the arena for contestation, where power is mobilized and wielded to influence decisions. Within these spaces, interests are articulated, coalitions formed and negotiations engaged. Raymond Bryant’s politicized Environment analogy is a similar perception of complex social realities where power relations between various societal actors can be investigated and their behaviour analyzed. Analysis of actor behaviour requires that the actors, their interests and power is discerned and understood (see chapter 3). Their interaction and bargaining strategies can be investigated within a negotiation setting (see chapter 4) and the influence of power to demonstrate how coalitions provide space for interest protect could be visualized in a project implementation or policy implementation setting (see chapter 5).

While political ecology as a theoretical foundation raises useful questions in as far as human relations with the environment are concerned, - its proponents are still faced with the challenge of conceptual tools for analyzing actor behaviour. Wakker (1999) has argued that political ecology lacks the methodological tools that a researcher can carry along to the field and this has also been pointed towards its relevance in policy change. I therefore borrow specific tools from the strategic group theory and actor oriented approaches as well as state-market-society relations to gain analytical tools and meet

specific research objectives. In the following chapter, I begin by mapping the key actors engaged in influencing the state of affairs in Tarkwa's mining sector. I perceive this area as a negotiation space defined by multiple players, representing varying interests.

Diagram 2-1: Conceptualizing a negotiation Space from a Political Ecology Perspective



CHAPTER 3 Actors and Interest Representation in Tarkwa’s Gold Mining Area

As discussed in chapter one, Mining areas like Tarkwa have experienced an increase in mining activities as well as an influx of other stakeholders after the reforms of the late 80’s in Ghana (see table 3-1 below). The areas experienced rapid growth in mining activities, especially those operated by the leading international multinational companies¹⁴ (Minerals Commission – Ghana, 2007). Besides the large scale mining companies, government support agencies, NGOs and Universities established a presence in Tarkwa. Each actor played a specific role and represented varying interests within the mining sector. In this chapter, I describe these actors including the roles they play and the interests they represent within the mining sector. In addition to the four above, I also describe the characteristics of the local communities in Tarkwa and how they interact within this changing social space. In my conclusions, I discuss the influence of this complex social space on the social and environmental problems associated within mining areas.

Table 3-1: Large Scale Mining Companies Operating in Tarkwa (2000 - 2007)

Company	Commodity Mined	Mine area	Type of Mine
Abosso Gold Fields	Gold	Abosso	Open Cast
Anglo Gold Ashanti	Gold	Teberebi / Iduaprim	Open cast
Gold Fields Ghana	Gold	Tarkwa, Damang	Open cast
Golden Star Resources	Gold	Prestea, Iduaprim	Open cast
Teberebie Gold Fields Limited	Gold	Teberebie	Open cast

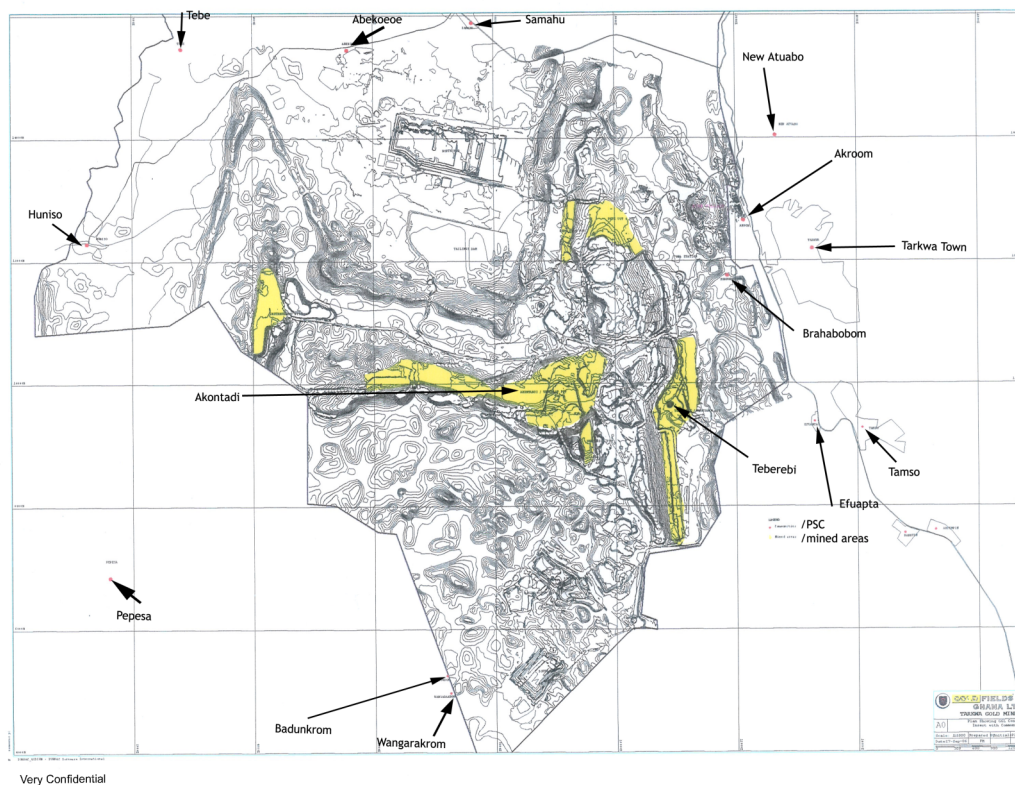
Source: Field Survey, 2007; Akabzaa, 2009; WACAM, 2006; Minerals Commission, 2007

¹⁴ Anglo Gold Ashanti (South African), Gold Fields International (South African), Golden Star Resources (Canadian), New Mount (American) and Australian Gold fields International (Australian) all fall in the top-five gold producing multinationals of the world with operations in all the leading gold producing countries (Goldsheet, 2009)

3.1 Local Mining Communities

Local mining communities are those whose livelihoods, economic activities or dwellings are situated within or in close proximity to mining sites or concessions (MMSD, 2005). The Tarkwa Mine, for example is surrounded by eight villages, namely, - Abekoase, Huniso, Samahu Pepesa, Tebe, Akoon, Brahabobom, and New Atuabo (see map below). According to a census undertaken by the EPA and Ghana Statistical Service, the population of these communities was estimated at 8,200¹⁵ (EPA, 2004). The inhabitants of these villages portray differing characteristics, which are crucial for understanding their interests as a key actor within the mining sector. Nyame et al, (2008) argues that local mining communities are heterogeneous in nature and are differentiated along cultural lines, but also in terms of the economic activities that they engage in. This differentiation plays a key role in influencing their interests within the mining sector and which is crucial to this chapter.

Map 3-1: Sketch Map showing Location of Local Communities around TGMC



Source: Field Survey, 2007; Confidential Source

¹⁵ These population figures are not consistent, as a census funded by UNFPA in the same year indicated a population of 10,000 for the same villages. The Ghana Statistical Service attributes these inconsistencies to the unprecedented migration in and out of the area. This view is shared by (Nyame, et al, 2008) who states that, because of growing mining activities in the area, potential job seekers, contractors, mine speculators and mine employees relocate into the area. It is therefore difficult to accurately monitor numbers settled in respective villages.

Ethnic Identities

According to the works of Dummet (1980), the early inhabitants of Tarkwa as a whole comprised of Wassa speaking people. This seems to have changed as I did observe a high ethnic mix within the villages, also reflected in various literature sources (Nyame, et al, 2008; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). In Abekoase for example, which was one my research communities; I observed that the village was highly mixed ethnically, with its inhabitants originally from the Northern, Upper Eastern, Central and Volta regions of Ghana. These regions not only speak different languages, but are also guided by varying local structures and economic practices. Various local dialects are spoken in this village, although *Twi*¹⁶ is the unifying language spoken by the majority, if not all Ghanaians. Nyame (2008) research work on migration in Ghana finds that ethnic variation in the country is much higher in mining areas because of opportunities and employment prospects created by mine development. He states further that while Ghana is, in addition to traditionally being a country of destination in the region, mining areas like Tarkwa are, becoming a transit area for prospective migrant miners, potential employers, job seekers and land speculators. Dummet (1980) shares a similar view though he argues that, this ethnic mix is quite visible during this era of large-scale privatized mining where labour is not restricted to neighbourhoods or families as it was during the olden days. His position is that, demands for skilled labour in the mines has created an opportunity, not just for the *galamsey workers*, but also educated Ghanaians seeking to tap into the employment opportunities.

Because of this ethnic mix, the communities around the mine can be described as comprising of both indigenes and migrants (Ghana Statistical Services, 2004; UNFPA, 2007; Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). The indigenous villages are those occupied largely by the Wassa speaking people and whose heritage or family lineage is originally from the area. A chief of Huniso village, one of the more indigenous villages, mentioned that according to him, an indigene is anyone who could show that the graves of his or her ancestors or fore fathers are found in that particular village. In this case, the identity of the inhabitants is largely defined by family lineage, but not the duration that one has occupied the village as Nyame, et al, (2008) presents in his work. The ethnic differentiation of the villages plays a key role in understanding social dynamics within the mining sector.

¹⁶ *Twi* - The largest of the Akan group of languages, spoken chiefly in Ghana (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akan_language)

A good example of how this ethnic mix plays a role in decision-making will be discussed later in chapter 4 of this thesis, when I describe a community struggle for compensation after a cyanide spillage into a local water source. I assessed the opinions of the inhabitants from the affected villages to understand their perceptions of what an ideal compensation would look like. From the assessment, I did observe that most of the inhabitants of Abekoase village, which is predominantly occupied by migrants, preferred a monetary compensation. Secondly, most of my respondents also mentioned that they would have preferred to be resettled to a different location. The views from the other more indigenous villages like Huniso were different. Most of my respondents would have preferred that the river basin is restored and argued that the company should have invested in cleaning up the polluted water source. They were opposed to the suggestion by some inhabitants of Abekoase, that communities affected by the spillage should be resettled and given monetary compensation. They argued that the land upon which they resided upon was of sentimental value and resettlement was not an option. In addition, they held the view that monetary compensation will never be a sufficient replacement of the polluted river, which was not only a source of water, but also a symbol of spiritual wellbeing.

The perception that migrant communities in mining areas are driven the desire to make monetary gains can be misleading, because I do believe that some indigenous are also driven by the same goal. It is however logical to argue that the attachment that an indigene would have on the local resources, for example, land or water is higher than that of the migrant, whose original home is elsewhere. Nyame (2008) supports this view in his research when he finds out that most of the migrants are driven by the desire to accumulate wealth or material gain to largely support their families back home, and will seldom engage in activities that tie them down to their temporary environments. The ethnic differentiation among these communities also has a link to the economic characteristics of the area, as we shall see below.

Economic Differentiation

The majority of the inhabitants of the village depend on land for their daily sustenance as well as for their income (Ayling and Kelly, 1997). A GFG – Environment Impact Assessment Report of 1998 stated that the livelihoods of the inhabitants of Tarkwa could be categorized into either on-farm or off-farm. The report defines on - farm activities as those where land has to be tilled for production, while off-farm activities do not depend

entirely on land. This categorization is however confusing, as some of the activities identified as off-farm, for example *galamsey*, could be regarded as heavily dependant upon land too. Dummet (1998) however provides a much better understanding of the economic characteristics of in Tarkwa, by stating that all the inhabitants relied on the land for their food, but not necessarily for their income. He does not draw any categories, but states that land was critical to the survival of local communities, be it in terms of food production or income generation. The majority of the community members were either farmers or miners or farmer – miners (Dummet, 1980:45).

3.1.1 Small scale (subsistence) Farmers

Farming is the main source of food in this area. The crops that are grown include cassava, yams, maize and an assortment of vegetables. All these are produced on small scale on family or household farms, which depends very much on family labour. In some cases, large-scale farming also takes place, but in such cases its cash crops like Palm oil trees or cocoa that is grown. Such cases therefore call for additional labour, which is mostly sought from within the village. Besides growing crops, inhabitants also reared animals, which included; chicken, goats, sheep and pigs, but again this was done on a very small scale. (Dummet, 1980) argues that animal keeping was however not a strong economic activity among the inhabitants who were famous of their fishing prowess.

It is worth noting that the varying economic activities determine the interests of those groups that engage in them. In Tarkwa, I observed that this variation was did cut across the ethnic divide that I discussed in the previous section. From my study, I found out that my respondents who originated from other regions of Ghana or who were not indigenes for that matter, rarely engaged in large-scale farming. This generated various responses. On one hand, some of my informants argued that migrants seldom had enough land to till and would rarely have sufficient resources to engage in cash crop farming. Another view was that most of the migrants would rarely engage in economic or food production activities that require long term investments or long period of time, before producing returns. Both these views are valid, though I observed the second one much more. Most of the households that I visited which belonged to non – Wassa speakers, engaged in subsistence production of vegetables or maize, normally crops that grow within a very short time and which do not require very high investments. I did not come across any migrant who had invested in large-scale cash crop production for example. On average, it takes close to 5 years before a cocoa tree can produce for the market (Personal Communication, Land Valuation Board). Akabzaa (2000)'s work on

social and environmental impacts of mining in Tarkwa show similar results, though he attributes the concentration on small scale (temporary) farming activities to the restrictions by mining companies on communities residing on their concessions. For fear of loosing their investments during resettlement, he posits that most communities have resorted to small scale / subsistence to meet their daily needs, instead of cash crop farming which takes a while to bear fruit, and which according to the Minerals and Mining Act (703), 2006. From a legal perspective, his view is viable, but from my field observations, I identified close to 15 large-scale farms among the eight villages, and all these farms were owned by indigenes, with their workers comprised of a mix of both local and migrant sections of the communities.

Picture 3-1: Showing a the Assembly Man of Huniso on his Cassava Farm



Source: Photo Taken during Field Work 07.

3.1.2 Galamsey miners

Alongside farming, inhabitants of Tarkwa have a long history of alluvial mining, locally referred to as galamsey¹⁷. According to the chief of Abekoase village, galamsey mining still is a key source of income among the residents of Tarkwa and dates back to the 12th C, even before the coming of colonialists. They exploit marginal or small mineral deposits using traditional or rudimentary tools, which include; pickaxes and shovels, sluices and pans as well as simple equipment. The processing of gold is also simple where the ore is crashed, washed and amalgamated in mercury to extract the gold (Ayling and Kelly, 1997). This group of miners lack capital and their operations are labour intensive with low rates of recovery. They also suffer from poor access to markets and support services and have to depend on middlemen who facilitate the transfer of their goods to the market. Their operations are situated in health risk areas bearing a significant impact on the environment (MMSD Report, 2001). In Tarkwa, this practice is very historical and Dummet (1980) argues that most of the mining communities engaged in galamsey mining, a trade that was passed on through generations.

In Tarkwa I did observe that the galamsey were mostly young men, of working age, women and in some cases children who reside in the villages. The question of who engaged in galamsey work in terms of ethnic identity came up as has been in the literature. In the literature, it is argued that migrants do engage in galamsey work much more than indigenes (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; MMSD, 2002) I did observe the same pattern, but felt that this occurrence is not viewed in the broader mining perspective and changes taking place in the sector. Dummet (1980) attempts to do this by arguing that galamsey operations are not a domain of either migrant or indigenes, in any case, most if not all mining communities engaged in this exercise. Why studying the dynamics of mining areas in pre-colonial times, Dummet finds that indigenes engaged in mining operations on a seasonal basis, especially in dry seasons when there was not much to do on the farm. Labour was therefore organized along family lines and wages were paid in kind and were not negotiated on individual salary basis, but on the assumption that the returns should benefit the whole community. This however changed after independence, especially with the influx of large-scale mining operations.

¹⁷ A **galamsey** is a term given to a local artisanal **gold** miner in **Ghana**, West Africa. Galamseys are people who do **gold mining** independent of **mining** companies, digging small workings (pits, tunnels and sluices) by hand. Generally they can only dig to a limited depth, far shallower and smaller than commercial mining companies. Under current Ghana law, it is illegal for galamseys to dig on land granted to mining companies as concessions or licenses (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galamsey>)

According to the MMSD report of 2002 on small scale mining, the influx of large scale mining operations after independence in most developing countries changed the nature of galamsey work, as agriculture which was the main mode of food and income generation, became sidelined with reducing available land for farming as well as increased wages from the mines, that rendered farming less lucrative as compared to mining. Some local communities began engaging in galamsey operations as a dominant source of income and in some cases, to meet basic needs like rent, food and clothing (MMSD, 2002). Mining areas became an attraction for job seekers; land speculators as well as traders seeking to tap into the market provided by the miners and related activities. This notion however did not meet the expectations of all those who migrated into these areas, especially the less educated who could not secure jobs in the large mines that required skilled labour. The majority of the disappointed group resorted to the galamsey work, and played a key role in the number of migrants who currently influence galamsey work in Tarkwa, because of their success or assumed success in the trade.

Picture 3-2: A group of Women Collecting Ore at a Galamsey Mining Site in Tarkwa



Source: Field Work Photo, 2007

The galamsey miners are also not a homogenous group. They are stratified, based on how the trade is structured (see quote below)

“At the highest level, there is the concession owner. The owners are usually chiefs or big-men in government. Sometimes, the workers never know who the owner is. For our mine, we are told, that the owner lives in Accra. We have never seen him. Then there is the machine operator. He owns the machine normally the crusher, which is the most important tool for a galamsey work. In some cases, the machine owner also works as the operator, but over time, people are starting to lease their machines to wealthier individuals in communities. In cases where the machine owner is also a miner, he will recruit a member of his family as a machine operator, who also doubles as the operations manager. He is in charge of ensuring that all the ore is crushed. Next on the hierarchy is the individual in charge of gold processing. He buys and stores the mercury, which is used for processing gold from the ore. Finally, it's the workers. These are the majority on any site, and they engage in digging, shovelling and transporting the ore to the crusher. Most of the workers are casual labourers, paid on a daily basis” (Interview: Mine Worker)

Like any business or mining operation, galamsey work is structured with decisions being made at different levels of the operations. What my informant did not mention was the role of middlemen, who engage in marketing the gold to the market. These middlemen play a very central role, given that galamsey is legally banned in Ghana, under the Small Scale Mining Law of 1986. Anyone operating without a legal contract is therefore regarded as a criminal engaging in illegal operations. Because of their illegal identity, galamsey groups adopt a very informal approach to their work and are generally difficult to track down¹⁸ (MMSD, 2002).

Despite the illegal identity of galamsey miners, they do continue to influence decisions at the local level, as well as within the formal mining sector. I have already mentioned that despite the ‘illegal’ identity of galamsey operations, the gold produced still finds its way to the formal market. According to a chief in one my research communities, the government’s attempts to deal with illegal mining does not lie with cracking down on the miners, but cutting down the market chain mostly sustained by well-connected middlemen. This view is reflected in Andrew, J.S. (2003)’s work, where he concludes that, in as long as gold produced illegally finds its way to the legal market, the struggle to stomp out the practice will yield minimal fruit. In his view, powerful individuals within the formal mining sector, play a key role in ensuring that the gold produced through galamsey work finds market in the formal gold market. In Ghana, this role is played under the domain of the small-scale mining centre, which is responsible for marketing legal small-scale operations as well as collecting the gold for local consumption. My

¹⁸ It is difficult to get any official statistics galamsey, their numbers, financial gains or contributions to the local or national economy. MMSD report of 2002 estimates that there are a total of 200,000 galamsey workers in Tarkwa District only, but this cannot be verified from any other source

informants, mostly, local community members speculated that powerful individuals - who hold top positions in government, traditional councils and in mining multinationals, own these mining sites. Such individuals makes it difficult to effectively stem down on the influence of galamsey operations and keeps the local demand for gold, by acting as middlemen to the agencies responsible for mining. These individuals also keep the market chain for mercury open, despite the ban of 1943, which prohibits the trade and use of mercury in any mining operations.

At the local level, galamsey work continues to influence social dynamics based on its impact on resource use and standard of life. Some of my respondents argued that most young people engaged in galamsey, are driven by the prestige and high lifestyle that the miners enjoy. One individual mentioned that galamsey miners make close to USD 100 per day and since they appear to be guaranteed the same each day, they spend it luxuriously. Among the young people, this is an attraction. Ayling and Kelly (1997) in their assessment of small-scale mining operations in Ghana also finds a similar pattern and argues that, in most cases, the indigenes seem to accuse the migrants of neglecting environmental interests for monetary gain.

Galamsey miners are a crucial group of actors when analysing actor relations and dynamics in Ghana's mining sector. The Ghanaian government's attempt to legalize and formalize its small scale mining sector seems to be failing for capacity reasons, it is also true that in some cases galamseys relish the idea of operating informally or illegally (Hilson, G. and Potter, C., 2003). According to Hilson and Potter, illegality nurtures an identity that allows galamsey operators to ignore and or work outside of the formal legal framework respectively. Working outside the legal framework has a strong financial incentive to the galamsey operators as discussed in chapter 2 and also by avoiding regulation and participation in the formal sector, galamsey workers receive the sympathies of advocacy groups and other lobbyists who regard them as minority groups (Hilson, G. and Mohammed, S., 2006). According to a galamsey operator, registration of their business is a tortuous and expensive process – costly in both time and money, yet offering very limited incentives. *“De go chop our money for noting,”* states one of the operators in Pidgin English. As the government struggles to constrain and control galamsey operators, so do the galamsey reinforce their social position as an identity to reckon with within the formal mining sector? A case in mind is in 2007, when the government launched a campaign against the galamsey – dubbed *“operation flash-out”* which to date seemed to have generated positive visibility and increased the influence of

galamseys in the district instead of suppressing the activity. Galamsey operator's interests and needs have been taken up by local media and NGOs who argue that galamsey work like any other income generation activity is a livelihood sustenance activity and that any suppression or abolishment of galamsey work is equivalent to denying them their human right to live. This position reinforced the galamsey's local influence as communities identify with the activity that has shaped local mining communities of Tarkwa for centuries. Other than the support and collaboration with NGOs and other local communities, galamsey work serves the interests of other key actors, especially the chiefs who gain through the royalties, the government middlemen whose income depend on the unfinished productions of galamsey work, and the political, business and local elite who own the concessions that operate outside the legal mining framework. The interaction between these interests will be discussed deeply in the subsequent chapters.

3.1.3 Chiefs

Chiefs play a very important role in Tarkwa's mining sector. According to Berry (2001), the role of chiefs as custodians of land serves as the fulcrum of authority in rural and some urban areas of Ghana since land is one vital resource that determines the patterns of social and economic exchange. As we have seen in chapter one, land remains a central capital for mining activities as well as for local communities. With this in mind the influence and power of chiefs is set to grow in such areas. In Tarkwa, chiefs own, control, administer and manage land and other natural resources.

The chieftaincy institution is managed through a formal structure, with the Paramount chief at the helm. He is also the president of the traditional council, but mostly plays honorary roles. In Tarkwa for example, the paramount chief comes from the Bansa stool land, meaning that he lacks direct influence and control over the Awudua stool lands which Tarkwa and the mines belong to. The land in Tarkwa, and which most of the communities and mining companies inhabit, belongs to the Awudua royal family. The land under this family belongs to the Provincial chief or the Apintohene, making him an extremely powerful individual in the area. His office is responsible for negotiating and allocating land for any major investments, both public and or private within the area. The Apinto has therefore become one of the wealthiest individual in the area, due to the royalties and other fees payable to him as a result of various land use investments. At the local level, the Apintohene appoints village chiefs or Odikros whose responsibility is to control, manage and coordinate the use and distribution of any resources including land within the village on his behalf. Any local decision that needs to be made regarding

allocation of farming land, tenancy or distribution of labour is channelled through the chief who works with his elders.

In chapter 1, I described how the colonial and post-independent regimes attempted to suppress the influence of chiefs in mining areas. This was all in an attempt to gain total hegemony and control over these rich areas. At the moment, the chiefs still play a very central role, though their influence is undermined by an increase in conflicts of interests between and among the chiefs (Akabzaa, 2000). In some cases, the Apintohene's decisions have been perceived as being in conflict to those of his subjects. A good example recorded by Akabzaa and Darimani (2001) is in 1998, when the Apintohene supported the decision to relocate 12 villages in Tarkwa in order to create land for GFG mining operations. He supported this decision despite the risks identified in the impact assessment of resettlement. After the resettlement, many community members were not adequately resettled and did not receive farmland upon which to grow their food. In some areas, the relocated communities had to cover over 12km in search of water, because their new homes did not have a river or sufficient sources of water. The choice by the Apinto to support this move was perceived by community members as being driven by a selfish personal desire to make financial gains from the company. The same accusation is made of the Odikros, who seem caught in between the desire to serve the interests of the Apinto and that of the communities. In chapter four, I discuss a case of community struggle to gain compensation after a spillage occurred poisoning a local river source. While the Apintohene seemed inclined to supporting the interests of the company, some of the chiefs aligned themselves on the side of the communities. This however changed, when the Apintohene used his position within the chieftaincy hierarchy to demand that all chiefs respect the institution of chiefs and provide support to the company and government positions. The Apinto however commanded more influence over the indigenes of the area, whose chiefs were selected from within the royal families. In settler villages, this was different as the chief was appointed, more as a caretaker and did not enjoy the same privileges and entitlements as the indigenous ones. Odikros, just like the Apinto possess individual interests too, which excludes the general interests of local communities. These conflicts of interest and overlapping roles do play a key role in shaping local level decisions in mining areas. In chapter 4 and 5 we shall have an opportunity to place these overlaps in perspective through real case studies in Tarkwa

3.2 Government Regulatory Agencies

“..every mineral in its natural state in, under or upon land, rivers, streams, water-courses throughout the country, is the property of the republic and is vested in the president in trust for the people of Ghana (Minerals and Mining Act 703, - 2006: 1).

The government of Ghana plays a very central role in the mining sector of Ghana. This role is constitutional and legally empowering as indicated in the quotation above. Under the section on “Ownership of minerals and cadastral system”, the president has the power to unconditionally acquire any land that is required or deemed to be viable for mining investments. He is legally empowered also by the constitution to authorize compulsory occupation and use of such land for a period of time and also allocate mining rights to an appropriate investor. The government has however delegated responsibilities to various agencies that play various roles within the sector. Since the reforms of 1986 and the move towards decentralization, all the government agencies established a presence in key mining areas to ensure that mining operations are regulated. Tarkwa was an example of these areas, which besides being a district headquarter, its also host to all the key regulatory agencies (see table 3-2 below). These agencies are charged with various roles:

Table 3-2: Government Regulatory Agencies with Offices in Tarkwa

Government Agency	Year when Agency Established an Office in Tarkwa
EPA	1995
Small Scale Mining Center	1989
Minerals Commission	1987
Land Valuation Board	1990
Forestry Commission	1990
Water Resources Commission	2007

Source: Field Survey, 2007; Minerals Commission Website

The **Minerals Commission (MC)** is charged with the responsibility of regulating and managing the utilization of the mineral resources of Ghana as well as the coordination of policies that relate to the governance of minerals. According to Section 37 of the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006; a holder of a prospective license (see chapter 1) is only eligible to make a formal application for a mining lease from the Minerals commission after satisfactorily submitting accurate records showing the mineral content of the samples from the areas prospected. The MC assesses these samples for their economic viability¹⁹ before formally requesting the prospective investor to submit an investment plan. The investment plan is a detailed elaboration of the forecast of the mineral reserves

¹⁹ According to the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006, - a viable investment plan to be approved by MC is one worth USD 500 or above. Some respondents in the field however argued that the government has compromised on this clause to approve investments that are much lower than this figure (Field Notes, 2007)

in the area as well as the total amount that the company seeks to invest in the country (Minerals & Mining Act, 2006: Sec, 49). Most mining companies are forced to seek external financing from either their mother governments or other international financial institutions (World Bank, 1992). External funding is a norm among most mining operations because of the high minimum investment ceiling of USD 500 million set by the Ghanaian Government for a viable mining operation (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). In Tarkwa for example, the Tarkwa Gold Mining Concession has been funded by the International Finance Corporation, - the investment arm of the World Bank.

While the minerals commission evaluates the economic viability of the proposed investment, Ghana's **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** seeks to ensure that the implementation of environmental policy and planning is integrated within each proposed mining investment. The environmental policy and planning document is a policy guideline developed by both the Minerals commission and the EPA. It stipulates the minimum requirements that any proposed investment should demonstrate which cover aspects like waste management, tailings location, water recycling, among others (Mining and Environmental Guidelines, 1999). The environmental soundness of any mining investment according to the EPA in Tarkwa is determined by how a proposed investor integrates the various aspects identified as crucial in the policy and planning document into their environmental impact assessment²⁰ (EIA). According to the EPA in Tarkwa, the EIA should outline the environmental risks and social impacts of the proposed investment and which should be disclosed to the local inhabitants through a public hearing. After the public hearing and after consultations with local communities, the investor is required by law to draft and submit an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). The EMP is a legally binding document prepared by the investor and endorsed by the EPA, which provides proposed strategies for managing the environmental risks identified in the EIA. While this is the ideal scenario, a senior EPA official in Tarkwa argues that the political nature of contract applications is such that, by the time an EIA is being drafted, most large scale mining companies are already in possession of mining contracts, - making the EIA process a mere formality.

²⁰ An EIA is a document developed by the prospective investor outlining the social risks and the potential environmental implications of a proposed investment (Ghana EPA, 2007)

The EPA in performing its role within the mining sector depends on evaluations from other government agencies. The **Land Valuation Board (LVB)** is an advisory arm of the Lands Commission in charge of advising the government on all landed-property, valuations for rental, leasing, and rating and compensation purposes. The land requested for mining needs to be valued so that the investment companies can pay adequate taxes and compensations. In Tarkwa for example the most visible role of the land valuation board is not necessarily during the contract application, but mostly when there is a land acquisition disputes between a PSC and a mining company. According to the district land valuation officer in Tarkwa, the board under the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 Section 73 is charged with the responsibility of intervening in such disputes to provide official land and property valuation rates. According to LVB in Tarkwa, unless there is an extraordinary dispute over the value of land during a lease application, the role of the land valuation board is relegated to managing land acquisition disputes or disagreements between communities and the companies during mine expansion or resettlement.

In situations where the proposed mining investments are likely to affect a community or public forest, the **Forestry Commission (FC)** is approached to value the proposed damage and recommend whether the worthiness of the investment. While such cases are rare, legally, the holder of a mineral right shall have to obtain the necessary approvals and permits required from the Forestry Commission (FC) for the protection of forest resources (Act 703: section 18). The FC is therefore a government regulatory agency charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all national forests and wildlife resources are properly managed, utilized and adequately compensated when destroyed. According to the district executive of the Forestry Commission in Tarkwa, the commission comes into play mostly after the contract has been acquired and where mine expansion would require the depletion of a forested area. According to his records, all the large mines in Tarkwa are currently in their second or third phase and have in one way or the other affected the one time sprawling Tarkwa forest. According to the commission, a mining right holder is allowed to utilize the resources within his concession as he pleases which makes it challenging for the FC to intervene in case the area under the concession comprises of a forest as well (Field Notes, 2007).

Like forests and land, mining operations require vast amounts of water not only for their day to day running of their plants, but also for the gold processing. When negotiating with the government for a mining lease or contract, one central resource that the government has to guarantee the investor is water. In some cases, potential investors will need to divert water for their use. They might divert river flows or barricade streams to create their tailing dams and solution ponds. According to the law, such processes will require approvals and permits from the **Water Resources Commission (WRC)**. The WRC is legally mandated to regulate and manage Ghana's water resources and coordinate government policies in relation to them. The commission therefore issues the water abstraction permits to potential mining investors which then according to the Mining Act allows the holder of the mining license with the right to obtain, divert, impound, convey and use water from a river stream, underground reservoir or water course within the land under subject of the mining right.

3.3 Gold Fields Ghana Limited (GFG)

Gold Fields Ghana is currently the world's third leading extractor of gold, behind a fellow South African company, - Anglo Gold Ashanti. Besides its Tarkwa Mine, - GFG owns and operates gold mines in Peru (South America) and St. Elves in Australia (GFG, 2007). According to the company records, the Tarkwa mine is the company's largest investment standing on close to 150 hectares, in Ghana's Western Region. The company holds the longest mining lease in Ghana, projected to last for 28 years²¹. This, according to the Ghana Chamber of Mines, is reflective of the productivity and longevity of the *Tarkwarian ore*, which is the gold-holding rock predominantly, found in Tarkwa district (Dummet, 1978; Ghana Chamber of Mines, 2007). GFG's Tarkwa mine is located on 150 ha of land, which 8²² local communities, who depend on the same land for their survival. In some cases, the struggle for shrinking land has been a source of conflict as already discussed in earlier sections of this chapter. Gold Fields Ghana is positioned and embedded within the local context of Tarkwa and Ghana as a whole in a manner that makes it a key player in its mining space. In the following brief sections, I will discuss the some aspects or characteristics of GFG that have contributed to the social influence that the company enjoys in Tarkwa's mining space.

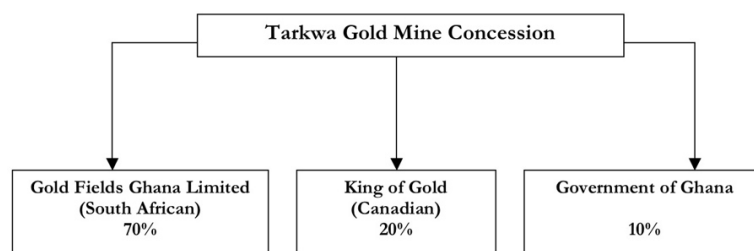
²¹ From a confidential source, I was informed that GFG submitted mine reserve and gold resource life projections of the Tarkwa mine concession, which indicated that the reserve will run out by 2022. This year is also projected by the US state geological survey department that monitors geological reserves in mining countries of the world.

²² The 8 include; Samahu, Abekoase, Tebe, Huniso, Pepesa, New Atuabo, Akoon, Brahabobom

3.3.1 Shareholding

In terms of share – holding on the investment in Tarkwa, GFG holds 70% of the total investment; a Canadian Mining Company owns 20%, while the government of Ghana retains 10% of the total investment (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Unlike many other mining companies that either depend on individual or private investment funds, the Tarkwa mine was funded directly under extractive development fund of the International Financial Corporation²³ (IFC). A total of 650 million USD was spent to acquire the Tarkwa gold mine from the then government owned State Gold Mine Corporation (SGMC), in 1994. So in addition to the relationship with the government, GFG is largely entangled with international finance institutions like IFC and the World Bank, which contribute to its social position.

Diagram 3-1: Tarkwa Gold Mine Concession Shareholdings²⁴



Source: Personal by Author

3.3.2 Gold Production

Gold Fields Ghana is arguably Ghana’s richest mining company in terms of mining infrastructure on site. While its share holdings indicate a 20% ownership by mining giant IAM Gold, GFG was the first company to engage in full mining in 2004 (Chamber of Mines, 2007). The company is now endowed with two Heap Leach plants and one Carbon in Leach Plants, which have a monthly production of 1.85 Million tones of ore per month, translating to a gold production rate of close to 900,000 ounces of gold per year. According to the Minerals commission, the Tarkwa mine contributes close to 30% of Ghana’s total gold exports, a percentage that makes GFG a key favourite to the government (see table below). Its profits margins are also reflective of the company’s productivity. After the 2007 financial year for example, the profits ranged from 1.5M to 2.3 Million USD (GFG Website, 2007), above Anglo Gold Ashanti and New Mont

²³ IFC – International Finance Corporation is the investment arm of the World Bank. It has so far granted 2 investment loans to GFG for the Tarkwa mine

²⁴ Government of Ghana owns a non-negotiable 10% of all large scale mining investments in Ghana according to the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006

International, the other top two who posted 1 million and 1.2 million USD the same year respectively (Gold Sheet, 2008).

Table 3-3: GFG Gold Production in comparison to other Large Scale Mining Companies in Ghana (2007)

Company	Mine	Production Rates (million Ounces)
Gold Fields Ghana	Tarkwa	1.85
Anglo Gold Ashanti	Teberebie	1.7
New Mont	Akym	1.2

Source: (GFG Website, AngloGold Ashanti Website, New Mont Website)

Employment

To meet this high production levels, GFG’s adapts two employment programs within its Tarkwa mine. First, the company adapts a professional employment program where it recruits skilled and trained professionals, both from within Ghana and abroad. A human resource official at the company mentioned that the company currently employs close to 1,700 professional Ghanaians working at various levels. From company records, these professionals work at junior management, supervisory and maintenance levels at the company (See table below). In addition to the 1,700, a team of 42 expatriates holding senior management and head of department portfolios are recruited mostly from South Africa, Canada and Australia. In other sections of this chapter, I have argued that the employment approach by the company, especially focus on specialized skills and professionals has been criticized by lobby groups and the media as excluding local communities. In addition it still remains a big question mark, the extend to which the Ghanaians employed by the company hold positions of influence. According to the labour statistics however, GFG is still presented as a model example based on its employment policy in comparison to other large scale mining companies.

The second employment program is what the company refers to as the Community Employment Programme. Employment contracts and offers are advertised through the chiefs who are then required to source for potential candidates and make recommendations to the company. This program is more complicated than this and has been argued to be an avenue for chiefs to gain personal benefits in terms of how recruitments are done. In chapter 5 of this chapter I dive deeper into this issue based on a case study. All the same, the community employment program as implemented by the

GFG has managed to win over some sections of the mining communities as well as the government, who indicate that conscious efforts are being made by GFG to plough back returns to the communities through providing employment. From a researchers point of view, the figures provided by the company are astonishingly low, given the overall population of the area. In addition, questions still remain about who indeed gets these employment opportunities, because my case in chapter 5 shows that chiefs use these opportunities to “sell” employment opportunities to outsiders and not necessary the Tarkwarians.

By the time I was completing my study, GFG records indicated a total of 572 employment contracts issued to the communities some of which were allocated directly to the chiefs as indicated in the official yet confidential document source of table 3 below. The implications of the community employment program as designed by GFG will be discussed later in chapter 5.

Corporate Social Responsibility Programs

In chapter 4 and 5 of this thesis, I will discuss a case study that in my opinion shaped GFG’s community development or corporate social responsibility program. In Ghana, the SEED program funded by the GFG Foundation, as well as the activities implemented by the Community relations department set the stage upon which other companies began rolling similar programs (see table below). These programs are funded by the Gold Fields Ghana Foundation (GFGF) and implemented by an NGO – OICI. Within GFG, a community relations department has been established to supervise the implementation of this program. In this thesis I do question the extend to which these programs have served the interests of local communities, because my case as we shall see in chapter 4 and 5 is that corporate social responsibility remain a PR tool for mining companies, while the benefits meant for local communities are captured by a minority group, pretending to be acting on behalf of the majority of the community members. All the same, these programs have been highlighted in Ghana’s mining sector as an example of how private enterprises can reach out to the societal well being of local communities. According to company reports, a total of about Ghanaian Cedi ₵61 billion or (\$6.625million) had been spent on Community development programs which cover both infrastructural development and community alternative livelihoods programs (see table 3 below).

From this section, we observe that the influence of GFG is largely attributed to the material wealth in the form of financial investment accompany their operations in developing economies (see Bryant and Bailey, 1996; Goldsmith, 1995). Because of their financial influence, Bryant (1999) argues that MMCs enjoy close to a moral reverence, admiration and recognition, and which as argued by Akaabza & Darimani, (2001) and BICC (2006) lies in what they refer to as the “power of the contract”. In their argument, MMCs enjoy special regard and treatment within the host government because of the benefits, rights and entitlements that are earned due to the mining partnership (Lowi, 2006; Williamson, 1985). Lastly, political ecologists (see Bryant & Bailey, 1996; Robbins, P, 2004) argue that the influence of the MMCs besides their financial muscle is the ability to spread their tentacles by entangling and embedding themselves in the local political system within their locations of operations. This allows them access to decision making structures and hence their growing influence as they are able to capture the various spheres of influence at local level and hence consolidate their power to better advance their special interests of profit making (Bryant & Bailey, 1996). The strategies they employ in advancing their goals will be elaborated in chapter 4 and 5. This section however introduces Gold Fields International, - the second leading gold producer in the world and currently holder of a 28-year mining contract lease in Tarkwa.

3.4 Non - Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Since the popular view holds that governments and private sector tend to isolate local communities from development processes, (Bryant and Bailey, 1996; Cottrell, G. and Rankin, L., 2000), NGOs have been perceived as a key intermediary to advocate and protect the interests of local communities (BICC, 2006; Volger, et al, 2006). They are argued to be impartial, neutral and advocates of societal interests, as well as a moral compass and ethical investigator of corporate and governmental wrongdoings. Bryant and Bailey (1997) in conceptualizing the political ecology of natural resource use argue that the emergence of advocacy and lobby driven groups at the grassroots and national levels in developing countries could be evidenced at the time when the access and use of ecological resources generated negative environmental and social costs in these countries. This they argue could either have been as a result of large scale mining, illegal logging or mechanized farming which bears heavy ecological hazards to the environment and rural communities. Cowell, S.J., et al, (1999) posits that as global aspects of market driven production and capitalistic demand and supply dimensions flood into African mining economies for example, economic interests supported by host government political and

economic sovereignty needs have sidelined general societal and environmental concerns especially affecting the local communities in the mining sites. The governance gap including host government's role of "absentee husband" has opened a window for NGOs as a new actor and interest group driving the cost – benefit dilemma within the mining areas of third world countries.

Within the mining area of Tarkwa in Ghana, the active engagement of NGOs or community based lobby groups was evidenced during the late 90's as the government handed over the Tarkwa mine to the South African Mining giant – Gold Fields Ghana Limited (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). This is because the change in management generated negative consequences that began the first of many conflicts between PSCs and the large-scale mining companies (WACAM, 2004). According to the director of a leading Anti-mining watchdog based in Tarkwa, GFG decision to cease its underground operations and adopt the more resource intensive open cast mines was a key factor behind the uprising. As discussed in chapter 1, underground mines as compared to Open casts are more labour intensive. This mining method is familiar to the Tarkwarian miners since the early traveller (see Dummet, 1978) as it numerous employment opportunities for local community members. Very low skills are required for a mine operator in an underground shaft and most of the work is manual and not necessarily machine operated or technical (Newmont, 1999). As a consequence, unofficial reports from various sources indicate that close to 12,000 jobs were lost during the management shift, to the anger and frustration of local communities (WACAM, 2001; Akaabza and Darimani, 2001; TWN, 2002, Oxfam America, 2002).

Underground shafts do not waste land resources as mining operations take place underground, meaning that the top surface of the land is protected and other non-industrial economic activities can happen hand in hand with mining (Guerra, M.C.G, 2002). Open cast mines on the other hand are resource intensive, as vast amounts of land are needed for blasting, excavation and hauling. Separate gold processing sites are needed though the amount left wasted is high. As indicated in chapter 2, open cast mining operations require concessions of land, which means that communities within the assigned locations are not allowed to engage in long term investments. According to the Minerals and Mining Act, 703, local communities are not allowed any surface rights to the land under concession, meaning that they cannot construct any permanent structures or engage in farming crops that take a long time to reach their full maturity. Besides interfering with day-to-day livelihoods of local communities, surface mines are regarded

as being wasteful of land resources. Unofficial records from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) indicate that for every 1.5million tonnes of ore mined, only 1,000 ounces of gold are produced. Calculated in terms of land, it means that for every 100 ha of land under concession, only 20 ha is used for actual production of gold (Project Underground, 2004; USGS, 2004). GFG records and the environmental management plan submitted to the EPA branch in Tarkwa indicated that close to 12 communities had to be resettled between 1998, when underground mining ceased, and 2001 when the construction of the North Side heap leach pad was completed (GFG, 2004; EPA, Official records, 2006). The expansion of mines as a result of surface mines has therefore been a threat to the subsistence mode of production prevalent in local mining communities and has been a source of conflict between the two.

In addition to the social aspects and struggles over benefits in the form of employment and competition over land, gold processing methods, namely heap leach and carbon in leach (see chapter 2), are complex methods that use cyanide- a highly toxic chemical- to extract and process the gold from the ore. The ecological consequences of cyanide in times of spillages into community surface and underground water sources, were also a factor behind increased confrontation between local communities and large scale mining companies. A study undertaken by a US based Ghanaian geologist and environmental consultant revealed that between 1998, when underground mining ceased and the first gold was leached through the South heap leach pad, and 2001 when the first carbon in leach pad was officially opened, a record 8 cyanide spillages had already occurred within the Tarkwa concession. The most serious spillage and whose impact will be greatly discussed a case study in chapter 4 occurred in October 2001 polluting River Asuman, a tributary of the Ankobra River which forms part of the White Volta basin. This river was also the source of water for five communities²⁵, all located within the Tarkwa mining concession.

As environmental problems associated with mining continued to bear social consequences to local communities, both local and international media began demanding attention from the government and mining multinationals. The first initiative according to an official of a local organization was by a Chief of one the affected communities who together with some trade unionists in Accra began brainstorming on forming anti-mining watchdog to fight and protect the interests of local communities in mining areas of Tarkwa. At the same time, a group of print and mass media journalists working in mining

²⁵ Samahu, Abekoase, Tebe, Huniso and Pepesa

areas of Tarkwa for various FM stations and newspapers formed a League of Environmental Journalists as the investigative arm of the Local watch-dog. Being cognizant of the role of youth and especially that of those who lost their employment and who have been relegated to galamsey work, the same group started to brainstorm on forming a youth lobby group which came to be referred to as the Youth For Action in Ghana which lobbies and advocates on behalf of youth in mining areas, especially regarding employment and other social problems like HIV and drug abuse in mining areas (Akaabza, 2001). This process did not end here as, realizing the need to litigate and advocate for mining communities legally in court, the group approached a group of legal experts, mostly lecturers and practitioners at the Faculty of Law at the University of Ghana, Legon. A non-profit paralegal organization consisting of professional lawyers to represent mining communities being affected by mines was formed, with the then head of Faculty as its director. With all these arms of operation, the mining watchdog WACAM has now evolved as a central lobby and advocacy group and a force to reckon with not just in Ghana, but in West Africa. Its strategies for mobilizing power to influence the behaviour of both the government and mining multinationals will be discussed at length in chapter 4 and 5.

Lobby and advocacy is only but one wing of the NGO movement within Tarkwa. In 2002, during the Mining For Sustainable Development Conference held in Berlin which brought together top officials of the leading mining multinational companies²⁶, representatives from their mother governments and leading NGO activists, principles of public - private partnerships and the need for socially environmental behaviour by the companies in their host countries was mooted. During this monumental forum, MMCs were called upon to ensure that their operations are not only economically viable, but also socially responsible and sustainable. To be able to achieve this, mining companies needed a "social license" to operate. This social license was only achievable, if the mining companies developed and nurtured a good working relationship with the local communities on the basis of the soundness of their community relations and application of environmental principles. A key finding or recommendation during this international forum was that the growing conflicts and discontent between local mining communities and mining multinationals was because of the deteriorating relationships between the two groups and a lack of intentional management of environmental and social conflicts between them (MMSD, 2003). A key outcome of this meeting was the need for MMCs

²⁶ In attendance during this forum was Anglo Gold Ashanti, Newmont, Gold Fields Ghana and Golden Star Resources, - all the four holders of large scale mining concessions in Tarkwa area of Ghana.

to forge intentional alliances with societal groups and other public institutions capable of acting as a bridge between the private and public sector in local mining areas. NGOs were among these prospective or potential allies, with the argument being that NGOs, with the assumed grassroots and local outreach, would provide the necessary values of social responsibility while assisting private enterprises to build and nurture good working relations with local mining communities (Hamann R., 2003). Upon returning home, new forms of collaboration and partnerships began emerging between NGOs and MMCs in mining countries as the relationships between mining companies and local communities began to soar. These relationships brought along not only a range of possibilities, but also associated problems (BICC, 2006).

In Tarkwa, OICI- a national NGO with USA roots- is a product of the recommendations of the 2002 International conference discussed above and which is currently implementing community livelihoods and infrastructure development for all the large scale mining multinationals in Tarkwa. While the mining multinationals perceive this strategy as enriching their social and public image, some community groups especially lobbyists and activists have argued that NGOs working closely or collaborating with multinationals within the mining sector are isolating and excluding the local needs from the negotiation table further and compromising on the needs of mining countries (WACAM, 2003; TWN, 2004). The director of a local lobby group on mining in Ghana argues that any relationship between mining companies and NGOs that involves an exchange of funds and money can never be objective and will always serve the interests of the lender and not that of the local communities. OICI on the other hand hold the view that NGOs have the local knowledge and grassroots outreach which business community's lack. In their opinion confrontation between NGOs and mining companies has failed to help local communities and there is need for collaborative governance and corporation between the public and private sector. WACAM on the other hand is a lobby and anti-mining watchdog working in most of the mining areas of Ghana, but with its roots in Tarkwa area. As a local organization, WACAM has spearheaded lobby activities against mining multinationals and the mining regime in Ghana, gaining the reputation of an anti-mining watchdog in the region. While the debate on the role of NGOs- be it the development driven organizations like OICI and the lobby groups like WACAM- questions still linger on regarding whose interests they represent or whose needs they strive to meet. The questions include whose interests they represent and whose agenda they are pushing. Is it for the donors funding their programmes or that of

vulnerable mining communities? How do they position themselves within local mining areas to mobilize power to influence government policy within the mining sector? To what extent are they effective in advocating for change? Chapter 4 and 5 provide the setting where these questions will be deeply discussed and analysed using specific cases within the mining sector in Tarkwa.

3.5 University of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa (UMAT)

Ghana's mining sector has undergone tremendous reforms since independence. These reforms could be categorized as legal and technological. Legally, the government has adopted a more regulatory approach, ceding its mine ownership and control role to private – foreign investments. As part of economic recovery program, the government established specialized agencies like the EPA to regulate the sector as well as revamp other line commissions to actively police the mining sector (see chapter 1). Secondly, the reform process witnessed in Ghana's mining sector saw an injection of massive foreign investments and large-scale transition from underground to more technologically savvy open cast mines. By 1990, all the state owned gold mines had been acquired by foreign investments and by the late 90's the mining methods had shifted from the traditional labour intensive underground shafts to the more modern resource intensive, but technologically sound open cast mines (Akaabza, 2001). As described in chapter 2, Open cast mining methods depend on modern technologies of gold processing and amalgamation. The commonly used methods are the Heap Leach and Carbon in Leach processors, which are highly technical processing methods, requiring specially trained labour on site. The technological shifts within the mining sector had two main impacts in as far the actor dynamics in mining areas are concerned.

One, there was urgent need for specialized skilled labourers able to run and operate these computerised and highly chemical gold mining processes. Unlike in underground mining where most of the work was manual and which unskilled labour was very use-able, open cast mining depends largely on operations that require a certain level of trained and specialized skill at every stage of the mining process. From the blasting where explosives are used to break the ore, through to the huge caterpillars used to excavate, haul and move the ore, to the carbonation and cyanidation processes that processes the ore for gold. The role of unskilled labour rapidly declined, meaning that most of the PSCs' members initially employed at the mines had to be relieved of their duties. Within the Tarkwa concession for example, GFG resorted to outsourcing the mining operations to a Canadian mining giant, IAM Gold as it built its own internal skilled-labour force. The

local community members were therefore relegated to the manual or temporary casual jobs like site clearing during planned mine expansions etc. Secondly, new technologies in the mining sector brought a lot of “unknowns” in terms of risks and externalities as well as benefits. By 1999 for example, the Tarkwa District had already experienced close to 4 incidences of cyanide spillages as a result of leakages and bursts from and of tailings dams where pregnant cyanide solution is stored (see chapter 2). In addition, the effects of cyanide use for gold processing and its impact on water quality as well as the massive demand of water for these complex mining operations became a source of conflict between companies and local communities. The effects of using diatomite explosives for blasting ore was already being questioned as communities complained of the effects it was having on their already fragile hamlets. Unlike the common problems associated with underground mining- mostly workers health and inadequate salaries- these new methods of mining brought to the scene new “unknown” problems.

Technological shifts and the resultant consequences as elaborated above brought to the scene a new interest group or created spaces for the involvement of a new actor. On one hand, specialized and trained labour was needed to fill the new job-grade within the system. While GFG opted to outsource its mining arm, government and NGO pressure was rising on the need to employ local expertise, which of course the company was finding difficult to identify. Efforts were now being directed at attracting Ghanaian mining experts from the diaspora back home. The lucrative expatriates’ salaries worked to lure 5 of the senior mine managers specialized in Heap Leach and carbonation mining to return home from abroad. This was however a short term solution and with rising pressure, the Chamber of Mines prevailed on the government to work towards establishing a full-fledged University specialized in Mining and New Technologies in Tarkwa. At that time, the Technical committee head at the Chamber of Mines led the negotiations with the government and currently sits as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa. The university of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa, Ghana, is now a full-fledged university teaching and developing scholars to research, learn and work on and in the growing mining and mine processing sector since 2004. As the only mining specialized centre for learning on mining in Ghana and the sub-region, UMAT has continued to position itself as a major player advancing scientific research interests, but also driving the notion of commercialized expert knowledge through consultancy and the sale of expert advice to government, private sector and non-governmental bodies. The strategic location of the University and the industrial

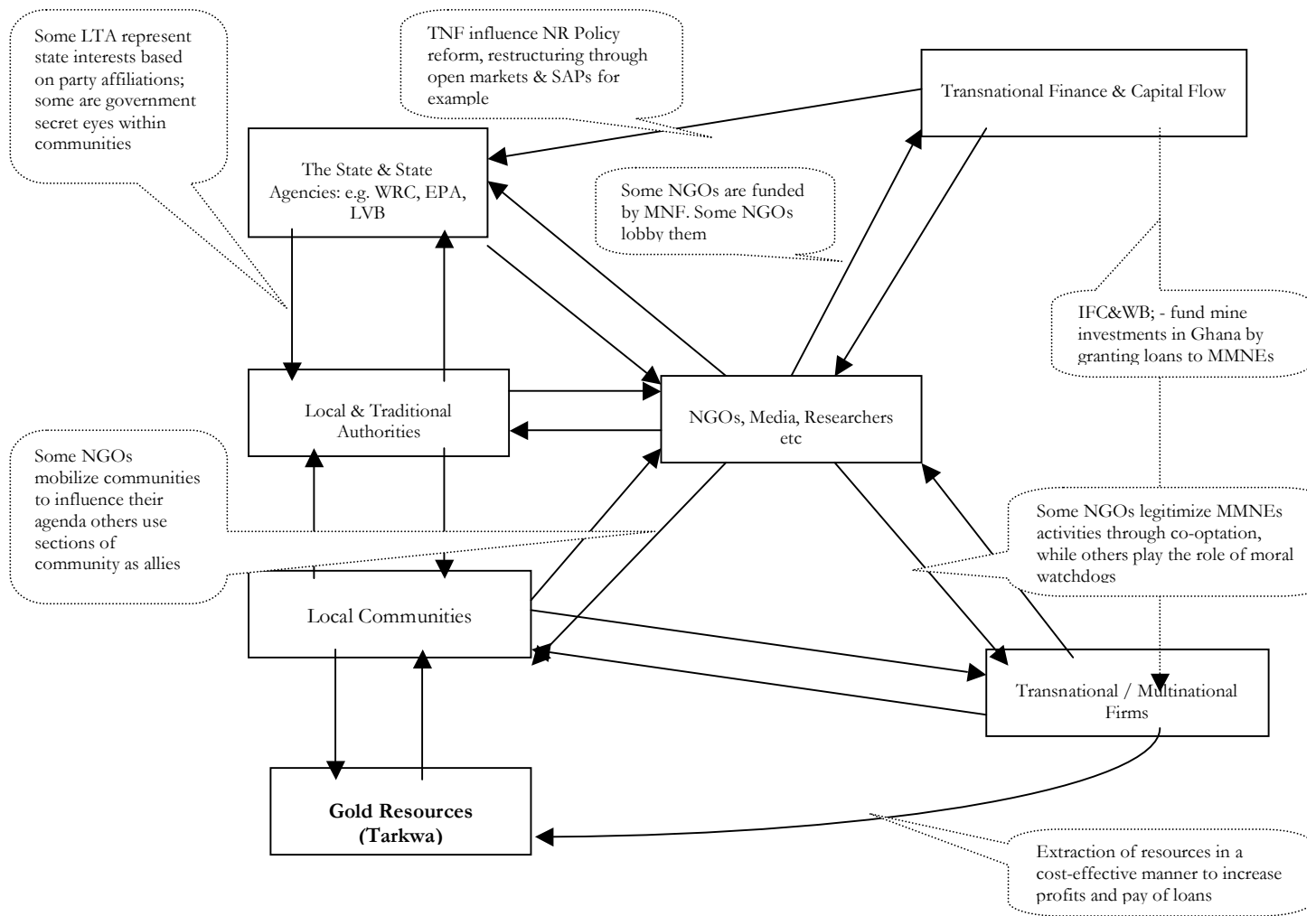
environment surrounding it as well as the new challenges facing the district because of the technological shifts makes it a key ally to most of the actors who see the strategic power or value of scientific justifications or knowledge.

Besides the penetration and visibility of UMAT, works of external researchers, individual “experts” and consultants writing for science and or advocacy has plagued the Tarkwa area. According to the chief of one my research communities, since the 2001 cyanide spillages the community receives foreign researchers on almost a yearly basis. These could either be consultants working for multinational companies, for international NGOs, Masters or PHD students as well as practicing development experts from media and development organizations. The role of scientific or expert knowledge in influencing decisions or management of valuable resources still poses renewed research questions and in chapter 5 I try to link my arguments to Everse and Gerke (2005)’s positions on experts as strategic groups. In Tarkwa however, the growing ecological problems and social costs of mining related to new technologies of mining opened a niche for experts willing to provide linkages, explain phenomena and sell their knowledge to provide answers to mining related problems. Everse and Gerke (2005) talk about the power of being able to make sense, that is, give meaning to actions and consequences. With this, there are increasing number of university lecturers, researchers and staff often described as being "knowledge elite" who are contracted either by mining companies to defend their position or by NGOs to justify their argument. Chapter 4 will provide a case of how universities and other knowledge generators entangle themselves in this complex network of actors and whose interest they represent or advance.

Complex Interaction of Multiple Interests

The gold mining area of Tarkwa represents a complex image of actors interacting in the same area (see Diagram 3-2). These actors play varying roles and use the legal framework provided to protect and meet their interests. From the analysis in the chapter, it is possible to observe that there isn’t a single homogenous group of actors – that is, a group that shares similar interests and possessing similar levels of power. These actors are differentiated on the basis of their interests in this mining area and this differentiation largely determine the strategies they adopt to cope or engage, one with the other. In the next chapter, I discuss a case, which seeks to provide a better understanding of how the various interests manifest in mining areas and more specifically, how these actors interact with each other to influence decisions.

Diagram 3-2: Complex Interactions in Tarkwa Gold Mining Concession



CHAPTER 4 WINNING THE BATTLE: *Community Struggle for Compensation in Tarkwa's Gold Mine*

“...An owner or lawful occupier may be entitled, to compensation for...b) Loss of or damage to immovable properties (land, forests, and water resources).....the amount of compensation payable shall be determined by agreement between the parties.... but if the parties are unable to reach an agreement as to the amount of compensation, the matter shall be referred by either party to the Minister...” (Ghana's Minerals and Mining Act 703 (2006) – Section 73(3) and 74(1) a, b.

The payment of compensations to mining communities is currently a key requirement in most mining legislations (Akabzaa, 2000; Volker, 2006). This is because of the acknowledgement that mining inevitably causes social and environmental impacts that largely affect the local communities that co-exist with the mines. The impacts of mining which include water pollution, loss of land and destruction of forests forces local communities to either change their lifestyles or in some cases relocate from their traditional lands (Obara and Jenkins, 2006; Kwame, et al, 2006). In Ghana, section 73 and 74 of its Minerals and Mining Act (2006) is dedicated to compensation issues. These two sections place emphasis on compensation for loss or damage of immovable resources such as land, water or forest resources. According to the Act, the amount of compensation to be paid is to be determined by agreements reached through negotiations between the holder of the mining right (e.g. mining company) and the lawful owner of the resource (e.g. local communities).

In this chapter, I discuss a case of a cyanide spill that occurred in a mining town of Tarkwa in 2001, polluting a local community water source. This incident prompted negotiations for compensation between five affected communities and GFG, a South African company that owns a large-scale surface mine in Tarkwa. A compensation agreement was reached in 2003, bringing to an end a hard fought battle by the communities. In analysing this case, I found out that in reality, negotiations for compensation are not as simple or linear as prescribed in mining legislations. They are however a complex power struggle *or inter – action* between multiple players, - who possess varying claims or interests in the sector. In the end, the nature of the compensation agreement is dependant on the extent to which the local communities can mobilize and wield bargaining power to overcome the unequal power relations with negotiation space. In this chapter:

1. I describe the social, economic and ecological context within which the mine is located and where the resultant negotiations took place.
2. I describe the cyanide spillage, the various perceptions of how it occurred, what caused it and its resultant effects.
3. I present the key events that preceded the negotiations for the compensation agreement based on recollections of my key respondents. In each event, I demonstrate the interaction of various players and how they influenced the outcome of the negotiation outcome. I focus on key events, because my respondents could remember and that in cases where they could not, there was secondary data in the form of government statements, media reports, NGO reports or court cases to fill any memory gaps.
4. Lastly, I draw my conclusions which then lays the foundation for my further discussions on chapter five.

4.1 TARKWA GOLD MINE AND MINING AREA

The Tarkwa mine is situated in Ghana's Western region and is owned by Gold Fields Ghana (GFG), in partnership with IAMGold- of Canada and the Government of Ghana (see chapter 3). This mine was acquired from the government in April 1996, though actual surface mining began in April 1998 (EPA, 2001; Gold Fields Ghana, 2001). The mine is made up of six open pits and two heap leach plants, where cyanide is utilized in leaching gold from the ore (See part 2 of chapter 1). A mandatory requirement for any mine using cyanide for gold amalgamation is the establishment of a containment facility for recycling and storing the waste cyanide solution after mining. These facilities are located with the mine, but away from the operations because of the toxic nature of cyanide rich solutions (ICMC, 2003)

The Tarkwa mine is however not situated in a vacuum. It is embedded in local contexts where its operations interact with the natural environment and the human beings that inhabit these areas. Mining activities therefore have an impact either directly or indirectly to the local environment as section 2 of this chapter will show. The following subsection is therefore a description of the ecological, social and economic characteristics of the region where the mine is located. This serves to place the spillage in its rightful context.

4.1.1 Physical Characteristics of Tarkwa Area

Tarkwa is located in Wassa West District. This district covers a total land area of 9235km², representing 12 % of the total land area of the country (GSS, 2006). It is bordered to the north by the Wassa Amenfi District, to the south by the Mpohor-Wassa East and Ahanta West, to the east by the Mpohor-Wassa East and to the west by the Nzema East District. The area falls within the equatorial climatic zone, primarily the tropical rain forest zone of Ghana. Tarkwa and the district as a whole are known for heavy rains. The Ghana meteorological service department indicates that the area is fed by a mean annual rainfall in the range of 1500mm and 1933mm with most of the rains occurring from April-June and October-November giving it a bi-modal rainfall regime (GMSD, 2004).

Tarkwa's terrain is very critical when trying to understand the influx of mining operations into the area. This is because its environs lie generally within mountain ranges underneath which lies the famous Tarkwarian rock, famous for its gold. Dummet (1980) argues that in the ancient times, the Tarkwarian rock formed the gravel on the minor roads where surface mining involved scooping the sand with possibilities of accessing nuggets of gold. Such is the richness of the underlying rock in the district. Tarkwa Township and its surrounding settlements are therefore wedged between two of these long ranges of hills considered to be the host of *Tarkwarian rock*, (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001; Dummet, 1998), but which is currently host to GFG, a South African Mining company.

Akaabza and Darimani (2001) points out the value of the long ranges in Tarkwa, upon which the Tarkwa mine is situated. In their work, they indicate that these mountain ranges constitute the source of water for many of the rivers and streams in the area. They add further that Tarkwa region is part of an extensive drainage basin known as the Ankobra Basin comprising the Ankobra River and its tributaries such as the Arsuman and Huni rivers respectively. The Arsuman and Huni rivers are the main sources of water for these communities. Dummet (1980) states that these rivers are also an asset for the traditional small-scale miners who use the flowing water to wash their ore during *galamsey* work. With this understanding, the location of mining operations upstream in the area, by design or default, poses a huge amount of risk to the rivers and streams downstream and to the communities who rely on them for their livelihoods and domestic needs.

Picture 4-1: Showing the Hilly Terrain of Tarkwa Subjected to Mining



Source: Field Work Photo

4.1.2 Communities Around the Tarkwa Mine

The Tarkwa Mine, is surrounded by eight villages, namely, - Abekoase, Huniso, Samahu Pepesa, Tebe, Akoon, Brahabobom, and New Atuabo. According to a census undertaken by the EPA and Ghana Statistical Service, the population of these communities is estimated at 8,200 (EPA, 2004). These population figures are not consistent, as a census funded by UNFPA in the same year indicated a population of 10,000 for the same villages. The Ghana Statistical Service attributes these inconsistencies to the unprecedented migration in and out of the area. This view is shared by (Nyame, et al, 2008) who states that, because of growing mining activities in the area, potential job seekers, contractors, mine speculators and mine employees relocate into the area. It is therefore difficult to accurately monitor numbers settled in respective villages.

The indigenous ethnic group in this area is the Wassa people, though the ethnic mix is highly varied. (Nyame, et al, 2008) examines migration patterns in Ghana's mining sector and particularly Tarkwa. He finds out that the ethnic variation in the country is much higher in mining areas because of opportunities and prospects created by mine development. He states further that while Ghana is, in addition to traditionally being a country of destination in the region, mining areas like Tarkwa are, becoming a transit area for prospective migrant miners, potential employers, job seekers and land speculators. Dummet (1980) shares a similar view though he argues that, this ethnic shift is more visible during this era of large-scale privatized mining where labour is sourced and hired privately. In his anthropological study in on labour movements in Wassa West

District of Ghana, he found out that, in the earlier days, traditional authorities controlled labour movements, as work in mining areas was distributed communally along family lines. This way, in-migration was not as common. He posits that it was only in special cases, especially in the Ashanti region where slaves from other areas were brought in to work in the mines, in which case, it was systematic and organized.

Ethnically, these eight villages like all others in Tarkwa are comprised of both indigenes and migrants, though some are more exclusive than others (Ghana Statistical Services, 2004; UNFPA, 2007; Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). The indigenous villages are those occupied largely by the Wassa speaking people and according to one of chiefs in the area, have their heritage²⁷ in the village. By heritage, I mean that the inhabitants can draw their family lineage from the area, they occupy land belonging to their family line or their ancestors were lived and buried in the area (Nyame, et al, 2008: 22). An example of such a village (inhabited largely by indigenes) is Huniso, where the chief pointed me towards the graves of the fathers of the village. This village is also inhabited by a few migrants especially from the Northern region, but cannot be compared to the predominantly settler community of Abekoase. In Abekoase, the entire village is a settlement with its inhabitants originating from the Northern, Upper Eastern, Central and Volta regions respectively. I also came across members of the village who originally came from the neighbouring Ivory Coast and the Ewe speaking people from Togo.

Economically, the area within the mine is also diversified. The people living in this area engaged either in on-farm or off-farm activities (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). The on-farm activities according to (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001) are those where land has to be tilled for production for example farming activities. I observed that the inhabitants of these villages grow cassava, yams, maize and an assortment of vegetables. Food is produced on small scale for subsistence purposes, those some also engage in trade. Animal rearing forms part of the on-farm activities. Communities raise chicken, goats, sheep and pigs, but largely on small scales. (Dummet, 1980) however argues that animal keeping was not a strong economic activity in Tarkwa and most of the meat consumed in the area was fish. The chicken, goat and beef was produced in the nearby Wassa Amenfi District and traded in Tarkwa. In his opinion, the inhabitants of Tarkwa engaged in farming for their daily subsistence, but supplemented their income by engaging in alluvial mining during the dry seasons. I observed that most of the inhabitants who are within

²⁷ By heritage, the member either lives on his family land, his ancestral parents were buried in the area (Personal communication with the Chief of Huniso Village); Also see (Dummet, 1980)

the working-age bracket were engaged mostly as labourers on other people's farms, casual workers on the mine site or galamsey workers. The variation in economic activities could be observed between communities too.

In Abekoase for example, a survey that I conducted indicated that most of the community members are involved in off-farm activities, with an aim of income generation. Most of the traders, food suppliers to galamsey sites, galamsey machine operators, crushers and miners were largely migrants inhabiting this community. A possible explanation could be that most settlers (as discussed above) engage in income generation activities to support their families back home and did not have the same sentimental attachment to the area to make long term investments e.g. growing cocoa, palm oil trees etc. (Aryeetey and Twerefou, 2004), share this view in their work, though their work reveals that settler communities do not engage in long term investments like cash crop agriculture, because they do not have large land available like the indigenous villages. This holds true for Abekoase village where the farm lands comprised of small gardens are the back of the homes as compared to Huniso which had huge tracks of farms set aside specifically for farming. This is not to say that indigenes do not engage in income generation activities, they do. The only difference in this case is that, in these villages, one can observe a conscious effort by the inhabitants to make long term investments e.g. cash crop agriculture, though Akabzaa and Darimani (2001) argue that expansion of mining is rapidly reducing the land available for farming as an economic activity in these areas.

The description of the inhabitants of communities along the mine provides an understanding of the social and economic characteristics of the area, which are in constant interaction with the mining activities. The Tarkwa mine is therefore not located on empty space, as Asare (1997) would argue, rather on land, shared by communities depend on it for various economic and livelihood sustenance activities. In the process of mining, it is therefore inevitable that extractive investments will have a direct and indirect impact on the communities and their livelihoods activities. This interaction is not always cordial, but characterised by conflicts especially when mining activities generate negative impacts like polluting community sources, destroying land during excavation among others (see chapter 1). Such incidents generate heated reactions from the communities who as we have seen are not homogenous groups, but are differentiated along ethnic, cultural and economic lines. The following section describes an example of such an incident where in October 2001, a cyanide rich solution from Gold Fields Ghana's

Tarkwa mine leaked out polluting a nearby River Source. This incident generated heated reactions from various sections of society including local communities who depended on the river for multiple uses.

Picture 4-2: Showing the State of Huniso Village found in TGMC



Source: Field Work Photo

4.2 CYANIDE SPILL IN TARKWA (16.10.2001)

The cyanide spillage in Tarkwa happened in the early morning of the 16th of October 2001. Unfortunately, the cyanide-rich waste solution flowed into River Arsuman to the shock of local communities who found dead fish floating on the river as they went to fetch water on that morning (Boateng, 2001; Daily Graphic – October, 2001). River Arsuman flows through five communities located along the Tarkwa Mine. These communities include, Samahu, Abekoase, Tebe, Huniso and Pepesa. The residents of these communities depend on the river for various uses. At the domestic level, the river provides water for drinking, preparing meals and cleaning. The river is also a source of fish and other aquatic forms of life, which is a key source of proteins and commercial commodity for income (Dummet, 1980). According to Dummet (1980), this river is also popular for galamsey mining operations where community residents wash the ore as part of their gold processing activities. My respondent in Huniso village also mentioned that the river is an ancestral inheritance and plays a key role for the spiritual wellbeing of the communities, especially among the older generation. This view is shared by (Boeteng, 2003), whose research findings show that local communities also hold spiritual relationships to natural resources like rivers, mountains or even forests. The affected communities, perceived the spillage into river Arsuman as an attack on their livelihoods,

economic and spiritual wellbeing. It was important that the company brings the causes of the spill to the open.

Picture 4-3: A main Street in Tarkwa named after the Cyanide Spillage of 2001



Source: Field Work Photo

GFG issued an official statement (see excerpt of statement below) claiming that the spill was as a result of a leakage after a rainstorm caused the banks of its tailings dam²⁸ to burst.

“.....During the early morning hours of October 16, due to a rainstorm, the bank of our South Plant tailings dam burst realising waste leach solution. The leaking solution, after saturation of the surface of the heap, travelled along the surface to a stream downhill. (Excerpt from the Daily Graphic – 16th October, 01 – Official GFG Release)

The statement by GFG was contested by the affected communities, who claimed that the spill was caused by mere negligence and disregard for community interests by the mining company. A member of Abekoase village, who was previously employed by the company, informed me that, the spillage was probably an effect of an overflow from the dam and not a rainstorm. As he indicates in the quote below, the tailings dams are constructed uphill and in very close proximity to the communities. The dangers of a leakage downstream are much higher, from an overflowing dam, even without the aid of a rainstorm or broken bank. The chiefs of Abekoase and Huniso villages shared this view

²⁸ Tailing is the term used to refer to the waste from mineral processing plant or milling operation. Tailings are stored in a pond like structure referred to as a tailings dam (EPA and Minerals Commission, 1994)

and informed me that, they had previously complained to the EPA about the close proximity of the dam to community land and rivers, down stream.

“...From my house, I can see the dam and it seems to be overflowing. That was my fear even when I worked at the company. I don't think any bank is broken, or the rains should not be blamed on this. It always rains in Tarkwa” (Interview: Resident of Abekoase village)

GFG environmental manager refuted this claim stating the tailings dams are constructed in accordance to ICMC²⁹. In a statement issued to the press, the manager stated that the EPA approved the construction of the dam on the basis of an environmental impact assessment undertaken in 1999 (GFG – Press, 2001). Akabzaa (2000)'s study on impacts of mining find contributes to this debate where he argues that the location of tailings dams, especially given the hilly nature of Tarkwa with communities residing down slope is a huge risk. He questions the credibility of the EPA for approving such investments for not considering the dangers posed for communities residing down hill.

One day after the spillage EPA had not issued any official statement on the causes of the spillage, as the director stated that investigations were still underway (Daily Graphic, 17.10.2001). The statement further claimed that the EPA could only comment on the issue because it had not received the incident report from GFG. An incident report (IR) is an environmental monitoring document used in mining areas to monitor the occurrence of any incidences or cases that require attention from the EPA. The IR is mandatory especially when an incident has possibilities for causing protracted risks to the environment and public at large. For the spillage, the law requires that the responsible company submit an incident report to the EPA, not more than one hour after the incident. The guideline states further “the affected communities should be notified by both the EPA and the responsible mining company within the same hour to prevent any possible health risks” (Minerals Commission and EPA, 1999: 11-12). It was therefore questionable that GFG had not submitted the IR, twenty fours after the spill. Contradictorily, GFG issued a statement on the same day (see in later sections) stating that its environmental staff issued an incident report to the EPA that same morning.

“...The cyanide spill was promptly reported to the EPA and Mines Inspectorate at 7:00am...preliminary investigations, showed that there was no public safety or health threat, and therefore no long term damage to the river system or neighbouring communities”
(GFG official statement by the Managing Director, 22.10.2001)

²⁹ International Cyanide Management Code is a voluntary legislation established to provide guidelines to cyanide users on how to ensure that cyanide does not cause harm to people and the environment.

With these conflicting positions, I probed further into the question of how the communities got to know about the spillage? Understanding how the incident was reported shows how information is used as a power instrument to either empower one group or exclude the other from decision-making. This question also generated conflicting positions especially between the local communities who witnessed the dead fish floating on the river and the company who claims to have reported the incident to the responsible government agencies as the quotation below shows. A resident of the Abekoase village informed me that, his wife alerted him about dead fish floating on the rivers as she went to fetch water early in the morning. After verifying the report, he informed the chief who then summoned the community to assemble. The members of the village were warned against drinking the water from the river as the cause of the deaths before reason behind the dead fish was known.

“...I mentioned to the chief who then accompanied me to the river to ascertain what the women were saying. This was about 6:30am. The chief rang the gong gong³⁰ and the community was alerted about the tragedy and requested people not to drink water from the stream” (Interview with resident from Abekoase Village)

After warning the community against drinking from the river, the chief accompanied by his elders went to the EPA office in Tarkwa to report the matter. By 12:00 pm the same day, neither the EPA nor the GFG had formally informed the community inhabitants of the incident, and there was confusion regarding the state of the river and reasons why the fishes were dead. GFG was again quick to refute this claim, through a press statement where the Managing Director claimed to have instructed his personnel to inform the communities downstream about the incident. I could not verify this report from the EPA District EPA Officer in Tarkwa, given that this was the second allegation by the company insinuating that the agency was aware of the spillage and even had in its position an IR. The EPA officer in Tarkwa confided that he did not have the permission to present reports of such sensitivity to the public. His role was to submit the reports to the head office, which then makes an official statement to the public. (Personal Communication with EPA District Officer – Tarkwa, May 2007).

³⁰ Gong gong is a term used to refer to a bell which is rang in the village, to call for a community meeting, assembly or even communal labour

These diverging views on the sources, causes of the incident and how it was reported is a reflection of social realities in as far as information flows and perceptions is concerned. Different issues are perceived differently and each group will have a different story based on how they interpret or perceive an issue. As a researcher, it is difficult to deduce where the truth lies amidst all these conflicting stories, but it indeed reflects the local realities of every day life. The word “truth” therefore becomes very relative as the perception or position of each group or individual actors shapes their reality or truth for that matter. In decision-making or negotiations, these realities do influence our positions or the positions of the actors, as we shall see in later sections of this chapter. In the context of my study, I am able to observe the converging views or perceptions, which gives insights into possible alliances or coalitions when it comes to decision-making. For example, the decision by the EPA director not to disclose the contents of the IR, despite receiving them, could be construed as protecting aligning himself with the company, while the influence of the district office is also questioned at the same time. Based on the legal document (see Mining and Environmental Guidelines, 1999: 37) it might be correct to claim that the environmental and minerals guidelines places more weight on the statement provided by the companies as the IR does not consider views or perceptions of the local communities. The affected communities were still waiting to receive formal information about the spill

As my respondent informed me in the quote below, a team comprising of an EPA representative from Tarkwa and the Tarkwa mine manager arrived at the Abekoase Village at 12:30pm. EPA informed the assembled members about the spillage. He cautioned the community members not to drink from the water until the investigations on the state of the river were completed.

At about 12:30PM, we saw a GFG vehicle coming towards to the village”. The EPA man and the GFG manager informed us that there was an accident and small amounts of waste solution leaked through to our stream. He requested that we refrain from consuming the water from the river until further water tests have been undertaken and the state of the river is ascertained. GFG Manager mentioned that the company would in the meantime provide portable water to the communities as cleaning of the river continues” (Interview: Assembly Man of Abekoase Village)

He further informed the assembled group, that the company would supply the affected communities with portable water, pending final investigations. The Mine Manager informed the assembled group that the situation was under control and that the spillage did not pose a danger to the lives of the community. This agitated the already heated group, who heckled him demanding that he reveals the truth about the spillage. The

community members did not understand why the company would be willing to supply portable water if the spillage did not pose any health risk (see quote below).

"He informed us that the spillage was insignificant and could not have been injurious to aquatic life let alone human life. Why is the company supplying water if the river is in good health?"
(**Interview:** community member who attended the assembly that mid afternoon)

The visit by the EPA and mine manager did not bear much fruit; in any case, it caused more panic worsening the situation. At about 15:00pm on the same day, two trucks with 2 five hundred-litre poly-tanks of water arrived at Abekoase village. The trucks were vandalized by a few community youth and the poly tanks punctured as a demonstration of the community's reluctance to accept any offers from the company until the truth about the spillage is brought out. A community member informed me that a rowdy group of youth attacked the company trucks just before they stopped at the chief's residence. They then deflated the wheels before puncturing tank and cheered as the water seeped out.

"We just waited until the trucks had packed. The drivers went to the chief's house to inform him that the water had arrived. As they entered the chief's house, the young people deflated the tires of the tracks. Some climbed on the track and using nails began to puncture the poly-tanks with nails. Apparently the chief did not also want to meet the drivers, so he released them, but by the time they got to where the trucks were packed, the water had leaked and the wheels were all deflated. The two drivers were chased from the village and told to go back and tell the company, that the village does not need water". (Interview: Resident of Huniso Village)

The chief of Abekoase confirmed this incident stating it was very difficult to stop the community members who were really agitated. He revealed that he feared that if he intervened, the community members would assume he is working in collaboration with the company. The situation however got out of hand; involving the police who made arrested four Abekoase members in relation to the incident. GFG issued a statement to the Ghana News Agency (GNA) refuting any claim that could link the arrests to the company. The statement read, *"The arrests had no relation to GFG. The government police were operating on their own accord as enforcers of the law"*. Media reports and photos had however showed the mine's chief security disembarking from the police vehicle at the scene of the arrests (Excerpt in the Heritage, 17 October 2001), creating increased publicity on the issue.

Half an hour later, we saw a company car followed by police truck from Tarkwa. When the crowd of youth saw the police, they ran away, though four who hailed stones at the vehicle were arrested. By this time the chief had already left his palace, so the police and the GFG Chief of Security had no one to meet. The village was suddenly deserted as people dashed to the bush. After close to 15 minutes the media had already gotten word about the skirmishes in Abekoase village and cameras were all over the place” (Interview Excerpt with community member of Abekoase Village)

I was curious to understand why the community rejected the portable water. I was informed that, provision of water has become a popular strategy that the company adopts in situations where river sources are polluted. A galamsey operator who previously worked with the company informed me that provision of portable water is a cheaper option for mining companies as compared to detoxifying the whole basin. He also argued that providing water is a strategy that companies use to dodge the real issues. Akabzaa and Darimani (2001) confirmed this view and argues that, in previous spillages, for example in 1998³¹ the company escaped meeting the full compensation of the spillage, instead provided diverted the attention from the real issues affecting the communities, by providing two boreholes that do not work to date.

4.3 CYANIDE SPILLAGE AND RESULTANT REACTIONS

The spillage issue had gained publicity in the media and generated heated reactions from various groups. In the following section, I discuss the response from NGOs (local and international), the media, the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology and Gold Fields Ghana. These reactions show divergent views and perceptions regarding the spillage and provide the spaces within which the compensation struggle is contested. In later sections of this chapter, I will demonstrate how these actors interact to influence the negotiation outcome.

4.3.1 NGO Response

20:10:2001 - Three days after the cyanide spillage, nothing had happened in as far as the cyanide spillage was concerned. The affected communities were still in limbo regarding the whole issue, while at the GFG, it was business as usual. There was no public statement from the responsible government officials (EPA and MEST) and the four community members, who had been arrested, had not been released. The first group to break the silence was the NGOs through a press conference held in Accra on the 20th of October. WACAM, a local mining watch and lobby group working in Tarkwa and other mining areas of Ghana organized the press conference. The main aim of the press

³¹ Previous cyanide spills in Tarkwa included 1996, 1998, and 1999. In all the occasions, there was no evidence of any form of compensation despite the claims by local communities (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001; WACAM, 2004; WACAM Annual Report, 2006)

conference was to use it as a platform to voice the concerns of the communities affected by the spillage and call upon the government to act expeditiously. In attendance during this press conference were other NGOs - FIAN Africa, Third World Network, ISODEC, CEPIL, Youth For Action Ghana, League of Environmental Journalists and the Centre for Environmental Analysis. The main message from this conference was that the spillage was an infringement on the rights of local communities and GFG should take full responsibility and adequately compensate the affected communities. They also called on the EPA and respective government agencies to ‘come out of hiding’ and tell Ghanaians the truth about the spillage.

“Polluting River Arsuman is denying the local communities access to their livelihoods and survival base. It is infringing on their rights to life, an aspect that mining companies fail to observe. They are concerned with making profits with little regard to the needs of local communities. GFG should take full responsibility and adequately compensate the affected communities. The government has also failed in protecting its own people and should come out of hiding and say the truth” (Quoted in the Heritage, 20.10.01; Environmental Watch, 22:10:01)

As a sign of solidarity, the NGOs present pledged to fight for the rights of Abekoase and Huniso residents and as a sign of their promise declared themselves as a Coalition of NGOs on Environment (Heritage, 20.10.01). The mandate and details of this coalition were not clear and their activities were not spelt out, though the Director of WACAM was selected by the present group as the leader and Third World Network as the Spokesman of the coalition (Boateng, J. Y., 2003). WACAM began by stating that the spill is an infringement of the human rights of the people of Abekoase and Huniso villages. Like in the quote above, he stated that the government had failed its people by remaining silent despite the brutality and environmental faults of the company. He also claimed that the government was definitely acting in unison with the company since it allowed the police to harass and arrest its own citizens. They collectively demanded an immediate release of those arrested and also called for a full-scale (independent) investigation into the spillage in order to determine the cause and effects to the ecosystem and surrounding communities. The Executive Director of the WACAM, Mr. Daniel Owusu Koranteng, accused the acting General Manager of GGL of being insensitive to the plight of the local communities by implying that the spill was not dangerous to the environment or the community. He claimed that the company was taking the local communities for granted because of their ignorance. In the statement, he gave examples of how cyanide spillages have caused environmental and health problems in other mining countries like Indonesia, Romania and Botswana.

The representative of Third World Network mentioned that the EPA and government as a whole had failed the nation. He accused the EPA of being “so self-centred and a coward to publicly declare the truth on such issues of public interest. He also wondered why a matter of such sensitivity could be treated as confidential, when lives of communities who drank the water was at risk”. He also demanded that the contents of the assessment that the company claimed to have undertaken be made public. As the press conference came to an end, WACAM demanded that the owners of Goldfields accept full financial responsibility for the cyanide spill.

“...Goldfields should not hide from their responsibility for damages, we need to demand compensation for those directly affected by mining disasters. Gold Fields Ghana needs to take full responsibility and we demand that an adequate compensation is provided.”

He stated that the coalition would unveil its community support strategy and in collaboration with its partners would make sure that the plight of Abekoase and Huniso villagers was widely known. While demanding a proactive involvement from the government, the civil society group also called upon the academic community in Ghana, not just to sit back and engage in research work that “*accumulates dust*” on the shelves of libraries, but to focus on action – research for advocacy, popular campaigns. In their opinion, Ghanaian scientists should come out in the open and educate the public and especially local communities on cyanide, its use and impacts of its use.

“...We should not depend on the company, because the polluter will never submit objective findings or analysis”.

The reactions from the civil society were not limited to the local NGOs (Ghana based), but international ones, too. The Green Earth Organization (GEO), for example, described the disaster as “unprecedented serious”. They maintained that the use of cyanide in gold mining poses an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment and there was need for a long term monitoring program along the whole river system to ensure that its health be fully restored. On their website, GEO also demanded that GFG take full responsibility to restore the river and should not resort to “cheap and simplistic” remedial measures like providing portable water or drilling boreholes. They further urged that the mining industry and governments need to learn that rivers and healthy ecosystems are not mere commodities to be replaced, but these have ancestral and traditional value to local communities. These values are more precious than gold. FIAN International, a German - based food security watch dog, demanded a strong voice and an international campaign to protect the rights of local communities in developing countries from mining practices. They called upon African governments and civil society

groups to hold mining companies accountable and ensure that social and environmental standards of mining are upheld (Earthworks/Oxfam. 2004). Oxfam America, Friends of the Earth, Earth Works, NIZA and Fatal Transactions³² commended the efforts of Ghanaian NGOs to form the coalition on Environment and pledged to support their cause and lobby for international support and raise awareness among the shareholders, investors and the international public on behalf of Abekoase and Huniso village.

4.3.2 Media Response

The reaction of the media on the spillage issue was evidenced in the magnitude of publicity that the issue received. Besides the growing number of private FM radio stations in Ghana, print media also plays a pivotal role in disseminating information. The web is a key tool used, as most of the media stations including newspapers have online portals. During my literature review for example, and as my references show, I accessed about 60% of my secondary sources from media reports posted on the Internet facilities belonging to local newspapers. I also relied largely on newspaper cuttings, where I recorded about two articles on the spillage per day on most of the main newspapers. Over 90% of the articles that I accessed highlighted the situation and brought to light the environmental and human rights violations in mining areas. There was a sudden influx of and interest by media groups to Tarkwa, keen to conduct interviews and develop documentaries on the situation. Kwansah-Aidoo (2003) argues that this was because there was both a local and international demand to 'know' the status of issues in these communities. While studying the role of media in public debates, he found out that 93 out of 113 respondents he interviewed mentioned that they found out about the environmental problems in the mining areas from the media, and that this is their primary source of information since they spend their time in the cities and are not in touch with the occurrences in the rural areas. Media reports serve to bring issues to the public's attention and consequently to influence the public's involvement.

It's worth mentioning however that the media groups are also divided in terms of allegiance. Kwansah-Aidoo argues that there are those objective media groups who seek to present stories from both ends, while there are those who seem to favour conflicting sides based on their interests. He noted that there is media groups aligned to the ruling government who seek to present biased information in favour of the government. There

³² These five international organizations pledged to are part of an international campaign on mining referred to as "No Dirty Gold" and "Project Underground" which basically documents and raises awareness on the impact of mining in developing countries, with an aim of raising awareness in the public, but also of lobbying governments and private companies in the West to ensure social and environmental sustainability in their areas of operation in developing countries.

are those who also seek to protect any ‘anti-establishment’ sentiments in the way they frame and report their incidents. This division was very evident during my fieldwork and especially as I conducted my studies and reviewed newspaper cuttings relevant to my study. The pro-government media groups for example – Ghana News Agency and the Ghanaian Times would most of the time frame their stories in support of the government. Coincidentally, they also framed their messages as if protecting mining company images too. These are the media groups that were mostly invited to government-organized press conferences.

Regarding the spillage, the company (GFG) received more coverage on the pro-government groups as compared to the others. Some of my respondents argued that sometimes GFG would recall a story deemed to destroy their reputation by paying for stories. Through the respective government ministry and chief news editors of these newspapers, the company had the ability, many times unofficially, to prevent a given media group from publishing a particular story. My research assistant, a media practitioner with a private newspaper house, claimed that the companies have also been able to go beyond controlling only the pro-government media groups to include also the private ones. They use money especially to ensure that certain stories especially those giving good public relations for the company are published and to ensure that nothing negative is published. While I was not able to confirm this allegation, he also mentioned that some media chief editors or news managers have a remuneration arrangement with the company, where they are advanced an amount every month to ensure that a positive story about the company is published at least monthly.

A tangible contribution or reaction by media group or practitioners was by a group who called themselves the League of Environmental Journalists. They comprised of individual journalists from the Heritage, the Public Agenda, the Daily Graphic and the Environmental Watch. These group of journalists participated in the WACAM-organized press conference on the 20th of October 2001. After the press conference in Accra, they called for all media groups to be impartial towards any side and report objectively on the issues affecting local communities in mining areas.

“Information is a powerful resource. It is our responsibility to create an aware public by providing objective information and sensitizing the Ghanaian public. The media should not be caught in pledging allegiance, but serving the public. Gold Fields Ghana, should adequately compensate the affected communities...” (Statement by LEJ published in the Heritage, 23:10:01)

4.3.3 Government Response

Five days after the spill occurred and two days after strong statements from NGOs and media groups, the country was waiting on the government and the company to act. The NGOs had promised to unveil a “community support” strategy, while international lobbyists had pledged to put the cyanide spillage issue on the international agenda if no immediate action was taken to solve the matter. According to the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006, any resettlement or compensation dispute between mining companies and local communities falls in the domain of the Minister of Environment, Science and Technology (MEST). The Ministry is therefore in charge of representing the government in resolving disputes between a mining contract holder and local communities (MEST Website; 2007). It was therefore expected that the minister would issue a statement regarding this issue and most importantly because it falls under his domain of environment. The minister indeed issued a press statement the next day (17th October, 2001) where he implored the local communities in question to remain calm as investigations to the sources; causes and magnitude of the problem were being carried out. Citing the ‘mini-incident’ of impounding the company trucks and resultant arrests, the minister cautioned the communities from engaging in any activities that might be construed as being criminal. He stated that his ministry would only respond to the issue once he received full documents including the incident report, from the EPA.

In his statement, he restated the important role of GFG as a prominent development partner to Ghana and that any issue between the communities and the company could be easily resolved. He “stated that there was need for genial relations between the mine and the communities and maintained that the company management must initiate an intensive public education campaign on the operations of the mine and what the people should do in case of an accident” (MCL Global Website, 2001). He stated that a cyanide investigation committee (CIC) would be launched to formally investigate the issue. In the statement, he also stated that he was going to make an official visit on a fact finding mission to Tarkwa where he hoped to initiate consultations between the communities and mining company on the way forward. In the statement, he did not reveal the exact details of his planned visit or nature of the consultations. While not directly responding to the NGO sentiments, he indirectly threw a blow their way by calling upon the public to leave the cyanide issue to “experts” and avoid speculative and provocative statements.

4.2.4 Gold Fields Ghana - Response

The MEST had taken a non-committal position on the spillage issue, and focused on the normal government rhetoric or what Kwandah-Aidoo (2003) calls government propaganda. The NGOs as well as media groups were calling on GFG to take full responsibility and adequately compensate the affected communities. Gold Fields Ghana had to respond to this issue and did it by touching on a very controversial issue. This controversial statement was issued on the 17th October 2001, at the company's premises. The statement was captured in the Ghanaian Times (17.10.2001) and also posted on GFG's website (accessed in June 2007). In the statement, the mine manager of GFG stated that the GFG and EPA jointly undertook water-sampling tests on the morning that the spillage occurred. In what he referred to as a joint assessment, the company statement also read that, 'the EPA and the Mines Inspectorate was invited to the company premises on the same morning where a joint incident report was developed. The company guided the EPA on the steps it took to contain the leakage and ensure that such cases do not happen in the future. In the statement, the company claimed that the 'joint results' showed that the river was in good health and the water was safe for domestic and non-domestic consumption (see excerpt of statement below).

"The article published the Daily Graphic and the Independent on October 17, 2001 contained incorrect and misleading information concerning a small solution excursion which occurred on October 16, 2001 at the Tarkwa Gold Mine. The incident referred to in the article was promptly reported to the EPA and Mines Inspectorate at 7:00am. The communities had been informed earlier (04:45am) and preliminary investigations, showed that there was no public safety or health threat, and therefore no long term damage to the river system or neighbouring communities" (GFG Official statement by the Managing Director, 22.10.2001)

This statement was controversial because all along, the EPA had denied engaging in any assessment. The Director had stated that the EPA will comment on the issue once he receives a incident report from his counterparts in Tarkwa. I probed further on this issue and to get a position from GFG. A staff member with the environmental department indeed confirmed that an incident report was developed and circulated to various key players on the 16 October 2001. A copy of the report, dated October 16, 2001 had been dispatched at 8:45 a.m. the same date, by fax and hard copies by mail. The contents of the report included "*a report of the incident*"³³, the magnitude of the flow and water sample reports. From the report, I was able to note that the incident report was copied to Principal Inspector of Mines, Tarkwa; Executive Director, EPA; Regional EPA Officer,

³³ A report of incident is a term used in the Mining and Environmental guidelines of Ghana (1999) to imply a notification of an occurrence of an incident, accident or potential risk in the course of a mining operations.

Takoradi and District EPA Officer, Tarkwa. When I inquired why such an important document was not made public, he informed me that the District EPA Office did not have the power to publicly disclose the contents of such documents and it's always the responsibility of the head office and MEST to publicize the issue. I was also curious to know why the EPA could not undertake its own independent assessments. He confided that the district office is really under-equipped and since the use of cyanide is a new phenomenon in Ghana, the agency does not have the specialized equipment to undertake independent assessments. A representative of the EPA district officer confirmed this position:

"It is our policy that official statements are made by the head office. As the district office, our responsibility is to provide the information on the ground.....In Tarkwa; there is only technical staff member. We do not have any sophisticated equipment like the ones the company has. GFG for example has an environmental department of close to 30 professional staff members. Their lab is better equipped than the government owned SBB. To be honest with you, the EPA always depends or relies on the tests and samples provided by the company. That becomes very difficult for us to challenge their position, if we indeed depend on their reports for our work, (Interview: Representative EPA District Office)

Despite the multiple reactions from a cross-section of actors, the issue of the spillage remained unresolved. The affected communities had not made any demands and the situation was tense with the NGOs demanding the company takes full responsibility.

4.3.4 Affected Community's Response and Position

There had been a lull on the whole incident. The communities had rejected the portable water from the company and attempts by the company to meet with the village chiefs had failed. The affected groups, especially the women, were reeling under the pain of having to fetch water from other communities located six kilometres away, while the rest did not trust the river or the water for any domestic or non-domestic uses. The key government agencies (EPA and MEST) had been quiet since the press conference of the 19th of October and nothing was publicly known about the joint EPA-GFG assessment, other than the statement issued by GFG. Those five individuals who had been arrested, remained detained at the Tarkwa Prison and according to my research assistant, *the tension was simmering*. The reactions from the NGOs however, and the reports and news items that filled each media house had galvanised the issue and according to a local Ghanaian slang, *Tarkwa had become very hot*. The issue was simmering, but a dispute was indeed evident. The pressure from the NGOs and the media had paid off. The Minister announced the date for his official visit to Tarkwa as the 1st of November 2001, fifteen days after the spill. Affected communities were to assemble at Abekoase village by 10:00

am, where they could share their grievances with the minister as a beginning of the process for resolving the dispute.

On previous occasions, whenever disputes have arisen between communities and the mining company, it was the EPA and district assembly that mediated. This particular incident had generated heated reactions and for the first time since the disputes over resettling 12 villages in 1995, the minister in charge was going to mediate the negotiations. The NGO and media pressure could be argued as having influenced the minister's decision to personally visit the area. Before the minister arrives, the affected communities faced a massive challenge of coming up with a common position regarding the cyanide spillage and most specifically in terms of the compensation they expected from the mining company. As I had discussed in section 1.2, the affected communities are not one homogenous group, but a heterogeneous one, differentiated along cultural, social and economic lines. These differentiations play a key role in shaping their perceptions on what comprises an appropriate compensation. According to the chief of Abekoase, a meeting was convened that same morning between the chiefs of the five villages so as to come up with a common position on the matter. In his opinion, a common position would be their best approach to demonstrating solidarity, which has lacked in previous incidences. (See quote below).

“After we received the news from Nana Angu (Apintobene) that the Minister was coming to our village, I called for an urgent meeting with my colleagues (chiefs) from the other four villages. I knew that we did not have much time, as the Minister was arriving in two days time. We needed to have our concerns on the table and it was really important for us to be united as one front. In our villages, consensus is very important, because we know that our villages are very different. It was very important that we agree and hopefully come up with a common position, though I knew it would be tough. The chiefs arrived at my house and after a prayer, I told them the importance of our meeting and what we should try and achieve...” (Interview: Chief of Abekoase Village)

The chief confirmed that the process of coming up with a common position proved to be a challenge much more than he expected, because the five chiefs present did not share the same perception about the elements of an appropriate compensation package. For example, his community preferred a monetary settlement to the issue, while the chief from Huniso village claimed that the company should restore the river into its original state. Two other community leaders claimed that the company should resettle all the communities residing along the mine, because so long as the mine is closely located to the communities, it will be difficult to overcome such occurrences. Another claim on behalf of the unemployed sections of the affected communities was that the company

should compensate them by creating employment opportunities in the mine. The chief from Huniso and Pepesa where most of the farming lands are situated demanded that the company supports members whose livelihoods and economic activities have been affected. They however argued against the proposal for resettlement because they did not want to lose their ancestral lands (See quote below).

“...The chief of Huniso felt that the company should restore the livelihoods of the affected communities, especially those who relied on the river for fish farming, irrigation agriculture and farming. He claimed that some farmers do not want to use the water for irrigating their pepper any more, because they fear that the water is contaminated. In my opinion, I proposed that the company should provide monetary compensation, consider resettling local communities and also engage in supporting their livelihoods. Most important, the company should work towards building good relations with the community. The Huniso chief did not support the question of resettlement, because he felt that resettlement would deny the communities access to their ancestral lands. He also felt that, relocation programs employed by the company fail to consider local realities and tend to be painful than rewarding...” (Interview with the Chief of Abekoase village).

A separate observation that I made during my fieldwork was that issues around the spillage paid close attention to concerns by Abekoase and Huniso villages, with very little mention of the other three villages³⁴. My readers will also observe my research focuses on the two, because they form my primary research communities. My interview with the chief of Abekoase provided some understanding to this issue. He informed me that one of the reasons was that a very large section of River Arsuman was flowed through Abekoase and Huniso communities. The members of these two communities therefore relied on the river much more than the other three. When the spillage occurred, it was therefore natural that the residents of Abekoase and Huniso would make more noise than those of Samahu, Tebe and Pepesa who had a very remote interaction with the river. These views are supported by research work of Akaabza and Darimani (2001) and Dummet (1980). Secondly, the chief mentioned that since the spillage occurred, Samahu, Tebe and Pepesa were not as involved (interested) in the supporting the other two communities (See interview quotation below). I also observed a dis-interest from the two communities when I established contact for my research in the field. In his opinion, the attitude of the communities, especially the chiefs changed and they got more involved and interested in joining the other two communities, after the incident gained much publicity, with calls for GFG to compensate affected communities. The chief mentions that the meeting at his house was the first that three chiefs were attending, despite other gatherings (for example the October 16 community assembly), which they did not attend.

³⁴ The other three are Samahu, Pepesa and Tebe

“...The chiefs of Samabu, Pepesa and Tebe were not very engaging. The chiefs of Pepesa, Samabu and Tebe were more concerned about resettlement, monetary settlement and employment opportunities. They did not mention anything about the river. From the beginning, the spill had been regarded as a problem affecting Huniso and Abekoase village. The Arsuman River has huge portions in these two villages, they are the biggest and the communities depend on the river more than others. Huniso and Abekoase villages are really close to the mine and for a long time have suffered from negative impacts of mining. When the problem occurred, the other three villages, - Samabu, Tebe and Pepesa were not really supportive and distanced themselves especially when five people were arrested in Abekoase. But when NGOs got involved and the media had the story everywhere, the chiefs of these villages realized that there is an opportunity to benefit through compensation. Their involvement was even more resonated when the minister stated that he would be visiting the villages. (Interview with an Opinion Leader – Huniso Village)

Despite the conflicting views and perceptions, the five chiefs were able to come up with a list of demands to present to the company. As shown in the table below, it appeared as if all the issues identified by the chiefs were combined together into a long list of demands. There wasn't any evidence that members of these communities were consulted on this issue, and because there was limited time before the minister arrived, the chiefs opted to settle for the six items. One of the issues that was omitted from the list, but which had been voiced by the chief of Abekoase was that of “resettlement”. The Chief of Huniso mentioned that the group chose to drop this issue, off course after very heated discussions and arguments with their counterpart from Abekoase, who had proposed it. The other four held the view that resettlement was not an option for them, because the land they inhabit is an ancestral heritage and asking the company to move the villages is cheaply sacrificing the identity of the people. This discussions did crop up again and again during my fieldwork, and I did indeed observe and also through my interviews that the majority of residents from Abekoase village would have preferred to be resettled. On the outside, they held a very good and logical point. According to the chief, as long as the communities live in close proximity to the mines, these problems will never be resolved and the mining operations will always affect the local communities. But on a deeper level, the majority if not all of the residents of Abekoase were migrants who as described in section 1.2 of this chapter, migrated into the area either as prospective workers or miners. They do not share the same attachment to the land or the river as the more indigenous communities like Pepesa and Huniso. This view is supported by numerous other researches in Tarkwa (see Akaabza and Darimani, 2001; Ansah, 2006; Kwame, et al, 2008; Dummet, 1980).

Table 4-1: Community Demands after Cyanide Spillage in 2001

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternative sources of water – boreholes, wells• Social investments in communities, - schools, clinics, community centres, toilets, electricity• Infrastructural development – electricity, roads• Demand to release free land for galamsey work• Clean up of river Arsuman• Improved community relations• Creation of Employment Opportunities <p>Source: Minutes of the Ministers Meeting with the Communities (1.11.2001); Heritage Newspaper Issue: (03:11:2001); Interview with Abekoase, Huniso Chiefs</p>

4.4 The battle

The reactions from the NGOs and the media had two key impacts on the state of affairs in regards to the spillage issue. One, the demand that GFG accepts responsibility and adequately compensates the affected communities had motivated the representatives of these groups to organize themselves and come up with a common stand (see table 4-1 above). Secondly, for the first time in Tarkwa's mining history, a state Minister was making an official visit to consult with the communities and mediate for a possible solution. The visit by the minister was the beginning of several other events that preceded the settlement of this dispute. In the following section, I discuss these key events with a focus of showing the role played by various actors and how they exercise their influence and power to influence the final outcome.

4.4.1 The Minister's Visit (01:11:2001)

The hour had come and fifteen days after the spillage, the Minister of Environment, Science and Technology made his long awaited visit to Tarkwa. Accompanying the Minister from Accra was the Managing Director of GFG, the Public Relations Director from Gold Fields International head office in South Africa, the Director of EPA in Accra and the Mines Management team from Minerals Commission. The Minister and his delegation arrived from Accra aboard a GFG – a chartered plane belonging to GFG (Daily Graphic 02.11.2001), normally used for transporting staff and equipment to and

from Accra. Since the company has an airstrip within its premises, the Minister landed to be received by the Tarkwa manager, the DCE and the Apintohene; the DCE is the political head of the district and the Apintohene is the provincial chief or owner of the land under GFG concession. After a series of meetings with company officials, details of which I could not access, the Minister and his team began the official tour of the affected communities. The Vice Chancellor of the University of Mines and Technology and the Executive secretary of the Ghana Chamber of Mines also accompanied the minister to the communities.

The meeting that was anticipated to be a landmark in the history of mining communities in Tarkwa did not last for over half an hour. A reporter from the Heritage Newspaper, who covered the story, informed me that the meeting had failed to live up to its expectations. Not only was it short, but also the assembled community members expected that the Minister to take a firm stand on the spillage issue (Story captured in Heritage, 3.11.01). The members, and their chiefs were expecting that Minister would spare some time to listen to their grievances at least visit the site where the dead fish were first discovered. Neither of this happened, instead the minister spoke about the importance of mining and the special role that Gold Fields Ghana has played a development partner of the country He implored the local communities to respect this good partnership, joking that one day GFG will develop Tarkwa into a mining giant the same way it did in South Africa (see quote below).

“Gold Fields Ghana has an international reputation of good social and environmental reputation and that is why country has granted it a long-term mining contract. He urged the affected communities to show good will to the company as his vision was for Tarkwa to turn into a world-class mining town like Johannesburg”. (Statement by the MEST during the 1.11.01 meeting – Captured in Heritage, Issue on 3:11:01)

In the story captured widely in most local media, each speaker who took to the floor praised GFG and mentioned this “small incident”, referring to the spillage should not be the reason to generate animosity between the communities and the company. Among the speakers was the DCE, the Apintohene, the UMAT vice chancellor and the EPA Director from Accra. At the end of the meeting, the Minister asked the chiefs if they had any grievances to share with him. He however mentioned that he was running out of time, so he would appreciate a written document. Fortunately for the communities, they had scribbled their claims (see table above), which they presented to him. The chief of Abekoase informed me that he was disappointed with this gesture, because he hoped that this could be an opportunity for the community to articulate their concerns to the

Minister (see quote below).

“Our people have really suffered under the strong arm of the companies. When the minister came, for us it was an opportunity to take him round so that he can see what people in Accra do not see. We wanted him to stay until 13.30pm so that he see how our houses shake when the company blasts its ore and also take him to the site where the members of my village found the dead fish. This did not happen, and we were really disappointed” (Interview with chief of Abekoase village)

In his concluding remarks, he called upon the Apintohene, a traditional leader overseeing all the communities, to read out the proposed plan of action. It was not clear why the Apintohene was chosen to officiate the closing ceremony. In my opinion, I think it was a message being communicated to the chiefs and local communities that the Apintohene is the boss of the local communities. I did not find any evidence to show that consultations on this matter had taken place between the chiefs and the Apintohene, and I suspect that this was an opportunity for him to remind the community of his role and the provincial chief. He began by stating that he is dismayed by what he called the “greed” of his chiefs. He requested his subjects and chiefs to refrain from making decisions without consulting the traditional councils. He also highlighted the vital importance that GFG has played in supporting the activities of the traditional council through faithful payment of royalties and friendly partnerships. He called upon the communities to remain calm as the government and company sought an appropriate solution. Finally, he read from a piece of paper, some of the steps that will be implemented as a starting point to resolving the problem. This included:

Box 4-1: Government’s Recommendations

1. There will be Cyanide Investigative Committee (CIC) to investigating the sources and causes of the spill and the magnitude of the impact. The CIC will be comprised of the Water Resources Commission, EPA and the Minerals Commission experts.
2. Secondly, he called upon the Tarkwa DCE, as a requirement from the President that the five villagers arrested be released as a matter of urgency.
3. He demanded that an amicable resolution to this problem be sought so that communities and the mining companies can co-exist in harmony.
4. To do this, he called for a meeting between the company representatives, representatives of the communities and the EPA in his offices on the 3rd of December 2001. This meeting was meant to act as a mediation process between the communities and mining company for appropriate compensation. At the same time, during this meeting, the findings of the CIC will be disclosed publicly.

Source: Interview with Heritage Newspaper Reporter

4.4.2 WACAM Responds to the Minister's Visit

“...Why did he bring this top-level delegation and did not give the community a chance to voice their concerns. From the media reports, it was evident that the government was playing government propaganda. We also had our own people in the meeting to gather as much information as possible” (Interview with WACAM representative in Tarkwa)

The only hope for affected communities was item four of the proposition by the Minister and his delegation. They had a second opportunity to meet with the minister at his offices in Accra on the 3rd of December 2001. I use the word “hope” because, if the November 1st meeting was anything to go by, the communities needed a different strategy if their voices are to be heard in this discussions or decision-making process. The speech by the Apintohene had been typed out, meaning that the contents had been pre-meditated prior to the gathering. It was therefore not based on the November 1st meeting, meaning that a decision on the outcome had probably been reached already. There wasn't much time on the side of the community though as they had one month to prepare for the Accra meeting. The Apintohene had passed a strong message to the chiefs, and there was expectation that the chiefs will probably exercise more restraint in how they approach this next phase.

The NGOs on the other hand, regarded the 1st November meeting as a failure. In their opinion, the minister had failed to take a firm position on the matters affecting mining communities and instead used the opportunity to praise the mining company. According to an NGO representative, the strategy adopted by the government minister was one of intimidating the communities (See quote above). The fact that the Minister travelled on a plane owned and managed by the mining company and had closed-door meetings at the company before visiting the communities, raised questions about his objectivity and impartiality to the issue at hand. He reinstated the fact that during the meeting, each speaker shied away from dealing with the issues at hand, instead focusing on the importance of GFG and the role that mining plays in the Ghanaian economy. With minimum opportunity for the communities to voice their concerns, the NGOs feared that this was a strategy to frustrate and suppress the possibilities of resistance from the communities. The NGO representative also singled out the speech by the Apintohene as a disappointment. This was because local communities in mining areas rely on the chiefs as custodians of their rights and interests. By the Apintohene coming out strongly to condemn the decisions by some of his chiefs to allow their subjects to vandalize the company's vehicle was seen as a strategy by the Apintohene to distance himself from the concerns of the affected communities.

“We knew that the decision to call for a mediation meeting in Accra was also a strategy by the company and the government to isolate the communities further and intimidate their efforts. We therefore had to act fast to ensure that the villagers are well aware of what lies ahead of them”
(Interview with WACAM representative)

The representative from WACAM was convinced that the every power was working against the affected communities. With the Apintohene distancing himself from the issue at hand and the events at the November 1st meeting, there was need for NGOs to support the community’s cause. WACAM’s operations are situated in Tarkwa where they run a small secretariat manned by a staff of four. At the Tarkwa office, their central activity is community mobilization, which is in charge of sensitizing and creating awareness among mining communities on the impacts of mining. Strategic decisions on how to engage and which areas to work on are however made at the head-office in Accra where both the Director and core director are based. WACAM claims to advocate for local communities in mining areas, through awareness raising and lobby. In their strategic plan, WACAM’s vision is to empower local communities to be able to negotiate for their rights and protect their interests (WACAM, 2006).

In what I perceived as a counter - reaction to the Minister’s visit, WACAM organised a community awareness meeting just two days after the Minister had left Tarkwa. All the five affected community members and chiefs were invited to the forum planned for the 3rd of November at the Abekoase community centre. The delegation from Accra was going to include, representatives from five organizations, namely, TWN, WACAM, YFAG, LEJ and CEPIL³⁵ (WACAM – Draft Invitation Letter). According to the letter of invitation, the subject of the meeting was to sensitize mining communities on their rights and entitlements as stakeholders within mining areas. According to the Community Mobilizing Officer, the activity was funded by WACAM’s budget, though a separate source from within the organization claimed that this event was separately funded by contingency fund of Oxfam America – a human rights watchdog and affiliate of the UK based Oxfam International. WACAM’s invitation was only forwarded to the chiefs of the affected communities, respective members and the four organizations listed above. None of the government agencies, mining companies or even the EPA was invited. The Apintohene did not receive an invitation, a move that showed that the NGOs had probably decided to alienate themselves from any member who was part of the Minister’s delegation. I observed this behaviour while in the field, where activities organized by WACAM for example was very limited to lobbyists or those groups who shared their ideals or positions. It was therefore evident that their target group was the local communities and other like – minded groups. None of my respondents shed information on the on the behind-the-scene-planning of

³⁵ Third world network (TWN); Centre for Public Law and Interest (CEPIL); Youth for Action Ghana (YFAG) and League of Environmental Journalists (LEJ)

this event, but I was convinced that some closed door planning had taken place after the first press conference on the 17th of October between the five organisations. WACAM Convenes a Community Awareness Forum (03:11:2001)

Two days after the Minister left for Accra, WACAM convened a community awareness forum at the same location. The meeting began at about 10:00am. It had been scheduled on a Friday, so that a greater audience could participate. Fridays are referred to as *taboo* days in these communities, during which members of the villages are not allowed to go to the farm or engage in any form of labour work. Most communal events like market days, communal cleaning and labour days are set on Fridays so there is a guarantee of maximum participation. The program began on time and the whole theme was “*Life is more precious than gold*”. I later came to discover that the same theme is WACAM’s main campaign slogan. Two items formed the agenda of this meeting (WACAM – Draft Agenda – 03.11.01), one - mining and its impact to communities and two, negotiating with the mining company for compensation.

I could not find the report on the proceedings of this meeting. I however interviewed a journalist from Peace FM, one of the local radio stations in Tarkwa, who had covered the story on behalf of the radio station. I was intrigued at the his recollection of the event, that I chose to past an excerpt of my interview with him in this text (See below)

Box 4-2: Strategy by WACAM

“WACAM director began by commending the communities for rejecting the water from the villages. He reminded the communities about the spill of 1998 where no compensation was provided and further asked that every member of the affected communities should never forget to learn from that. He then invited a Lecturer from the University of Ghana, Legon who spoke about the impact of mining in Ghana and especially in Tarkwa. He revealed how mining companies are exploiting local communities by encroaching on their land, polluting their water sources and getting away with it. He made reference to the mining laws which he claimed were too liberal and tended to place emphasis on mine expansion, foreign investment, but very vague on community and environmental issues. He singled out section on dispute resolution and compensation which he mentioned as being very vague and assuming that local communities have the capability to engage the mining company on the same level. He called upon the chiefs to stand their ground as custodians of local knowledge and community resources. He encouraged them to rally behind their communities and not be drawn into the chieftaincy hierarchy disputes that have since separated them from the people. A representative from the third world network took the podium next and challenged the community to fight for their rights. He argued that mining multinationals use the strategy of “divide and rule” – where they look out for the cracks within a system to weaken the community. He mentioned that as it stands and from the minister’s visit, the some of the chiefs, in this case the Apintobene has already been compromised. The Minister serves the government that allocated the mining concession and granted GFG the mining right. I do not think that he has the power to hold the company accountable, he stated. He used examples from Indonesia, India, Botswana and Sudan, where local communities in collaboration with lobby groups have rallied against oppression from mining companies for effective compensation and social responsibility of their actions. The director of CEPIL, a paralegal NGO, mentioned that his organization was willing to support local communities through litigation processes and the affected communities should not fear the company. The speaker from Youth for Action – Ghana, challenged the youth to rise up in the villages as tomorrow’s leaders and should not succumb to the failures of the older generation. The final speaker was the Director of WACAM who reinforced the need for solidarity among the affected communities and strong partnerships with the lobby groups represented at the meeting. He mentioned that GFG was a powerful player in the mining sector and the communities cannot engage them on his or her own. They needed to be unified, have a strong leader and also negotiate for compensations that make them better and not worse. All the NGOs present offered to support the communities and requested they begin the process of appointing a leader amongst them and also strong representatives for the planned meeting in Accra”

Source: Interview with a journalist from Peace FM – Tarkwa)

From the quote above, I understood the influence of the coalition between the five organizations. They all play different roles and have varying responsibilities, but shared the same position in as far as the effects of mining were concerned. From analysing their work (see table below), I was able to note that all the four including WACAM had experience in lobby work and had gained reputation in the field based on their achievements. This was going to be an added value to the struggle by the local communities who did lack the power to engage directly with the mining company. As lobbyists, all these NGOs shared radical approaches that some could be regarded as being anti-privatization and held the view that local interests in mining areas were no-one’s priority. Their approach to advocating for local communities was driven by a

movement of “rights-based-approaches” to development where social, development or environmental problems were framed as a human rights issue. In the west, the foundations of this ways of thinking were developed under the auspices of Oxfam Australia, an affiliate of a lobby giant – Oxfam America (see http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/mining/docs/minerals_council.pdf).

Box 4-3: Description of WACAM's Core partners

CEPIL comprised of legal practitioners, mostly from the Faculty of Law at the University of Ghana, Legon. It was established with the main aim of using the law as a tool to make justice accessible and affordable to poor and marginalized communities and individuals. The Center also aims at making government and private actors accountable for their actions or inactions which adversely affect individuals and communities (www.cepil.org.gh). A key contribution of CEPIL within the mining sector has been providing paralegal aid to affected communities or individuals, and who lack the resources to seek legal advice. They have successfully represented mining communities including the Abekoase and Huniso villages being discussed in this chapter (see <http://www.cepil.org.gh/courtcases.htm>).

Third World Network – Africa on the other hand is a research and advocacy group based in Accra. As a research based NGO, TWN has established partnerships with solid reputable scientists from local and international universities, who mostly engage in undertaking research for advocacy work. An example of their most recent research report is by Dr. Thomas Akabzaa, a geologist and leading researcher on mining issues in Ghana. He has recently published research findings in a report titled, “Ghana Section of Breaking the Curse” (see <http://documents.twnafrica.org/fiscal-regime-ghana.pdf>) where he identifies the policy gaps and misconceptions about the role that mining plays in the Ghanaian economy. A second important research report, and which was produced in the course of this struggle was titled “Boom and Dislocation”, a study of impacts of mining sector investment in Ghana on mining communities. This report was later submitted to the technical committee on structural adjustment participatory review initiative on Ghana.

Finally, Youth for Action Ghana was a movement that gained pre-eminence during the John Rawlings era. It emerged out of the University of Ghana, bringing together mostly youth to rally the nation against authoritarian rule. With the emergence of democratic principles, YFAG embarked on defending rights of unemployed youth especially in mining areas of Ghana. Finally, the League of Environmental Journalists are a Kumasi – based lobby group comprised by practicing individuals. In their mission statement, they claim that, they are journalists concerned about societal and environmental interests. This group of individuals use their various media houses (print and mass media) to spread information to a wider audience on environmental issues, including mining. A key achievement of the LEJ is the weekly “Western Page” campaign which is a documentation of key issues; community concerns and issues that pose threats to communities in mining areas. This campaign has become a useful tool for lobbying, currently employed by WACAM in their programs (WACAM, 2006)

Source: Field Survey, 2007; WACAM, 2006; TWN Website

This forum was used as a platform to inform the communities, but also sensitize them on the effects of mining. Immediately after this meeting, I was informed of a closed-door meeting, which was convened between the five village chiefs and WACAM officials. Representatives from other organizations left for Accra while the director of WACAM remained behind. According to a source within this meeting, the main goal was to provide a forum where the village could identify a leader in readiness to lead this struggle. I was told that WACAM informed the communities that a leader among them was

important as a sign of solidarity so that they have one voice speaking on their behalf. He cited the example of 1998 when the affected communities were very disorganised and each village made claims to the company but got nothing in return. This leader was to have certain characteristics. For example, he needed to be educated and knowledgeable of the issues affecting the communities. He needed to have experience in dealing with mining companies. Lastly, the leader should be someone who could withstand pressure from the powerful players like the Apintohene or the government. While making these suggestions, it became apparent that he was guiding the discussions towards the chief of Abekoase, who met most of the characteristics listed.

This is, of course, where disputes arose. According to the chief of Pepesa, the chief of Huniso wanted to be the leader because his village is the largest among the other five and also since he was related to the Apintohene and therefore felt he stood a chance of being heard. He voiced his concerns about those chiefs who do not hold any position within the chieftaincy hierarchy. The chief of Abekoase was adamant that the Apintohene was their boss, but he had already showed that he was supporting the company and was also on the government side. During these arguments, WACAM Director intervened and tried to convince the rest of the five leaders that Abekoase's chief stood as the best option. During an interview with the Director of WACAM, I came to learn that Nana Moloba, the chief of Abekoase village was one of the founders of WACAM and was very active the resettlement struggle of 1998 and the forceful evictions that the area had experienced (See quote below)

"I am not sure the chiefs understood what it meant to be a leader during the struggle. In my opinion, I was convinced they thought there were privileges that came with leadership. They thought it was an opportunity to chop. Personally, I knew Nana Moloba, because he was very instrumental in the Struggle after the Tarkwa mine was acquired by GFG. He was among the co-founders of WACAM. He was educated relative to the other chiefs and was therefore able to understand the dynamics in the area. The fact that he was a settler himself meant that he was not very much interested in the chieftaincy hierarchy like the other more indigenous chiefs. According to the traditional council, if you are a settler, you do not have the possibility of advancing to become an Apinto or Paramount chief as those positions are reserved for the members of the royal family. Nana Moloba was therefore better placed to resist temptations for possible divisions and all these factors augured well for him. That is why I pushed for his selection" (Interview: WACAM Representative)

The involvement of WACAM had stimulated the local communities to think of an agenda before the meeting in Accra. From my field interviews, it was apparent that before WACAM came onto the scene, the local communities had no strategy of how to deal with this issue or how to progress with the negotiation. One could however argue

also that it had been a WACAM driven process so far and that, while the community now had a leader and an agenda, it remained to be seen how they could engage the mining company on their own within the direct support from WACAM. This test would come during the meeting with the minister in Accra where as expected, NGOs will not be represented. In the meantime however, WACAM in collaboration with three other lobby groups had organized public protests against what they referred to as “GFG’s infringement on community right to life” (WACAM, 2004:16).

4.4.3 Public Protests in Tarkwa (04:11:2001)

The public protests of November 4th 2001 seem to have caught everyone by surprise, but the organizers. According to the chief of Samahu, who participated in the closed-door meeting organized by WACAM, he did was not aware of any protests planned (See quote below. Even though he participated in the meeting between the chiefs and WACAM, he was not aware that a public protest had been planned.

“During the meeting with WACAM, he never mentioned that they were planning a demonstration. Some of us suspected that he had probably discussed it with the Abekoase chief, because they seemed really close. I suspect they planned for this rallies in the evening because Nana did not return to the palace on that night” (Interview: Chief of Samahu Village)

A police constable at the Tarkwa police station informed me that he was on duty that morning and received a call from his boss in Sekondi who informed him that there was a planned demonstration by WACAM in Tarkwa. His boss had called to inquire whether WACAM had applied for a permit as required by law or not. He confided that, whether they (WACAM) had a permit or not, the rally should not be allowed to proceed. The police officer, whose identity he requested that I conceal, mentioned that when he checked through the records, they showed that WACAM had indeed submitted a request for a permit (WACAM (01.11.09) – Submitted to Regional Police Commander – Ghana Police Service – Tarkwa). They had also requested police security during the mass protests. The copy of the permit, which he showed me, was dated 1st November; the same day the Minister was holding the community meeting in the area. While the police constable could not comment on whether the police were involved in providing security for the demonstrators, he mentioned that sometimes, the district station receives orders from “above” not to be involved in issues as sensitive as this ones. He argued, that there has been increased mistrust between the local communities in mining areas, since the arrests made on the 16th of October, and the general perception perpetrated by some NGOs was that the police are partisan to the company because GFG funded the renovation of the Tarkwa police and prisons (GFG, 2004). This view is also supported

by TWN's research on the impacts of mining in Tarkwa.

So when were the protests planned? I wondered. I came to learn that while the WACAM Director was meeting with the chiefs on 3rd November 2001, the representatives from the four organizations believed to be headed for Accra had convened in a small lodge in Tarkwa to plan the protests. I inquired why the planning was very secretive in the first place. A representative of TWN informed me that information is a powerful tool in lobby work. He argued that the success of any lobby strategy depended largely on how one is able to deny the other party access to information. In his opinion, as long as the government and the mining company did not know their plans, then they would lack a counter strategy. He believed that the government was not expecting a reaction from the NGOs, which was a very good thing. The secret meeting was therefore a negotiation tactic. His view is supported research by Bacharach and Fowler (1980), which finds out that bargaining tactics and counter – tactics largely influence outcomes of negotiation processes. In their theorizing they argue that each actor on the negotiation table engages in developing bargaining tactics that deny the other any knowledge about the opponents next move or strategy. Volker (2006) also finds out that NGOs engaged in lobby work withhold information as a strategy for catching their targets by surprise.

*“We participated in the training in the UK organised by Oxfam International. One of the lessons we got, as lobbyists was how to be **secretive** in planning. You need to ensure that your enemies do not know your plans. Don't be very predictable. I knew that even in the community, there were stooges supporting the company, the government or the Apintobene. So we had not shared this idea, because we did not want it to messed up. We met in a small restaurant in Tarkwa with a small group and planned the whole thing (Interview with Third World Network representative)*

During this private meeting, the representatives of the four organizations drew up a program of the protests and distributed responsibilities among themselves. According to the planning report, the Ghana TUC had donated an office strategically located at the market centre in Tarkwa to WACAM. This office was to be used as a secretariat to coordinate the public rallies and campaigns. Two WACAM staff members and 15 volunteers from the affected communities would man and coordinate the activities of the secretariat from the office. The secretariat was to be open for the inhabitants of the affected communities to come and record their statements and show solidarity by signing a petition against the mining company. This was regarded as a strategy for generating ownership and solidarity as well as collective action from the groups. The roles were distributed as follows: the Youth For Action Ghana would mobilize young people in the villages and encourage them to participate in the public rally and demonstrations. This

was because the majority of the disillusioned and frustrated section of the communities was comprised of youth who had either lost their jobs in the mines, been evicted from their galamsey sites or were just unemployed. Having this group on board was going to be very useful force for the campaign.

Another member of the coalition, the Third World Network (TWN), had previously commissioned research on the social, economic and ecological impact of mining in Tarkwa. This study had been commissioned before the spill happened and was therefore seen as a timely resource or piece of evidence during the protests. The research also revealed that the challenge communities were facing was because they did not have any objective intermediary, like a strong lobby group, to fight for their interests (see section 3.3.1). The WACAM staff positioned at the Secretariat had the responsibility of collecting statements from communities affected by mining and compiling the petition that would then be submitted to the mining company and other government stakeholders. Petitions including personal statements with individual signatures had become a strong lobby tool, especially among lobby groups trying to demonstrate the real impact of mining operations. By the end of the rallies, WACAM had been able to compile a total of 5,000 petitions with signatures, the highest number ever. The petition included issues such as loss of ancestral land, contraction of diseases, forceful eviction from land, harassment by company security, loss of livelihoods among others.

Finally, CEPIL was charged with the responsibility of identify the gaps within the mining laws and procedures in as far as compensation and dispute resolution was concerned. The analysis by CEPIL, which was published in WACAM's annual report for 2002, indicated that the mining acts in Ghana do not offer much protection to affected communities when it comes to dispute resolution and compensation negotiations. The act vaguely states that in times of a dispute, the parties need to negotiate between themselves and that, in the event of a stalemate, the Minister of Environment, Science and Technology can intervene. CEPIL's position was that they the act failed to realize that local mining communities represent the most uneducated, poor sections of society. They are situated in rural areas and their understanding and ability to negotiate with powerful actors like mining companies was definitely limited. Leaving such a section open is making allowing mining companies leverage in such negotiations, states the report. The report concludes by arguing that such lapses in our mining laws have tended to work in favour of the company while providing very little protection to the vulnerable communities. With the roles well distributed and evidence ready, the demonstrations

were underway. The public demonstrations were planned at two levels. One, there was going to mass protests through the streets of Tarkwa, and also a live mass awareness campaign on radio. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, radio plays a key role in initiating public debate on any issue that is of concern in Ghana (Kwansah-Aidoo, 2003). A representative of WACAM referred to the radio as the “public court” as it gives listeners an opportunity to call in and publicly declare their stand on the issue being discussed. In his opinion, this was a viable medium for mobilizing national support (see quote below)

“People in Ghana listen to the Radio a lot. You will realize that there are very many FM stations in Tarkwa for example. It is the public court. People listen to radio and contribute to debates by calling and sharing their views. We wanted to ensure that as many people as possible to hear the news. Not everyone is able to come to the streets, but almost everyone has a radio. Our main mission is to demystify this lie that mining is helping Tarkwa. We want people to know the truth. The truth is that life is more precious than gold” (Interview with WACAM representative)

Peace FM, a nation-wide radio station and whose chief editor is a member of the League of Environmental Journalists hosted the radio show. The show was organised in such a way that members of the public could call and ask the hosts’ questions as well as comment on the topic being discussed. The hosts at PEACE FM included one representative from WACAM, the chief of Abekoase, a scientist from the University of Ghana, Legon and a lawyer who is also the founder of CEPIL. According to the script, to which I listened to while in the field, close to 500 members of the public called in. The radio broadcast was conducted in the local language and my research assistant’s interpretation revealed the anger of the callers and frustration upon learning what was happening in Tarkwa. Of course during an informal meeting with a friend who works at GFG, he mentioned that many times WACAM has been accused of identifying people in advance, paying them to call and make strong allegations against the company or the government. I was not able to validate this allegation. The radio show lasted close to three hours and received good audience at least from those who could recall. The street protests also lasted about the same time. The Ghana Youth for Action and CEPIL rallied close to 2,000 demonstrators through the streets of Tarkwa all the way to the gates of GFG. The front liners held a placard that read: **“... Remember the 10,000 people who lost their land; Remember the 12 villages that disappeared? Remember the 5,000 who lost their jobs?And now River Arsuman is dead...ENOUGH is ENOUGH”**. The four NGO representatives were barred from entering the company premises to present their list of concerns. When the group arrived at the gate, they were

presented with a letter, titled; *Request for Visit*. I learned that WACAM had approached the company for permission to allow a group of four NGOs to visit the site of the spillage on the same date as that of the strike. In the letter, there was no mention of a public protest, rather a “*visit by WACAM and a few members of the civil society organizations*” (WACAM, 18.11.2001). The response which was submitted to the team at the gate turned down WACAM’s request, with the GFG accusing WACAM for ‘maliciously accusing GFG based on inaccurate information (GFG – Official Letter to WACAM – 21:10:2001) (see excerpt of letter below).

“...Had you made a request to visit the site and gather the correct information before going to the media, it would have been considered. However you chose to go to the media with an absolutely inaccurate statement and maliciously accused Gold Fields Ghana of attempting a cover-up. Thus, I can only believe that the purpose of your visit would be to do more of the same and the results would be an extension of your unethical behaviour. Therefore, I will not allow the requested visit” (Richard W. Graeme, (21:10:2001) MD – GFG – In a letter responding to WACAM’s request to visit the site of the spillage)

After being denied access to the company, the group turned back chanting and singing. The procession was being covered by members of the league of environmental journalists, a group of media representatives who have been involved in the case for mining communities. From the reports, it was indicated that the chiefs from the other four villages participated in the mass protests, but during my interviews with them, they denied participating, citing fear of being victimized or arrested by the police.

MEST and GFG Responds to the Public Protests

The protests received massive coverage on both print and mass media. I was able to collect a total of forty-five newspaper cuttings from various media houses that covered the same story. A large number of the stories had also been captured on online resources of newspapers with portal websites or international online resources. The coverage was not as major on television. I was informed that this was because the government - controlled Ghana TV censored most aspects of the story. According to the organizers of the protests, the protests of the mass demonstrations and public awareness campaign on radio was the coverage it received as well as the reactions it generated (see quote 1 below). He was referring to the response by the Minister of EST (see quote 2 below). The Tarkwa mine manager issued a press statement where he referred to NGOs perpetrators of disasters and inciters of peace loving Ghanaians. He urged the public to be weary of groups masquerading as protectors of local rights (see quote 3 below).

(1) *“The most important aspect of protests or campaign like ours is to get a response. That means that we have gotten someone’s attention”* **(Representative From WACAM as part of interview)**

(2) *“The cyanide issue is being investigated. Any one who gets involved in demonstrations like what we saw on the news is committing a criminal offence and will face the law”* **(MEST quoted in the Daily Graphics – 4th November 2001)**

(3) *“NGOs are known for creating disasters. The people of Ghana should be careful of some of these NGOs who pretend to serve the interests of local communities”* **(Tarkwa mine manager - in Heritage – 6th November 2001)**

Within the communities, nothing had changed. The affected communities became a popular topic of discussion by the public and because of publicity in the local and international media, WACAM and its partners gained a lot of popularity. During my pre-dissertation search on Google, I came across 10,500 hits on WACAM in Ghana and 150 hits on Abekoase, Huniso and Cyanide spillage of 2001 in Ghana. These statistics are, of course, of great relevance to the lobby work and awareness rising as close to 95% percent of these hits were directly related to the cyanide spill of 2001. This might be an argument for the observation that the spill, like many other environmental problems, is a window of opportunity for emergence of social movements and lobbyists (see Bryant and Bailey, 1997; Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). On the other hand the immense online coverage as compared to that of the communities raises questions about the objectives and interest of NGOs in mining areas, as stated by an official of the EPA in Tarkwa (see quote below).

“... Lobby groups like WACAM are driven by the zeal to gain publicity and recognition locally but most importantly internationally. This is how they raise funds for the salaries of the staff and families. The local communities continue languishing in the same state” (Interview with District EPA Officer)

Another slightly cynical reaction after the protests was that of the Mine Manager who equated lobby groups like WACAM to “disaster creators”, but who do not help local communities in any way (see quote 3 above). As in the quote above, he alleged that lobby groups are quick to incite local communities and generate disasters mostly to fund raise from abroad. In his statement, he had cautioned the local communities to be wary of such groups and in future ask them about how they spend the funds they receive on behalf of the communities. This strong allegation is of course captured in the literature, (see Bryant and Bailey, 1997) but the same questions were raised by some of my respondents during my fieldwork. Unfortunately for WACAM and others, the cynical views seemed to be carrying the day at this point in time. Nothing had changed at the local level. The affected communities were still paying the price of the spillage. Many did

not trust the water from the river any more and the women were still covering close to six kilometres to fetch water. The only change was the rising tensions in Huniso and Abekoase villages, with police patrols a very common occurrence. My research assistant who comes from Tarkwa mentioned that after the protests, police and company officials would patrol the borders of the mining company and communities to ensure that there were no trespassers or vandalism. He however mentioned that the police did not harass anyone or make any arrests, but their mere presence was quite a scare to the local communities. With slightly over two weeks, left to the December 3rd meeting, it remained to be seen what WACAM was now up to.

4.4.4 International Campaign on “STOP CORPORATE ABUSE” (20:11:2001)

The international campaign also came as a surprise and like the local protests; no one was expecting such mass attention to the issue. International campaigns have been fruitful strategies, but just like the local demonstrations, they largely depend on their timing, the influence of the team and how targeted they are. According to Volker et al, 2006, international campaigns are aimed at getting the attention of the international community by painting a negative image of the multinational company by revealing the information that rarely appears on their websites. The campaigns and lobby officer of Oxfam America’s Ghana office shares Volker (2006) view by stating that the performance of multinationals largely depends on the public image that it presents to its shareholders, investors and mother countries (see quote below). The director of WACAM however argues that this is a very recent phenomena and credit goes to the work of lobbyists who work so hard to raise awareness on the negative effects of multinationals which are rarely presented in their annual reports or during shareholders meetings. In the concluding section of this chapter, I will try and dive into some of these issues, but indeed the spillage occurred at a time when there was increased international pressure on foreign multinationals operating in developing countries to observe socially and environmentally sensitive investments (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001).

“...Most of the mining companies with large scale operations in Ghana are foreign. There are either headquartered abroad, post their market shares on foreign stock exchange platforms or have their financiers abroad. Because of their linkage abroad, multinationals are always very careful to maintain a positive public image. They do this by ensuring that only positive issues regarding their operations leave the country. Our work as lobbyists is to be able to dent a blow to the “fake” public image of multinationals, by bringing out the truth about how their operations do infringe the rights of local villages like Abekoase and Huniso (Interview with Campaigns and Lobby Advisor – Oxfam America)

The shares of the Gold Fields International for example are posted on the Johannesburg and London Stock Exchange markets respectively. In terms of ownership of the investment, 70% is owned by South Africa's Gold Fields International; 20% by Canadian IAM Gold and 10% by the government of Ghana (www.goldfields.co.za). In terms of market shareholding, the majority of individual and corporate shareholders are based in Germany. This is according to the Gold Fields 2007 Annual report. The United Kingdom also plays a central role in the performance of the company as the group shares of the Gold Fields group are posted on the London stock exchange. This evidently shows that GFG, like other multinationals, tend to be under more scrutiny and their operations would be more vulnerable to adverse publicity (Gladwin, 1987). WACAM's international campaign would therefore achieve desired goals and raise the much-needed reaction if all the above audience was reached. To achieve this target however, WACAM needed partnerships with other organizations that have the important outreach (see quote below)

“From the beginning, we knew that this will be a big challenge for us. We did not have enough money, capacity, knowledge and skills to undertake such a task. What we had though was networks. We had partnerships that we could tap into. GFG does not just depend on Ghana's gold. It also depends on the shares that are bought on London Stock Exchange and the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Most of the shareholders of GFG are based in South Africa, Europe and Canada. Their investments in Ghana, Peru and Australia were financed by IFC. Our goal was to make sure that all these stakeholders get to know who exactly GFG is. We wanted the plight of the local communities and the abuse of their rights to be publicized.

Mark Curtis (2006) wrote an article titled “Real power Struggle”. In this article he argues that addressing development issues in poor mining countries without creating awareness internationally, on the actions and effects of foreign mining companies is like talking about malaria without mentioning mosquitoes (Curtis, 2006:1). As an activist and initiator of Action Aid's “Stop Corporate Abuse” campaign, (http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/gold_rush.pdf) Curtis argues that for a long time the sustainable development agenda in developing countries has called for self-regulation to ensure responsible behaviour. This in his sixteen years of lobby work doesn't seem to work. He therefore believes that shareholders, investors, head-offices in Europe and the USA and the international community as a whole need to know what is going on in these countries. In a different study, (Balabanis et al, 1998) adds that such firms should be expected to operate in full understanding of the general welfare of the societies and to share benefits from their economic activities with society. When this responsibility is bridged, as was the case in Abekoase and Huniso, both Curtis (2006) and Balabanis et al,

(1998) call for international pressure barked by mass campaigns at local level. According to the director of WACAM, multinational companies command the following from the shareholders and partners abroad because of the performance, production and financial reports they present each year. Like Curtis above, he believed that the only way to be able to hold these companies accountable is by demanding that in addition to the performance reports, they should also submit the social and environmental impact reports of their work. But since this is a far-fetched dream, lobby groups like his in partnership with global partners will provide these realities through international campaign. The term used for such campaigns in lobby programs is “naming and shaming” where negative impacts of a given investments is publicly disclosed (Volker, et al, 2006).

In this description, we see a network of inter-linked organizations all playing different roles and targeting varying audiences. Like in local protests, international campaigns also depend on the tactics employed and the timing of the events. A good example in this case is the shareholders annual meeting, which coincided with the campaign, providing a wonderful platform to reveal the negative effects of GFG’s operations in Tarkwa.

Box 4-4: WACAM and Its Partnerships

*We knew that we were receiving the attention we needed, but there was still more to come. We divided our target audience into three main blocks. One was the USA, - home to IFC who finances the mining investments. For the USA, we engaged Oxfam America and Earthworks, two leading watchdogs who were coordinating a large campaign against mining operations in developing countries. They developed a two-day campaign strategy outside the World Bank offices in Washington and using the same material that we used during the radio broadcast, they sought audience with the IFC investment officials in charge of West Africa. Earth Works and Oxfam America had previously been influential in launching a massive campaign against Shell in Nigeria leading to reluctant payment of compensation to affected communities after spill. In Canada, we collaborated with a Canadian Advocacy group “Mining Watch” (www.miningwatch.ca) who organised mass protests outside the offices of IAM Gold a partner and shareholder of the GFG group in Ghana. In Canada, Mining watch was able to present our concerns and the statements from the communities to the management of IAM Gold. This was a big achievement for us. They also published a report on the historical analysis of the impact of Canadian mining companies in Ghana. Titled, “**Canadian Mining Companies Destroy Environment and Community Resources in Ghana**”. This article pointed towards a wide range of issues including the cyanide spillage and its linkage to human rights abuses in developing countries. In South Africa, we had established contact with the Netherlands institute for Southern Africa (NIZA), which is an advocacy group and watchdog working mostly on business and private relations in South African countries. NIZA is a member of an international campaign, Fatal Transactions, which brings together advocacy groups, NGOs and other practitioners to lobby against human rights abuses by mining multinationals in the developing south. NIZA gained its reputation after organizing a weeklong campaign against De Beers, a South African Diamond Mining Giant with mines in Botswana. Because of the protests, De Beers had to abandon its operations in Botswana, after a 15-year stint. NIZA also used the report from us and organised a public rally outside the offices of GFG headquarters in Johannesburg. Like Mining watch in Canada, NIZA presented the community concerns to the management of Gold Fields International and held a press conference in the presence of both local and international media the impact of the cyanide spill in Tarkwa and demanded that GFG appropriately compensates affected communities. In Europe, we partnered with two organizations - Global Witness, a UK based advocacy group and FLAN, an international membership lobby group headquartered in Heidelberg, Germany. Global Witness and FLAN organised electronic campaigns where they mobilized their members to draft letters of concern related to the cyanide spill and address them to the President of Ghana. The letters were copied to government Ghana’s EPA, GFG international and President of Ghana. These emails were also copied to advocacy groups that have been part of the campaigns. The effect of these letters was that they generated online blogs on the impact of mining in developing countries. The international campaign generated so much interest from all quarters and other countries especially in South Africa, Peru and Indonesia where GFG has mining operations joined the campaign. International media houses publicized the campaign forcing the GFG international management to call for an immediate solution to this problem. Our goal and that of the local communities had reached the international space and exactly where we wanted it. Local media was pushing for the government to take action, while the international advocacy groups called for increased accountability from shareholders and investment financiers”*

Source: (Interview with the Director of WACAM – Tarkwa)

Again, like the local protests, the international campaigns and lobby activities generated wide response and reactions locally and internationally. After two days, the World Bank and IFC Ghana country office acting on instructions from Washington sent a delegation to visit the affected communities. While I could not find any visit report in this regard, some community members who recalled the visit, mentioned that the World Bank officials visited - Samahu, Huniso, Tebe, Abekoase and Pepesa -communities in the area under GFG's concession. According to the Ghana Web (2004) – an online news and information exchange portal, the visit by the Bank officials revealed that by November the communities were just beginning to feel the effects of cyanide spill that occurred (Ghana Web, 2006). Attempts to verify this information from a bank official did not bear fruit, as I was not able to secure an interview. A GFG official however rejected this claim, stating that most of the health issues being experienced by the community are due to their poor hygiene. The company maintained that the communities could not hold them accountable any more after they rejected clean portable water (see earlier section). I followed up this discussion with Tarkwa general hospital admission and administration department. According to their records, most of the cases reported by patients from these communities of course included stomach- related ailments, throat infections and body rashes. This could however not be directly linked to the spill, though one of the nurses pointed out a marked increase in cases of stomach ailments and body rashes after the date of the spill, a finding shared by Akabzaa (2001) in his research.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES: *The Missing Majority*

Local and international lobby groups had stolen the show. The local communities had become less visible and their voices were only being heard through intermediaries. But how did they feel about the whole situation? I wondered. Did the lobby, campaigns and protests have any impact at the local level? I held a focus group discussion with farming groups (male and female) in Huniso village, where I posed this question to try and understand if the activities by WACAM and others had transformed their lives or empowered them in any way. In general, after a round of responses, it was evident that this the publicity generated by the lobby groups and the media was a source of hope in the communities. They were optimistic that their concerns and needs will be respected by the company and that the government will strive to be more accountable to its people, based on the local and international outcry. One respondent mentioned, that when he remembers 1995, at which time he lost his farming land to the company's expansion

plans, and there was no one to voice their concerns. They had to battle with the company and where it felt like grasshoppers fighting elephants (see quote below).

“During such negotiations, the company staff would just come to your house and inform you that you have been allocated a new farmland. This was done without any consultation or transparency. The DCE; EPA or Land Valuation Board could help us. So this is a really good opportunity that WACAM can speak for us. We have suffered for long” (Interview with a resident and farmer of Huniso Village),

So for some, WACAM played the role of a messiah or good Samaritan, trying to give them leverage against an otherwise powerful Goliath. A different view, however, from a vegetable trader and one, which will form some of my discussions at the end of this chapter, touched on the impact of lobby activities to the actual needs of the communities. She stated:

“I do agree with my brother that WACAM and Co. have been very good to us. But we have needs in our villages. We need clean drinking water, schools for our children, opportunities to sell our goods. Our land is being taken away and for example in Huniso, we do not even have a clinic. These are real needs. But these people just come here, talk, talk, ask us questions, write notes, take photos, and then they leave us with all these problems. We only see them again when there is a problem” (Interview with a Vegetable Trader during a Farmer’s Focus Group Discussion – Huniso Village)

4.5 Towards a “Settlement”

So indeed the campaigns and the lobby processes had created an opportunity of hope among the communities. Other sections of the village questioned the motives of lobby groups in terms of their role in addressing local needs. This question is not new in as far as NGOs as community intermediaries are concerned. At the policy level, it was yet to be seen whether the noise made by WACAM had had any effect or was just a ploy to gain reputation and personal glory.

4.5.1 Community – GFG Mediation Meeting (03:12:2001)

On the 1st of December, an official invitation was sent from the MEST to the various groups. A sample of the invitation letter to the communities indicated that each village should appoint not more than three representatives including the chief to represent the community at the meeting (MEST, 2001). In the invitation letter, the venue was slated for a conference room at MEST in Accra and the subject was mediation meeting between the community and GFG. Representing the government was the EPA Tarkwa Officer, the DCE of Tarkwa District Assembly, the Western Regional Minister and the MEST. Invitations had been copied to the Managing Director of Gold Fields Ghana, the Minister of Land, Forests and Mines and the Ghana Chamber of Mines. Attached to the invitation letter was a program with three items. First, was the opening speech; it did not

indicate the speakers. The second item was the CIC report followed by a section on community session. The last section was the conclusion and way forward. As usual the last aspect was a section for any other business. From the agenda, there was a feeling that community representatives would indeed get a chance to share their views and articulate their concerns. A senior scientist from the UMAT would mediate this meeting.

Despite the lobby and protests by the NGOs, none of the groups had been invited to the meeting, an omission that was regarded by a WACAM representatives as an attempt to intimidate deny local communities their “voices”. He however mentioned that, they had anticipated not to be invited and had a plan in mind (see quote below).

“We decided to prep the community representatives before the meeting. This was to give them confidence because for some of them, it was their first time in such a high level meeting. We paid for their bus ticket and accommodation in Accra on the eve of the meeting. It was a very terrible arrangement because some mentioned that they did not have money to come to Accra. The minister had not offered any facilitation money. This was a strategy to exclude the community”
(Interview with WACAM – Director)

Like in the first meeting when the Minister visited the affected communities, this December 3rd meeting was turning out into an arena for exercising the second phase of power as presented by Steven Luke (1974). While the works of Dahl (1957) and Weber (1956) focused on the behaviourist dimension of power where the influence of actors over others could be visibly discerned, Luke’s critique posited a scenario where power is exercised in “what does not happen” in decision-making settings. In his view a power is exercised when an actor is able to unwittingly neglect or consciously exclude issues from the agenda. This power he refers as “non-decision making” power which is usually commanded by an actor who has control over the decision- making agenda. From the quotation below, we can observe how decisions on the venue, participants and speeches are organized and deduce that agenda was organized in a manner that reduces any potentials for resistance from the affected communities. The choice by the minister not to disclose the contents of the CIC report might be unconscious, but could be read as an exercise of power on the other hand. In addition, Gavente (2007) refers to various forms of power where he speaks about “invisible” power to denote the body language, choice of venues for negotiations and participants to such meetings. By choosing the venue of the GFG head office as the venue for the meeting, one is creating an environment where it becomes extremely difficult to point out negatives about the company. The seating arrangement also where the “big” men get the high table and the rest use normal seats and table creates a “superior verses inferior” setting, which then determines the mood of

the discussions. The organizers of this meeting could be regarded as having set it up to protect the interests of the company.

“...When we arrived in Accra; we discovered that the venue of the meeting was not at the Minister’s office as the invitation letters read. The meeting was a high level forum. The then Minister of Environment and Science, Hon D.K. Fobih was chairing it. In attendance was the Acting Director of the Ministry of Environment and Science, the Member of Parliament of Prestea-Huni Valley Constituency who is our MP. Also in attendance were the Acting Executive Director, EPA, Mr. J. A. Allotey, the Managing Director of Gold Fields Ghana, the District Chief Executive of Wassa West District, Tarkwa, the Regional Minister of the Western Region Hon. Kumi and the VC of UMAT. Representing the Security and Police Force was the Western Region Police boss, the Apintohene representing the Wassa Fiase Traditional Council and finally the Chief Executive of the Ghana Chamber of Mines. All these top-level government officials were seated on the high table on a raised platform while the community representatives who were basically the chief and two elders for each community sat in the seats below facing the high table. The environment was very intimidating because of all these senior people. (Interview with an elder and representative of Samahu village)

The meeting that was meant to be a mediation process between the communities and the mining company turned out to be a public relations tool for the company. Like the last meeting when the Minister visited the villages, this also turned out to be an information sharing session much more than a consultation meeting. Like in the narration below, the Minister opened the meeting by inviting various speakers to talk. Each speaker seemed to have a similar message; either how excellent the mining company has been to the country and people of Tarkwa, or how the communities need to be patient and observe good relations with the companies.

“...The Minister opened the meeting. He condemned the protest activities by the communities and declared them illegal. The Apintohene took issue with the chiefs whom he admonished for putting the chieftaincy under shame. He threatened to de-stool any chief who engaged in protests or who incited local communities to take to the streets. Speaker after speaker issued either a threat to the demonstrators or heaped praise to the company for the benefits and good things they have done to the community and company. The meeting was over in less than three hours and none of the community representatives were allowed to speak” (Narration by the group of community representatives who attended the meeting in Accra in 2001)

When it came to the managing director of the company’s turn to speak, he accused lobby groups and other NGOs that go about using community members for their fund raising tools. *How come they never construct boreholes or build schools for the affected communities*, he asked? According to those who participated in the meeting, when it came to time for community consultations, the Apintohene took to the floor and offered to speak on behalf of his subjects once again (see section on minister’s visit). As quoted above, he called upon his chiefs and subjects to exercise restraint and abstain from engaging in any acts that disgrace the institution of chiefs. He maintained that appropriate solutions will

be sought through dialogue and not on the streets, referring to the November demonstrations. One of the representatives of Abekoase mentioned that towards the end of the meeting, his chief raised his hand trying to pose a question, but he was informed that there was no time. This conflicted with the understanding of the community representatives because the programme was meant to run until 1600 hours. In reality the meeting lasted for three hours and at the end the Minister informed the community members that after consultation with the company, a compensation package was being tabled for consideration. As in the quote below, the company was offering USD 700,000 as a one time monetary compensation, and that GFG would invest in social infrastructural facilities and drill a borehole in each community (MEST – Minutes of Minister’s Meeting, 2001). As provided for under the Minerals and Mining Act, 703 (2006), the communities had 4 weeks within which to respond to this proposition, without which the case will be closed and the deal endorsed.

“...To close off the meeting, the Minister mentioned that after consulting the company, an appropriate compensation package has been reached. The package included:

- A compensation fund of 1 billion Old Ghana Cedis (USD 700,000) for all the five affected communities.*
- Social Infrastructural facilities which will include; borehole each to the affected communities; Construct an access road from Samahu down to Pepesa;*

Source: Minutes of the Meeting between Community Representatives and GFG, 03:12:2001

The minister had tabled a proposed compensation and each speaker during the meeting had called upon the communities to collaborate peacefully with the company. The likelihood of the company and or government renegotiating this deal was very slim. While indeed the law stated that communities could appeal a decision within four weeks, the cyanide spill issue was losing meaning for the public and the media was focusing on other emerging issues. This is the reality in some cases, where issues of local concern fall in between cracks, because media and lobbyists have switched their focus to other hot issues. At the local level, there was already division brewing between the affected communities. According to the Chiefs of Huniso, Samahu, Pepesa and Tebe, the compensation was much more than they expected and they did not see any reason to appeal or even get an opinion from their members. They argued that in the previous times, communities have received as little as 5, 000 USD as compensation for loss of land or even pollution. “This is better than nothing”, one of the chiefs claimed. The Chief of Abekoase however had a different view to the whole situation. He regarded the meeting as a deception to the local communities and the compensation as being

disrespectful to local needs. The communities wanted the company to take full responsibility which included monitoring and cleaning the river, community that were in close proximity to the mine needed to be relocated as such problems will keep recurring and lost livelihoods were to be restored. None of this had been done, he claimed. The meeting in his opinion had intimidated the community representatives who were prohibited from voicing their concerns. After thinking through this keenly, he opted to rally support and go to court (Daily Graphic December 11:12:2001).

4.5.2 Affected community Sues GFG (22:03:2003)

There was a lull after the December 3rd meeting. None of my informants could recall any specific events that took place in between, other than the fact that the incident, which had filled the public domain for two months, was quickly fading away. In the media, there was a shift in focus and the cyanide spillage did not receive much coverage as before. But then on the 22nd of March 2002 something special happened, bringing the cyanide spillage back to the public agenda. The chief of Abekoase had decided close to seek a court injunction over the ruling and compensation package tabled by the minister of environment, science and technology. The media was abuzz again with a new file open on the spillage saga (see quotation below).

“Abekoase Community goes to Court over cyanide spill” (Daily Graphic 22nd March 2002)

The plaintiffs in the case were Nana Molobah, Samuel Nyanteki and Stephen Piedu, suing on behalf of Abekoase community, while the defendants were Gold Fields Ghana Limited. This suit was filed at the Tarkwa High Court by CEPIL lawyers acting on behalf of the community representatives (Tarkwa High Court, Case No: 163/2002). According to the court records the following statement of claims had been filed by the chief acting on behalf of the village:

Box 4-5: Statement of Claim by Abekoase Community

- *The plaintiffs say that on Tuesday 16th October 2001, there was a cyanide spillage from one of the pipes in the containment facility within the premises of the defendant's operation area into River Arsuman, which flows into the Ankobra River.*
- *The river Arsuman is the source of drinking water for the inhabitants of Abekoase, Huniso and other adjoining villages*
- *The plaintiffs claim further that in the early hours of 16 October 2001 after the spillage of cyanide several inhabitants of the community collected and used water from the said river*
- *The Plaintiffs claim that as a result of the spill, all forms of aquatic life – fish, crabs and others were killed and found floating on the river bed.*
- *The plaintiffs claim that cyanide is absorbed rapidly if ingested internally and may also be taken through the skin contact and thus lead to a systematic effect on the respiratory cells and other central nervous systems of human beings.*
- *The plaintiffs claim they have lost their sources of income as a result*
- *They also claim to have suffered psychologically, emotionally and physically as a result of the negligence of the company*
- *The Plaintiff further aver that the defendant's negligence in polluting the rivers aforesaid amount to a violation of their fundamental human right to live in a clean and healthy environment*
- *The defendant says that the defendant after accepting responsibility for the cyanide pollution which affected the Arsuman and Huni rivers and other natural resources, proposed to set up as compensation, a trust fund in the amount of One billion cedis to be managed by a board of trustees to among others promote the development of the communities.*
- *The Plaintiffs say that they find the trust fund unacceptable for it did not take into consideration the physical, emotional and psychological sufferings of the inhabitants of the community. Further, the amount of money proposed for the trust fund is highly inadequate compared to the damage done by the defendant to the natural environment and human health in the long term*

Source: CEPIL, Court Case No: 163/2002– Dated 21.03.2002

On the basis of the above statements of claim, Abekoase community representatives filed the following three claims:

Box 4-6: Declaration by Abekoase Community

- *A declaration that the determination made by the Minister of Environment, Science and Technology is null and void in as far as it is inadequate and not in consonance with the constitution*
- *A declaration that the defendant has infringed upon the rights of the community to clean and healthy environment*
- *The payment of prompt, fair and adequate compensation for their sufferings*
- *The appointment of a court expert to ascertain the environmental and health effects of the cyanide spillage on the community and the assessments of damages to be paid to the community.*
- *An order enjoining the defendant from future pollution of the rivers Arsuman and Huniso.*

Amidst the calmness after the December 3rd meeting, it was evident that some behind-the-scene events were taking place. Like the public protests in November, the lawsuit against the company was least expected. Many especially within the government and company circles knew that the matter was closed and sealed after the meeting in Accra. But I guess, WACAM and the Abekoase chief were not done yet. I say WACAM,

because it later became evident that the suggestion to seek a court injunction was fronted by them, though off course it was bold for the chief to try something that no one else had attempted in Tarkwa's the mining history. This was going to be an uphill task for the community as they will be coming up against a mining company capable of hiring the best and highly qualified lawyers in their defence. The registrar at the Tarkwa High Court shared this view and also stated that the mining company might have an upper hand in this case. This was because according to the law, once a compensation package is proposed and the grace period of four weeks expires without any formal complaint, then the case is regarded closed and the decision stands. Yet again, he stated that it was within Abekoase's legal right to seek redress through a court of law. I was however curious to understand how all this had been planned without much leakage or expectation from the otherwise aware public and intuitive media.

I was informed that on the 20th of December 2002, a meeting was convened between the chief of Abekoase and the Director of WACAM. There wasn't any formal agenda to this meeting, but discussions were geared at evaluating the proposition tabled by the minister during the December 3rd meeting. The chief of Abekoase was accompanied to this informal meeting by two of his members. During this meeting, a general point of agreement was that the compensation package did not reflect the concerns of the communities and the manner in which the whole process was organized showed a lack of respect to local communities. The chief of Abekoase mentioned that, there wasn't any opportunity for dialogue and the minister did not give any opportunity to the chiefs to give their side of the story. There was fear also that seeds of division had been sown in the process especially when the chiefs were implored not to engage in any acts of disobedience to the council. He suspected that because of this, the relationship between him and the rest of the chiefs has not been very cordial (see quote below).

"We held a meeting with WACAM officials at their offices in Tarkwa on 20th December. There wasn't any agenda. It was almost Christmas time, and people were getting ready for the festive season. We briefly discussed the events of the December 3rd meeting and the general agreement was the concerns of the communities were not fulfilled. The mining company had ignored the fact that mining has a direct impact on the livelihoods of local communities and a more structured intervention was needed beyond a one - time compensation and a few boreholes. The speech by the Apinto had frightened the other chiefs. When I mentioned that I was planning a meeting with WACAM, they mentioned that they had other engagements"
(Interview: Chief of Abekoase)

Toward the end of this meeting, my informant mentioned that WACAM advised the Abekoase community not to make any reaction after the four weeks elapse and instead explore possibilities of seeking a court injunction. The community was aware of what that meant and the chief did not have the resources and sue such a huge mining company. WACAM representative however maintained that this was the best opportunity to hit back at the company and that he will speak with CEPIL and explore possibilities for getting legal aid from them.

We were aware that there was no way we might be able to win the case against GFG. They were more powerful, had more money and could hire the best lawyers in Town.

After the meeting, WACAM telephoned representatives of CEPIL, TWN and LEJ to share the suggestion from his meeting with the Abekoase chief. According to him (see quote below), all the three representatives were in agreement with the suggestion and CEPIL was willing to represent the community. They promised to start collecting and compiling background information for drafting the suit. It was also important that they get witnesses who are willing to sign a petition. TWN committed to provide as much evidence as possible based on their research work, one, which ready for was being for publication (see section on local protests). The LEJ offered to cover the court cases and try as much as possible to bring back the story to the public. It was not clear the role that the chief was to play, but as it stood, the process was now underway.

“Like the campaigns, we thrive on strategic partnerships. CEPIL agreed to represent the communities in court and TWN offered to provide any background information and evidence on the basis of their research focus. The League of Environmental Journalists (LEJ) cover the cases to ensure that proceedings are reflected in all the dailies, and news programs on radio and TV. (Interview with the Director of WACAM)

The choice by the Abekoase chief to seek a court injunction generated mixed reactions within the communities. I had mentioned earlier that the relationship between the Abekoase chief and the other four had become sour. I tried to probe this issue further, because I thought it could provide a better understanding of the feeling on the ground about the court case. The chief of Tebe argued that the Abekoase chief was seeking personal glory from the beginning and that was why he was not convinced with the minister’s decision. The others, especially, the chief of Huniso, who had remained loyal until the December 3rd meeting in Accra, felt that his Abekoase counterpart was being misled by WACAM and that the option to go to court was WACAM’s and not his. Apparently most of the residents of Abekoase whom I spoke to said they fully supported their chief because he had showed dedication to serve the village. A small section of my

respondents feared that with the court case, the village will be isolated even more and “*we shall never be employed by the company*”, he stated. Some of the community members of Huniso, with whom I interviewed, claimed that the chief was being driven by his personal gain and was enjoying dining in big hotels in Tarkwa, being driven in NGO vehicles, while his people lacked water to drink. A specific woman during the interview stated, “*The chief was a disgrace*”.

Despite the mixed reactions from community members, I still pursued the issue of the four other chiefs further. During a visit to a galamsey mining site in a village close to the Apintohene’s village – Awudua, I held informal discussions with the mine operator (machine owner), who turned out to be the cousin to the chief of Huniso and therefore a nephew of the Apintohene. In this case, he was part of the royal family. In the course of our talk, he mentioned that his uncle the Apintohene who rarely visits his village, had called for a family meeting where key “royal” issues would be discussed. Since it was a family gathering, the four chiefs - of Samahu, Tebe, Huniso and Pepesa attended because they belong to the same family as the Apintohene. The chief of Abekoase, as already indicated earlier, does not belong to this family and was not invited. I suspect this was a strategy to exclude him because according to my respondent, at the heart of the agenda, was the spillage issue and how the chiefs have handled it. During this meeting, the four chiefs present were requested to incorporate with the company, with a promise for getting first priority when the compensation deal is implemented. I had observed during my stay in the Tarkwa that the four village chief had a closer interaction with the Apintohene, an aspect the chief of Abekoase dismissed a “*mere strategy to position themselves for a higher position within the chieftaincy hierarchy*”³⁶.

³⁶ Structure of the Traditional Council (Omanhene) in Tarkwa, only members of the royal family have the right and possibility of becoming provincial chief or king (See Dummet, 1980)

4.5.3 GFG – Responds to the Suit

With the lawsuit filed, the company had eight days to respond. GFG was defendant in court by a prominent law firm, the Reindorf Chambers of Lawyers³⁷. The sixteen-page statement of defence submitted by GFG identified the following as the key issues of concern for the company:

Box 4-7: Statement of Response by GFG

- *Defendant avers that it informed the EPA, Mines inspectorate as soon as possible after the incident and their representatives visited and inspected the site on the morning of the leak. The EPA, WRC and the defendant took samples from the Arsuman River and tests separately conducted by each of them on the quality of the water after the incident verified that there was no public safety threat posed to the users of the rivers.*
- *The defendant says that the Rivers Arsuman is not the only sources of drinking water for the residents of Abekoase and Huniso and other adjoining villages. Defendants built prior to the leakage, numerous wells and boreholes which are used by residents of these communities for drinking water. The village of Huniso has one borehole and two wells fitted with pumps, which were built prior to the leakage incident. An additional 7 wells were built in hamlets in the Tebe around Huniso*
- *The defendant avers that taking into consideration the scientifically documented effects of cyanide and the cyanide concentrations monitored in the Arsuman River, at no point in time could the water in these rivers have caused any sufferings, diseases and infections” in any human beings. In addition the main source of income for the communities is farming and not fishing.*
- *The defendant avers that the allegations by the plaintiffs are vague, speculative and embarrassing. Without evidence and particulars of the complaints of Sufferings, diseases and infections, as well as of inhabitants making the complaints, Plaintiffs out not permitted to rely on these allegations*
- *The defendant says that it has established a fund of one billion Cedis (USD 700,000) as a goodwill gesture to provide community development assistance. It was also agreed that the fund will provide compensation to any individual who could demonstrate that they had suffered loss dies to the leakage.*

Source: Reindorf Chambers Lawyers, (28:03:2002)

The first success of the lawsuit was that through a court order, the minister was not allowed to endorse the compensation deal tabled on December the 3rd 2001 until the issue was sorted out. That meant that the affected communities who had not supported the move still had to wait until after the case was closed, before the compensation deal was implemented. In the meantime however the “polluter” in this case the mining company carried on with its operations. In the local communities, it was back to normal and some sections of the villages were agitated with the chief, for they feared that the court case would destruct the attention of the company from providing the needed support. An environmental consultant with the Environmental Watch had mentioned to

³⁷ Reindorf Chambers of Lawyers are ranked highly not just in Ghana, but internationally. They specialize in multinational corporate defense cases in industry and commerce. In 1999, they were appointed as part of the advisory experts for the European Pension Scheme (<http://www.legal500.com/firms/12622-reindorf-chambers/offices/15652-accra>)

me, that such cases tend to take a very long term and any delays will work in the favour of the mining company as compared to the communities who were eagerly awaiting the compensation. In a period of three months, since the suit was filed, there had been only one hearing, an aspect that the court registrar revealed as being the reality of court cases. He mentioned that the court in Tarkwa was serving several districts and there was a congestion of cases, all to be heard by one judge. He also mentioned that GFG was continuously asking for adjournments, for one reason or the other. According to CEPIL, most wealthy parties in a case call for adjournments so as to frustrate the less powerful parties. This is because hearings are very expensive and every time a case is adjourned, the parties are the ones who incur more legal costs. In this case, the communities were not incurring any costs as CEPIL was representing them at no cost, though I learned that the transport, food and accommodation costs of the lawyers while in Tarkwa were funded by the TWN and Oxfam America (Confidential communication, 2007). Such adjournments were definitely beneficial to commercial lawyers like those defending GFG, because their legal fees continued to increase.

Litigation processes according to Volker (2006) are also a strategy aimed to dent the public image of the company. As a lobby strategy, most multinational companies would work so hard to avoid courtrooms, because the fact that a company is being sued, means that an aspect of its local relations is being questioned. The WACAM Director, who had a similar view as Volker, stated that; shareholders, investors and the international community as a whole tend to lose confidence in a company that is always in and out of the court (Personal communication, 2007). He was therefore certain that GFG will try as much as possible to ensure that the case does not drag on, because with each hearing a report was being published into local and international media platforms (for example BBC – Documentary Clips, 2003)

4.5.4 Out-of-Court Settlement (12:06:2002)

“...We would like to inform you that our clients have decided to renegotiate the compensation package they offered and in this letter requesting a discontinuation of the litigation....”

And indeed after only four hearings in a period of one year since the suit was filed, the company opted for an out of court settlement. Some sections of the media claimed that the reasons for this were largely the financial costs of the case (see the Independent, 12.June 2002), while other claimed that the company was frustrated with the delays in hearings. An official statement on the company website accessed in May 2007 read; “GFG after consulting with its lawyers have resorted to seek an out of court settlement

with the representatives of Abekoase over the Cyanide Spillage case number 163/2002”. This statement did not give any further details as to why this option was adopted though a source from within the company claimed, that the decision was a directive from the head office in South Africa. The then environmental manager of the company (currently its community affairs manager) informed me that the court case was generating negative publicity for the company and the directive to seek an out of court settlement was a viable option. He confirmed some reports from the daily newspaper by stating that such cases are also very expensive and for a profit making enterprise, they tend to be a liability.

On the 14th of April 2003, CEPIL, lawyers representing the community consented to the approach by GFG and in a statement drafted to the lawyers provided their conditions for an out of court settlement. A report that I reviewed indicated the following as the key conditions for an out of court settlement:

Box 4-8: Proposed Items of settlement

- *Gold fields Ghana shall pay a compensation fund of 250 million Ghana Cedis for the benefit of Abekoase community*
- *Gold Fields Shall, at its sole cost and expense, construct a meeting centre for the benefit of the community in the village of Abekoase*
- *Gold Fields Ghana will commit to launch an alternatives livelihoods project in Abekoase*
- *GFG confirms that Abekoase community will be eligible for future participation in Gold fields Ghana foundation projects as part of the interaction between the company and communities near to its Tarkwa mine. This should include social and infrastructural investments*
- *Gold Fields Ghana meets all the legal costs incurred in this case*

Source: Deed of Settlement, signed by both parties on (11.12.2003)

I suspected that there might have been behind-the-scene re-negotiations, but I could not gain any information on that. Such events are not recorded under normal circumstances, but I was interested to understand the role that out of court settlements play in such negotiations. An environmental scientist and consultant in Accra, informed me that an of court settlement tends to be costly to the party that makes the request, because normally the other party would demand that legal fees incurred are fully paid as part of the deal. This is what we see in the condition claim above. The flip side is that with out-of-court settlements becoming a reality, agencies like CEPIL providing “free” paralegal aid this strategy at times as a source of revenue, without really factoring whether the settlement does benefit their clients. This view is supported by (Bryant and Bailey, 1997) in their research work on environmental activism in Asia. According to the deed of settlement, GFG Lawyers responded to the demands of CEPIL agreeing to everything.

This two-year struggle was finally coming to an end. The two groups of lawyers representing GFG and Abekoase community drafted a thirty-two-page joint statement referred to as the “Deed of Settlement” (see section of deed of settlement below). As required by Tarkwa High Court, Civil Action Law, this document was filed at the High court with each party swearing to an oath of consent before the High judge. During this swearing process, a representative of Green Earth Organization in Ghana, League of Environmental Journalists, Third World Network and WACAM respectively, acted as witnesses on behalf of the chief of Abekoase village. In the deed, it was agreed that a joint press conference be convened by the two parties so as to publicly endorse this deed of settlement. The joint press conference was held between the representatives of Abekoase community and the GFG in Tarkwa on the 11th of December 2003. The Minister of Environment, Science and Technology graced this event bringing closure to the first phase of this struggle.

The contents of the deal were as follows:

Box 4-9: Deed of Settlement

- *Gold fields Ghana shall pay a compensation fund of 250 million Ghana Cedis for the benefit of Abekoase community*
- *Gold Fields Shall, at its sole cost and expense, construct a meeting centre for the benefit of the community in the village of Abekoase*
- *Gold Fields Ghana will commit to launch an alternatives livelihoods project in Abekoase*
- *GFG confirms that Abekoase community will be eligible for future participation in Gold fields Ghana foundation projects as part of the interaction between the company and communities near to its Tarkwa mine. This should include social and infrastructural investments*
- *The terms of this deed of settlement shall be in full and final statement and discharge of all claims whatsoever, howsoever and whensoever arising in connection with or out of suit number No. C821/2002*
- *The representatives of Abekoase warrant that they represent each individual member of the Abekoase community.*

Source: Deed of Settlement, signed by both parties on (11.12.2003)

4.6 PLACING THE STRUGGLE IN PERSPECTIVE

Before making any conclusions to this story, it is important to put the story in its rightful perspective. The cyanide spillage of 2001 occurred at a time when key decisions regarding mining issues were being made, both at national and international level. The international community was deeply engaged in identifying strategies for ensuring that mining multinationals shift their approach of operating in developing countries as purely profit making enterprises into social institutions. Under the banner of corporate social responsibility, the international community mostly lobby groups demanded that MMCs operate with a general understanding of social welfare and to share benefits from their

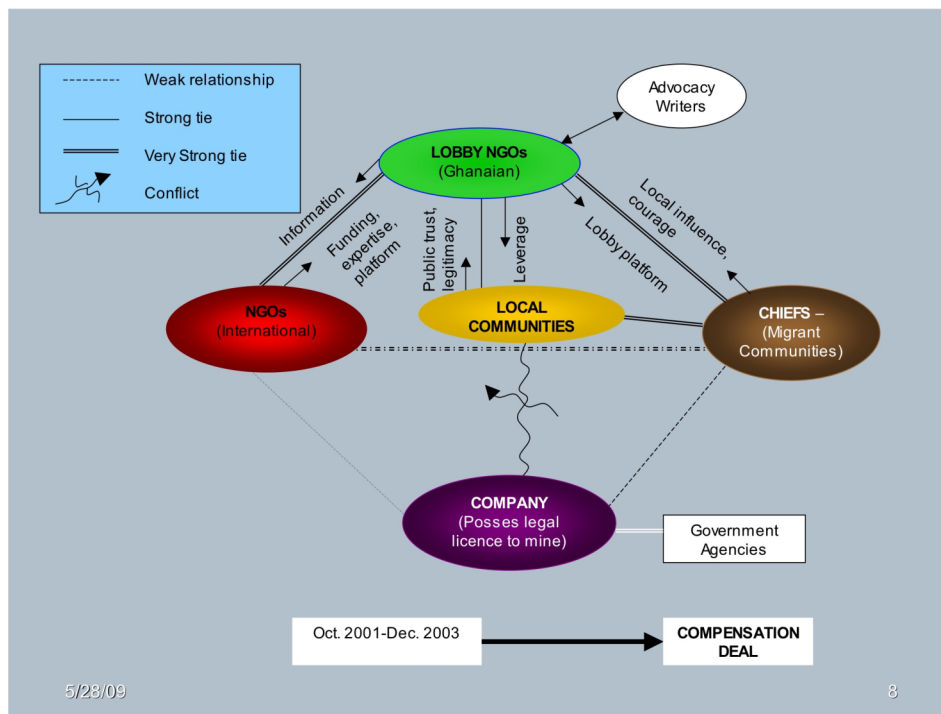
economic activities with their host communities. As they do so, MMCs were to ensure that their operations do not generate increase environmental and social costs or lead to conflicts, as was the case in many fragile societies. Between 1999 and 2001, there were close to five voluntary campaigns and frameworks, all fronted / driven by NGOs, all working towards ensuring a more collaborative / cordial interaction between mining companies and societies in developing countries. In Africa, Ghana was central to all these frameworks other than the Kimberly process, which was targeted mostly for diamond export in conflict zones. The season between 1999 and 2002 therefore was a prime moment for lobby activities and there was an eagerness and political will at the international level to support developing countries affected by mining operations. Lobby groups were also well positioned, as funding for NGO involvements was readily available providing a very ripe opportunity for achieving sustainable change.

With the above perspective in mind, story as told in this chapter tries to show the complex social interactions between multiple actors or interest groups in Tarkwa's mining sector. This complexity stems from the observation that multiple players, both local and externally placed, influence choices, actions and decisions within the sector, resembling what Moore, (1978) refer to as a semi-autonomous field. The influence of external on the local arena takes versus external takes two different forms in this chapter. One, we have the local communities who have ancestral claims on the land they inhabit. They, however, co-exist with a growing influx of migrants from other regions of Ghana and neighbouring countries. This interaction influences the nature of social dynamics in terms of the interests and power relations within the villages around the mines. We also have influence from both Tarkwa based lobby groups as well as those Accra based, like TWN, CEPIL, who, though they might not interact with the communities on a daily basis, play a key role in decisions that involve community rights etc. The last example for the first dimension of local versus external actors is government agencies and involvement. Despite the presence of government agencies in Tarkwa, for example the EPA, LVB and MC, there is still a linkage and influence by the head offices and government agencies e.g. MEST, EPA Head office in Accra. The interaction therefore of the local versus external within the Ghanaian context is in itself a complex social dynamic to study. The second dynamic of the local versus external actors is those actors based abroad or outside the Ghanaian borders, but who either have a claim, an interest or a stake in the decisions being made at the Tarkwa level. A good example, which is brought out in this chapter, is the influence of international NGOs and lobby groups in

Ghanaian mining issues. While some of them have no programs in Ghana for example, NIZA, Fatal Transactions, Friends of the Earth and Earth Works, they seem to have an influence on the decisions being made in Tarkwa's or Ghana's mining sector as a whole. The whole picture is therefore a complex set of multiple – multi-layered interactions which (Falk, 1998) refers to as a semi-autonomous field, which Bryant & Bailey (1997) a political ecologists refers to as a multi-layered politicised environment.

Secondly, the complexity of social interactions within Tarkwa's mining sector as we have seen in this chapter stems from the competing and at times conflicting interests and positions held by the various groups. From this case, we can conclude that there is indeed nothing like a homogenous group. While it was challenging to investigate the conflict of diverging interests within organizations like the EPA, GFG or MEST, it was possible to identify the varying positions at the local level, which I deem as being even more complex. At the community level for example, we observe the competing nature of interests between migrant communities who are driven largely by the desire to earn a living and make money to support their families back home, as compared to the more indigenous villages where inhabitants are keen to protect their ancestral inheritance. Through following the community struggle after the spillage, we are able to see how these competing interests influence the actions and choices that the various groups adapt. The choice by Abekoase village members to demand relocation, for example, increased employment might indeed generate multiple plausible explanations, but one of them could be the fact that, they do not have the same attachment or claim on the land, the river, as Huniso village for example. In this case, there is intra-community conflict, but also inter-community conflict in terms of the positions or varying claims from the communities when they needed a harmonious position. At the higher level, there is a difference in perceptions and interests, for example, between the Apintohene and some of his chiefs, which then comes to play as we have seen in this chapter. The competing nature of interests can be analysed between all relations, be it the company and the community, the NGOs and the company etc. The dispute that was being reviewed in this chapter was an example of conflict of interests between multiple actors in a local context.

Diagram 4-1: Interaction between Actors during the Struggle for Compensation



Source: Author’s construction

Despite GFG accepting liability for having caused the spillage, there is the question of negotiating for compensation. Which compensation meets all the interests represented? In this case, we observe that decision making in such a context is more of a power struggle than a consensual negotiation process. By a power struggle, I mean that for the community to get their desired claim, they have to engage in pressurizing the company, because the company has a deep seated position on what kind of compensation they are willing to offer. The reality, however, is that the affected communities are not as powerful as GFG, who have the investment power and are arguably backed by the government that granted the mining lease. The company has access to decision making networks especially within the government, but the community have to rely on either the chiefs or representatives who are also driven by their own interests. While this is the case, we still observe that GFG does not hold absolute power and has to devise strategies to overcome resistance from the communities. The communities, because of past experiences and their position as less powerful, engage in partnerships with NGOs in order to gain leverage against the company and its allies. The local NGOs on the other hand are forced to rely on international lobby groups, who have financial, technical, and resource power and a larger outreach than the local NGOs. As a result of unequal power relations and the knowledge that meeting one’s desire requires overcoming resistance

from the other, coalitions emerged as vehicles for designing strategies to meet desired goals, and overcome the unequal power relations as lobby groups attempted to do.

4.6.1 Practical Reflections

Advocacy NGOs have become important actor in the struggle as local communities lack the power to resist the influence of mining companies. One of the weak links of local communities and which makes advocacy groups like WACAM influential is the lack of community organization. Korten (1990:26) argues that poor communities tend to disintegrate when faced with resistance, because they are not able to organize themselves, develop a common front and publicly protest about their plight without the fear of inevitable retribution. In this chapter WACAM and local lobby groups influenced the actions of the Minister for example and generated a public interest on the plight of affected communities. International lobby groups played a key role in profiling the needs of the communities to the international public, which then influenced the choices of both the government in Ghana and most importantly the mining company. This lobby process through coalitions with lobbyists (local and international) influenced the final outcome. It still remains to be seen whether this process empowered the communities or not. The second point of reflection in this chapter relates to the compensation package itself. On the basis of my analysis, I would argue that the communities, with support from the lobby groups and some sections of the media, did win the battle. For the first time as noted by (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001), the company had been subjected into submission and provided arguably the highest compensation compared to any other compensation in the mining area. This does not mean that the compensation was adequate, it just means that the struggle provided hope for other communities, not just in Ghana, but also in African countries. The question that remains is whether the compensation package as tabled and endorsed goes to serve the very needy sections of the community or whether it ends up in the pockets of the wrong hands. Volker, et al, (2006) argues that in itself, the payment of compensation can generate a new war between various groups seeking to gain control of the benefits it brings. In chapter five, I discuss the compensation package in terms of how it was implemented. In that chapter, I describe the role various actors including NGOs, the mining company, chiefs and Scientific experts in the implementation of the package. I question whether the battle that was worn in chapter 4 was a wasted opportunity or a fulfilling one for the affected communities and mining communities in Tarkwa.

CHAPTER 5 LOOSING THE WAR: Who accessed the Compensation Deal?

This chapter builds upon the conclusions derived in chapter four, where five affected by the cyanide spillage of 2001; with support from a local lobby group pressurize GFG for compensation. In Chapter 4, I described the struggle for compensation, presenting it as battle won on behalf of the communities. Local communities with support from lobby groups adopted various strategies; public protests, mass awareness campaigns and international lobby activities, to pressurize the company, leading to compensation deal being reached in December 2003. In the literature many authors, mostly writing for advocacy groups, have argued that the struggle after spillage of 2001 was a milestone and set a benchmark for community resistance in mining areas (Akabzaa, 2000; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; TWN, 2004; WACAM, 2004). WACAM (2006:16) in particular mentioned that the struggle served to empower mining communities by building their capacity to struggle against the negative effects of mining. This chapter however shows a direct opposite to the above sentiments.

One, I find that local communities were not really involved in the design of the implementation strategies adopted for managing the compensation deal and in return their interests and concerns did not receive priority in the process. Secondly, this chapter shows that, the compensation deal was captured by; chiefs, a OICI, some GFG company officials and a Senior academic scientist, who influenced the implementation process to meet their hidden agenda, with dismal benefits trickling down to the affected communities. I argue that the compensation deal introduces new resources into the mining sector, providing a breeding ground for strategic group formation. These strategic groups operate with an aim to gain control of and access the resources made available. While individuals do not constitute strategic groups, the strategies that the individuals adopt in the cases described in this chapter resemble those identified largely in strategic group theory (See Evers and Gerke, 2009). On the other hand, these individual actors do not operate in isolation, but within the frameworks of their organizations to legitimize their actions and choices.

Secondly, I find out that the hope that was created by the struggle in Chapter 4 ends up in despair for the local communities whose lives do not change three years into the implementation period. As illustrated in the topic of this chapter, while the battle was won by virtue of securing the compensation, the war was lost because the compensation deal failed to serve the local needs. I attribute this defeat to local lobby groups, who had been very instrumental to and vocal in the struggle for the compensation (see chapter 4), but who failed to monitor the implementation process ensure that the compensation deal serves the affected communities. I equate this failure to the: internal structure of lobby groups, “ad-hoc-project approach” to community struggles and the competing interests of their donors and international partners.

The chapter is organized in the following order:

1. I show how the “OICI”, Chiefs, GFG Officials and Academic Scientists Influenced the implementation strategy to meet their own interests, while excluding local communities from gaining in the process.
2. Secondly, I place the implementation process in perspective, compensation deal as a platform resource control and power struggle and how the local lobby groups failed to carry on the struggle to ensure that local needs are met.

5.1 THE COMPENSATION DEAL AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In December 2003, a compensation deal was reached between the affected communities and GFG. This was in regards to the cyanide spillage of 2001. According to the Deed of Settlement of 2003, the compensation comprised of:

1. The *Establishment of Gold Fields Community Development & Compensation Fund* with an initial deposit of Euro 600,000 as partial compensation to the affected communities.
2. The *Establishment of a Gold Fields Trust Fund* through a yearly contribution of US\$1.00 of every ounce produced plus 0.5% of pre-tax profit to fund the construction of schools, clinics, public toilets, boreholes and other infrastructural investments in all mining communities along Tarkwa mine
3. To Launch a *Community Alternative Livelihoods Programme* to be funded under the GFG Trust Fund

In the following section, I discuss the how each of the three items were implemented, the role of various actors in the process and the extent to which local communities benefited. My assessment is based on two years of implementing the compensation deal, so should not be mistaken for an impact assessment.

5.1.1 Euro 600,000 – Compensation Fund

The GFG Compensation Fund was one of the negotiation outcomes after the cyanide spill in Tarkwa. A total of Euro 600,000 was the first deposit into this fund, offered by GFG as a direct compensation to the five communities affected by the cyanide spill of 2001. In this particular instance, the fund was to be equally divided between all the five communities, with each community having the liberty to decide how best they would like to make use of the funds. In total, each community had access to close to Euro 120,000. According to a report from the mining company, the Euro 600,000 was a one time payment to the affected communities, but a long term approach had been put in place where the GFG – Compensation Fund would be established as a contingency plan to respond to future cases resulting from mining operation. During an interview with WACAM representative in Tarkwa, the decision to establish a Compensation Fund was an outcome of the law suit by Abekoase community, where it was demanded that a separate fund be established by the company to ensure a more proactive approach to compensation issues other than dealing with compensation issue on an adhoc basis as was the case. The GFG Compensation Fund was the first of its kind in Ghana's mining sector, and other mining companies adapted as a result (Ghana Chamber of Mines, 2006).

From an outsider's perspective, I am not sure that Euro 600,000 as a one-time compensation can be regarded as a successful story when taken in isolation. As mentioned above, this fund translates to only Euro 120,000 per community which, if broken down further, would mean Euro 1,200 per individual living in these villages. In the short term, Euro 1,200 might appear a large amount, but if you look at the individual needs at the village level, it is difficult to see its long-term benefits. During my research, I did a random interview with a group of both men and women in terms of what their living costs were per day. While it was difficult to make itemized allocations, most of my respondents roughly estimated their monthly costs of living (excluding rent for the tenants) to between 80 to 100 euro per month. This implies that, if each individual was to receive the money directly, they would probably be able to use it for at least a whole

year. This option could have been most appealing to the majority of my respondents, given that with hindsight, the fund did not end up benefiting them, as we shall see later.

A different strategy was however adopted in managing this fund. The Minister of Environment, Science and Technology announced at a press conference that

“...the Euro 600,000 will be lodged in an independent bank account at the Commercial Bank of Ghana, Tarkwa Branch. This account will have three main signatories – The EPA Officer in Tarkwa, GFG’s Community Relations Manager and the Apintobene. A board of trustees comprising of the District Executive Officer of Wassa West District, The Apintobene, The 5 Chiefs representing the affected communities and Tarkwa’s EPA officer. The role of the board of trustees will be to manage the funds, screen the proposals submitted by the communities and approve them before funds are released. They will also be responsible for monitoring the implementation process and well as overseeing the formation of GFG – Compensation Trust Fund” (Statement by the Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, captured in the Times, - 2003)

This meeting was meant discuss the modalities of managing the compensation fund of Euro 600,000 and lay the foundation upon which the GFG – Compensation Trust Fund would be established. According to the statement above, the decision was reached to lodge the funds in an independent bank account and the overall management of this fund to be overseen by a board of trustees. The role of this board as we can deduce from the statement was very central to implementation of this fund as its role would not be limited to disbursing the fund, but also approval community projects. Unlike the preferred option of distributing the fund amongst the community members, the Minister had opted for a structure to coordinate the management of this resource and most importantly oversee the establishment of a compensation fund.

My initial curiosity as a researcher was to inquire about the individuals or organizations that were represented during this meeting. From the meeting notes of this press conference, I found out that the participants included: five communities (including the chief); the Apintohene; one representative from the EPA in Tarkwa; the General Manager of GFG; a Senior UMAT Lecturer³⁸; 2 representatives from a OICI based in Accra and media groups (Heritage, 2004). OICI³⁹ invited to this meeting was based in Accra. It was an international NGO, but one with programs in Ghana. The five villages had three representatives each participating in the meeting. It was not very clear the criteria used in the selection process, through from the participant’s names, it was the same group of village elders who accompanied the chiefs again (see chapter 4).

³⁸ The Senior UMAT Lecturer in attendance is a trained specialist on mining engineering and metallurgy. He recently undertook his PhD studies at a university in the USA.

³⁹ OICI – is an international NGO working in Ghana in the area of vocational training (<http://www.oicighana.org/>)

From this participant lists, it was evident again that local communities did not really participate in this meeting and like in previous cases, the organizers of this forum assumed that local interests will be represented by the chiefs and elders. It was also not very clear why the Lecturer from UMAT and a representative OICI was invited to the meeting. They had not played any role in the cyanide issue since 2001 and I was curious to investigate into their roles at this stage of the issue. I did later come to understand why because of the key role they played, not just in the implementation of the fund, but the compensation as a whole.

“The minister informed us how the fund will be managed. None of the participants asked questions or even questioned the decision.....I think they all knew about it” (Interview: Elder, Abekose)

As has been the case, these meetings were again forums for passing on information, but not really for consulting over decisions or setting an agenda. First of all, I had questioned the composition of the participants, because decisions of such importance would have warranted participation from the affected communities. Yes, chiefs do represent local communities, but as we shall see later, chiefs are also an interest group in their right and do not always represent the concerns of the communities they claim to represent.

According to a community member of Huniso village, the decisions made in Accra did not have any local input because there was minimal consultation on the issue before the meeting.

“...that under normal circumstances, a decision of this importance would be discussed by the unit communities first and then shared with the rest of the community. While reaching a common stand is always a challenge, we always tried to get to a middle ground. I do not remember a meeting being held to discuss the compensation after the spillage of 2001 (Interview with village elder who represented Abekoase Huniso Village at the meeting)

His view was also shared with many other community members with whom I interacted. In my own opinion, I also doubted whether the choice of Accra for this meeting was appropriate. I am sure it was in the interest of the Minister, who is based in the capital, as is the mining company head office, but in doing so, it denied access to local communities, whose input into the fund management strategy should have been imperative (Chambers, 1986). If, for example, this forum was held in Tarkwa or in one of the villages, chances are high that members of the affected communities would have attended and probably gotten a chance to voice their positions or concerns.

Besides the participation and venue of the meeting, it was also interesting to learn that the statement read by the Minister was not subjected to review, questioned or even contested by the group present. Through an interview by an elder who attended the forum (below), I learned that the statement read by the Minister like in the quote above seemed to have been endorsed by every participant. While indeed the minister asked if there was any comment, input or contest on the recommendation, none of the members even raised their hands to question the decision. Like in the quotation below, it was evident that the group seated around the table had previewed this statement and, the possibility that a decision had been already been made probably with consultation with a small group, was high. The contradiction from this setting was that attending this meeting also was the “hero” chief of Abekoase (see chapter 4), who despite his heroics in the struggle remained silent and did not raise any question regarding the suggested fund management approach. I would have expected that questions would have been raised on the agenda, the participation and mandate of the board of trustees. Who set the agenda of the meeting, who mandated the board of trustees and why are local communities not represented? All these questions would be paramount for such an important exercise as they lead toward interest representation.

“....after the Minister read the statement, he asked if there was any questions, comments, input or even contest on the strategy. No one said anything. I could not say anything despite the concerns that I had, because I was there based on the invitation of my chief. If there was anything to be said, it had to come from my chief and not me”

The only way to ascertain whether this exclusive participation or management structure had an impact on the communities is by assessing the implementation of the fund.

Did the Affected Communities Access the Fund?

According to the WACAM Director, the affected communities had not accessed the compensation fund, despite attempts to seek redress from the company. In a letter dated the 6th of December 2004, WACAM stated that; *“We have reports from the Abekoase village on difficulties in assessing the compensation fund. The letter states further that; unfortunately the bureaucracy of the Public Service is making it impossible for the community to access this fund. The money has been lying idle in the fund for almost one year and the community has began suspecting that the settlement deal was a hoax”* (WACAM, 06.12.2004) A response to this letter drafted by the then Managing Director of GFG, Brenden Walker, stated that; *“I hereby confirm that we did transfer an amount of 1,100,000 GHC (Euro, 600,000) into the GFG Community Compensation Fund, which is administered by an independent board of trustees. The letter further reads; The Board of Trustees of Fund have advised me that to date they have not received any written*

request for their consideration with regards to which community Project “the Abekoase Community” would like the funds to be allocated towards. In conclusion, the manager requests; Please forward to me a copy of the request and I would gladly take it up with the Board of trustees as long as it is in line with the spirit of the agreement. This response was dated the 14th of December 2004 and was copied to the District Executive Officer, the Apintohe and EPA, all who comprise the Board of Trustees.

WACAM could not confirm if the Abekoase village had indeed submitted a project proposal, though the views from the community members gave a slightly different impression. I interviewed Kwesi, is a resident of Abekoase village. He was among the very first individuals to be woken up by his wife to witness dead fish floating on River Arsuman on the morning of October 16, 2001. Like many other members of the affected communities, Kwesi was frustrated at the fact that four years after a compensation fund was tabled by the GFG, nothing has been done to make his life better. According to him, if the fund should have been distributed equally to each member. He mentioned that if that were the case, he would have been able to purchase an extra machine for his galmsey work, which costs about USD 500, and also lease more land for growing vegetables. As a father of four, Kwesi believes that while Euro 1,200 might be a very small amount of money as compared to the burden that mining causes to local communities, it would have benefited him and his family more, if he accessed it directly.

“...You wake up one morning and you find your river has been polluted. They say they will compensate us, but it takes two or three years. After the three years, we still get nothing. Why not just distribute the money directly to us?” (Interview with Kwesi: Resident, Abekoase Village)

Kwesi’s opinion was shared by the majority of the inhabitants from the affected villages whom I interviewed in the field. There was growing despair and frustration by the community members, who felt that after the sacrifices they made during the struggle, it was four years and nothing could be shown for the compensation fund. Some of the community members that I did speak to however alleged that the chiefs seemed to be gaining from this process, because they had not intervened despite community members raising concerns about the delays. During an informal discussion with a group of galmsey miners as their place of work, they alleged that the key beneficiaries of this fund could be the chiefs, who probably submitted requests, without consulting the rest of the communities and used the money for their own personal gains. An example that was largely cited was that of the Abekoase chief, for whom, since the compensation fund was established, the standard of the life that he led had greatly changed. Some of my

respondents alleged that before the fund was established, his palace was a hamlet just like everyone's and his children went to school in Tarkwa town. But, after the fund, he has built a new house, bought a car and moved his children to private boarding schools in Sekondi, - Western Region's headquarter.

This drastic shift in his social - economic status as well as his change in attitude towards the mining company was quite suspect, according to my respondents. The Abekoase chief was the hero of mining communities and had gained popularity because of his drive and dedication to serve the community during the struggle for compensation. After the compensation package, he seemed to have distanced himself from the community and was more aligned with the company. In the earlier sections, I wondered why he did not protest about the decision to have an independent board manage the fund without consulting local communities. It was difficult to validate the suspicions by some of the members of Abekoase, given that the chief himself denied such allegations as being an attack on his integrity. I was however able to observe the changes in the lifestyle of the chief, whose stone palace was completed during my stay in Tarkwa. One could therefore note that there was a sudden cash flow, which was reflected in the change in his socio-economic status. He had also become aloof from community issues and very strongly defended company decisions or positions.

The story was slightly different in the neighbouring Huniso village. The chief had submitted a proposal to support a village electrification plan for the village. According to a meeting report of the board of trustees held on 14th March, 2004, *The Chief of Huniso informed the meeting about a special project proposed on behalf of his village. His village had decided to engage in an electrification plan.* (EPA – Meeting Report, 14.03.2004). By the time I was conducting my field research, the poles in Abekoase had been put up, but the village did not have electricity yet. Some of the community members that I interviewed regarding this project mentioned that the chief did not consult them or hold any public rally to seek their opinion. As an outsider, I wouldn't see how electricity would be a priority for the village, as local community members had more pressing needs than that. Like Kwesi in Abekoase, most of the inhabitants of this village were concerned about their next meal and would have probably preferred to receive the cash in hand and make the decision on how it use themselves. This was however not the case and with four years since the compensation fund was offered, there was more doom than hope for them accessing this fund.

During a confidential interview with John Bomsong, - an inhabitant of Huniso village, but originally from Ivory Coast, he narrated how the chief used the electrification plant to meet his own interest. Bomsong was involved in erecting the poles for the electrification plant, after the GFG-Compensation Fund board of trustees approved the project. Like in the quote below, the Huniso chief supplied the community with poles for the electrification project.

“...We used to wake up early in the morning, when its still dark, because preparing the poles is easier before the sun rises. Nana Kwame has a farm close to Anudua, where we had to cut down the trees and start making poles. He accompanied us on the first day and personally showed us which trees to cut down. He had received power saws from the company, so it was easy to bring the trees down. After that, we had to peel off the bark, treat the tree and dry”
(Interview: Resident, Huniso Village).

Like the first case, I could not verify these allegations. One might argue that this is a question of corruption or abuse of office on the part of the chiefs. In the letter dated, December 14th 2004, GFG had claimed that the board of trustees had not received any community proposal. One way or the other, the communities were not benefiting from this fund and questions were being raised about the chiefs who marshalled the struggle in 2001. What had happened to them? The hero of Abekoase, was being suspected for squandering funds meant for the community compensation, while his counterpart in Huniso had engaged in a project with very little benefits for the community, but apparently with some benefits for himself as he provided the timber for the electricity poles.

If all these allegations were false, what had happened to the compensation deal? Why wasn't anyone saying anything? Other than the one letter seeking clarification on the fund by WACAM (see above), there had been no issues raised about the fund. By the time I was departing from my research area, the local community's hope was vanishing and it was not clear the status of the fund. I could not get any information on the actual state of the account, which the District Assembly's Chief Planning Officer was the Treasurer.

5.1.2 Gold Fields Ghana Foundation

“...For our communities around Tarkwa mine, we shall dedicate forty per cent of community investment to alternative livelihoods. Thirty four per cent of the budget into education, ten per cent to health, ten per cent to water and sanitation and the remaining six per cent was towards other infrastructure” (Statement by the MD – GFG during the Launch of the Foundation – Golden Touch, 2004)

The GFG – Foundation was launched in Tarkwa in December 2003, the same month the Compensation Trust fund was established. Unlike the Compensation Fund which targeted those communities affected by the spillage, the Foundation was aimed at supporting investment programs for all the communities residing along the Tarkwa mine, which includes those affected by the spillage. The main functions of the foundation were first outlined in the Settlement Deed of 2003, a document drafted and endorsed by representatives of the mining communities and GFG after the compensation dispute was resolved. According to this document, *“GFG would establish an independent trust fund to support investment programs among all the communities residing along the mine”* (Settlement Deed, 2003:12). These investment programs were to include: support investments towards education through building schools; health programs by constructing community clinics; water provision through borehole and hand-dug wells and, finally, creating opportunities for alternative livelihoods programs. The Foundation was first registered as a charity in Ghana in the Department of Social Welfare; its registration number is D.S.W. 2446 (GFG, 2004). It was proposed by the company management that 1% of pre-tax profits and an additional US\$1.00 for each ounce of gold produced in Ghana will be directed to the Foundation Trust. This was estimated at close to USD 1,000,000 invested into the Foundation per year. Like with the Compensation Fund, the next challenge was management structure of the foundation. One of the requirements in the “Settlement deed” was that the foundation remains independent of daily company activities and that its management be run by an independent board of trustees just like the compensation fund.

GFG – Foundation Management Structure

Unlike in the case of the Compensation Fund, where the minister was involved in publicly proclaiming the implementation strategy, this one remained an internal company process. During the launch of the Foundation, also held at the GFG head-office in Accra, the Managing Director announced that the Foundation will be managed by a board of trustees. This board would comprise of the DCE, a representative from the EPA, the Apintohene and finally a representative from the company’s community

relations department. The role of the board as outlined in the statement was to oversee all the activities of the foundation including the management of the fund and identification of priority areas of investment within the communities:

“The Foundation will be managed by a board of trustees whose task will be to oversee the governance and management of the Foundation, its assets as well as supervise the overall implementation of its investments and activities within the local communities. This six – members will include the Apintobene, representative from GFG-Community Relations Department, the EPA, and the District Chief Executive. Its specific roles will include designing the program focus of the foundation, areas of intervention within the identified themes of education, health, water and alternative livelihoods. The board will oversee the identification of vendors, suppliers, contractors and drawing up partnership plans for implementing Foundation funded projects. It will also draw, review and approve activity budgets” (GFG – Press Release, 2004)

GFG claims that the activities of the Foundation and the decisions on which activities are implemented are selected through a stakeholder consultation process. The above quotation does not show any indication of stakeholder or community consultations, but instead a GFG driven process, where decisions are taken and imposed on the local communities. Like the other case where communities felt excluded from contributing to key decisions, the strategic focus of the Foundation also failed to provide a platform for local communities living in this area to at least voice their suggestions on priority areas. The statement by the managing director of GFG above indicates that the priority areas had already been identified and during my interviews with local community members, I could not find any respondent who had been consulted on these issues. On the GFG website (http://www.goldfields.co.za/sus_investment.php), it was however claimed that all decisions on investments and the management of the fund was a product of a stakeholder consultation process.

That would have been the ideal case, but in reality, it was far from the truth. The most probable interpretation of stakeholder participation from the company’s point of view was a random selection of representatives from various groups in the area. It really does not matter whether these individuals are indeed representative of the local reality, but I suppose for the company, it was a cheaper means towards justifying their actions. Like in the case with the Compensation Fund, the company had basically selected a group of individuals without really consulting the communities whose interests are to be served. It was important for local communities to participate in these decisions because the board of trustees was bestowed with the most central role of managing and distributing the benefits from the fund. How could one trust that the interests of local communities would be protected yet there was very little indication that affected groups were involved

in the design of the implementation strategy or in the actual implementation? Under the foundation, several development programs were proposed as compensation to the affected communities.

5.1.3 Compensation Programs Funded by the GFG-Foundation

“.....The board of trustees OT prioritized two main areas as being priority under the Foundation. One, infrastructure investment which would include boreholes, schools, clinics, community centres, public toilets, food processing plants and access roads. Secondly, the Foundation would engage in financing a 5-Year community livelihoods program with two main sectors” (GFG Press Release and Mine Manager Discusses Priority Areas for the Foundation: Jan 2005).

It still remained to be seen if this approach by the company in managing the compensation would lead to meaningful results at the local level. I held an interview with a community relations officer of GFG, who is also a board member of the Foundation, to get a view of his evaluation of what the Foundation has achieved so far. I undertook this interview in May 2007 and the official provided a comprehensive account of what the Foundation had achieved to date. Below is an excerpt of the interview which I then validate with my own observations and perceptions from local communities and other actors in Tarkwa.

a) Schools and Clinics

“.....Thank you for this opportunity. The initiatives implemented under the GFG Foundation included the provision of medical clinics in all the communities and ensuring that the said clinics are appropriately resourced. We have also built 8 schools for early childhood development, primary and junior secondary schools in our host communities. We ensured that these schools attract appropriately qualified education professionals and also constructed accommodation for the aforementioned. These schools have been a huge success and we continue to actively support them”. (Interview: GFG – Community Relations Officer)

Picture 5-1: Billboard advertising the School Funded by the GFG-Foundation



GFG under the Foundation had indeed constructed eight schools and 3 clinics to be shared by the eight villages. The schools were mostly for lower primary education while the clinics served to provide basic and not specialized health care. While the company perceived this as a success, there is a lot more that had not been thought through in the planning. For example, in the quotation above, the company official claims that GFG ensures that *qualified personnel are* recruited to these schools and clinics. This claim was not true and one criticism of the social investments by the company was that the villages failed to attract qualified teachers or even nurses and that most of these facilities remained under-staffed. I visited close to four schools on different days and found school children playing outside because the teachers had not reported to school. Speaking to a teacher from one of the schools, she informed me that, *we have to rotate between three different schools. We are only two of us and we are in charge of three schools. It is really hard to be everywhere, everytime.* This view was however refuted by the Ghana Education Services department in Tarkwa in charge of ensuring that all schools are well equipped with teachers and learning material. He indeed admitted that GES finds it challenging to attract qualified teachers to some of these areas, but attempts were being made to ensure that all schools were equipped. He, however, pointed out that the involvement of GFG in providing education services in the area has caused some confusion, as roles are not very well harmonized:

Sometimes, we are not sure who reports to who and who pays for what. The mining company claims that the government should provide for the teachers and it pays their salaries, but sometimes, these salaries are not paid, hence the challenge to attract qualified personnel, he added.

This view was also echoed by a parent in one of the schools, who posited that:

building schools is not enough. The building does not make a school. No one has informed us about who we should go to when something is wrong. The teachers here are very young. Most of them are doing their youth service and are not qualified yet. But when we ask the GES, they refer us to GFG. When we ask GFG, they send us back to the GES. We are now confused

The overlap in roles and the lack of clarity in terms of who should do what, makes it difficult to appreciate the value of these schools. As stated by the parent, the buildings do exist, but indications of learning going on in the buildings remains to be seen. But as the new building blocks continue to sprout in the village, who was benefiting from the contracts. Who was in charge of the construction and provision of building material? I attempted to pursue this issue further especially in regards to the construction contracts, materials for building and labour. Most of the schools that I visited had close to three blocks, each seating about 35 students. GFG foundation according to the annual reports of 2005 claimed that close to USD 7 million had been used to construct these schools. This implies that each school roughly cost US 1 million. I am not sure if this amount is indeed reflective of the buildings that I saw in the field and there is a high possibility as mentioned by a WACAM representative that the company was exccergating the figures for its own public image. I indeed could not gain access to the itemised budgets for these investments, either from the EPA or the company, but I was sure that some money had been spent all the same. During a focus group discussion with a group of galamsey youth in one of their working “ghettos”, I inquired about the nature of the contracts and how the schools were constructed. A participant in this FGD whose identity I will conceal mentioned that:

“the schools, clinics and even road constructions that you see is a partnership between the chiefs and the community relations department. Once the budget has been approved, we found out that a senior staff member at the community relations department owns a contracting and construction company in Tarkwa. This company has been in charge of most of the constructions in the village. The chiefs on the other hand, collaborate by being in charge of construction materials and labour. I was involved in the construction of schools, and I rarely found many people from my village. Most of them were from Tarkwa. Some of them claimed that they had to give a hand-out so as to get the job. Because when you were recruited, you worked until the job was finished.

Picture 5-2: Showing a Sample of a School Constructed in Huniso Village



These are strong allegations being made by my informant in this quote, but they seemed to be common knowledge among the community members. It is of course challenging and difficult to produce invoices or purchase receipts that indicate that indeed the Community Relations staff member did own a company that oversaw the construction of infrastructure. The local community members and most of my respondents seemed to be quite aware of this and spoke about it very openly. I tried to probe this issue further in the Community Relations Department. They obviously refuted the claim, but mentioned that the chief is given the responsibility to secure labourers for the construction. According to a staff member with the department, this was part of the agreement when the implementation strategy was drawn up as a method of also creating employment among the local communities. From the quote above, however, the communities seem to have been losing out, as some chiefs had designed ways of making some money out of the available opportunities. A confidential document from the company, which detailed the the distribution of employment opportunities for the local communities however, indicated contradictorily that chiefs are also allocated contracts as part of the implementation strategy. This document seems to validate the allegation made by my informant in the quote above (GFG – Employment Program, 2006).

Despite the existence of schools, there were few teachers that could guarantee opportunities for learning. The local communities could not see any direct benefits in the process, but in the midst of the mess, a dependency relationship seemed to have been brewing between the chiefs and the community relations staff member (s). The chiefs were solidifying their control at the local level by providing construction labour, employment contracts, while the the “Senior Official” within the Community Relations Department was using his private business to provide construction material and equipment for construction of the schools and clinics. In my opinion, this dependency between the chief and the community relations department might be an explanation as to why the latter would not hold the former accountable in cases when the former fails to play his or her role, and vice versa. On the other hand, the Community Relations Department might probably find it difficult to question the role or involvement of chiefs, because of the dependency relationship in as far as construction contracts are concerned. The contracting company however must have been approved by the board which is in charge of the contracting and funds management. It is then possible to assume that there exists a silent agreement within the board, who might or might not be aware of these secret dealings. This however raises questions about the decision making process of the board and once again, at what point local concerns become a priority.

Picture 5-3: Showing an access road constructed by a private company belonging a GFG Official – This road has been abandoned and not in use any more



b) *Provision of Water*

“.....In terms of the provision of basic services, we have embarked on numerous projects that include provision of hygiene and sanitary infrastructure and access to water. So far, the foundation has constructed 28 wells at Abekoase, Tebe, Huniso and Pepesa. In total, we have also constructed 12 seat community toilet facility in the area”

The local perceptions about these publicized investments are again not positive. I was able to count the wells for example and its indeed true that a total of 28 wells have been drilled in Tarkwa mine communities. Funded by the Foundation, these wells are provided as part of the compensation to communities, whose water sources suffer the pollution from mining operations. The state and quality of these boreholes is however appalling. I also observed during a survey that many of the boreholes and hand-dug wells in the area, especially those provided by the mining company, were either not producing at all or produced very little. During an interview with a woman from Abekoase village, she stated that;

“during the dry seasons, the production of the well is very low. We still have to cover close to six kilometres to fetch water as the queues are always long when production levels falls. On average it would take 20 minutes to fill a 10 litre container, an exercise that would normally take five minutes. We have complained to the company many times, but they always say, it has nothing to do with the well, but the nature of our land”

This aspect of poor borehole production is also captured in a study undertaken by Akaabza and Darimani (2001) in Tarkwa. They argue that the low levels of production by the boreholes in mining areas of Tarkwa is not a geological problem as the mining companies have always claimed, but rather a dewatering effect of the mining operations. They argue that besides consuming huge amounts of water, extensive excavation of large tracts of forests and the piling of large mounds of earth along watercourses removes the source of water recharge for groundwater sources and ultimately reverses the direction of ground water, causing active dewatering, which in the end contributes to a number of boreholes, hand-dug wells and streams in the area either becoming unproductive or producing less (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001: 54).

Another issue associated with the hand-dug wells was the quality of the water, where communities complained that “*cassava changes colour*” when it comes in contact with the water. The same lady I spoke to mentioned that the water has a foul smell and *does not taste very good*, she added. These allegations have also been captured in a study by a Masters Student from the University of Ghana, Accra who was investigating the local perceptions of social investments by mining companies in Tarkwa. In her findings, she reveals that there is a particular well in Tebe community which, when one draws the

water and uses it for cooking cassava, it turns green. This allegation has been refuted by the EPA as mere speculation, but while in field, I did witness the occurrence too. Officials from the company however equate this phenomenon to the chemical characteristics of underground rocks which are exposed as a result of drilling. In her study, the student also attributes the poor production and detestable state of the boreholes to the quality of the work and material used to drill. She finds out that the pumps are of poor quality, purchased from China and with a very short life span. This view was also echoed by a representative of WACAM who maintained that the mining company is more geared towards minimizing costs, than providing the local communities with quality services. He believed that some of these investments were being used as a public relations tool for the company, in an attempt to rebuild its image and win over the public after the spillage. There is continued speculation about who continues to benefit and again the same company is cited in many of my interviews in as far as drilling the wells is concerned. The chiefs are also accused of taking advantage of employment contracts to make some financial gains from non-village residents.

Picture 5-4: Showing one the Non-Functional Boreholes in Tebe Village



C) Community Livelihoods Program (SEED)

Picture 5-5: Brochure Announcing the Official Launch of the SEED Program



The final investment being funded by the Foundation is the alternative livelihoods program. This program was launched in 2005 and now brings to the fore the role of OICI, the development NGO that participated in the Ministers Compensation Launch meeting in Accra (see section 1.1). During the same interview with the Community Relations Officer, he mentioned that:

“Our alternative livelihood initiatives are captured under the “SEED” programme which stands for Sustainable Community Empowerment and Economic Development. The vision of the “SEED” program is to be a high impact, results focused, sustainable integrated community development program that focuses on economic growth, wealth creation, quality of life improvement and empowerment through education, capacity building and infrastructure development. The “SEED” program is designed to serve as an international model for development partnerships between the private sector, communities, host governments and other stakeholders. The goal of the SEED program is to improve the quality of lives of 30,000 men, women and children in 16 primary stakeholder communities by 2010”

The program objectives are:

1. To increase income and economic activities of 4,000 households in the primary stakeholder communities;
2. To improve the health status of 30,000 residents in the primary stakeholder communities;
3. To improve the level of education and livelihood skills of 5,000 youths and adults living in the 16 primary stakeholder communities; and
4. To ensure the sustainability of “SEED” program interventions for long term results and impact.

In the quotation above, a statement that catches my attention and which has been the cross-cutting issue in this work is local level involvement. This compensation package was meant to serve the local communities. One would expect that a group that should be at the forefront in designing this program, identifying priority areas and also deciding on the target group, should be the same local communities. This does not seem to be the case. According to Chambers (1986), local involvement in project design is a key principle for enhancing ownership and local support. While some of these ideas remain theoretical, in reality they are abused, as we can see in this context. The Community Relations Officer in this case mentions that

“.....To ensure sustainability and community ownership of the program, the “SEED” program has been designed and implemented with active engagement with community representatives (traditional rulers, women, men, youth groups etc), local, regional and national government agencies and ministries and NGO partners in order to secure their commitment and participation throughout the life of “SEED” and beyond for its successful execution and for the monitoring and evaluation of results and impact”

That might sound really nice and convincing to shareholders who are not resident in Tarkwa and aware of the daily actions in the area, but the approach has been nothing close to stakeholder participation. In the quotation, he mentions that a wide section of stakeholders are involved in the design of the program, but a confidential document, that I accessed from the “OICI”, reveals that the program design and strategy was developed by OICI and a leading consultant, who also happens to be a “Professor” in a local mining university in the region. This document is dated January 2003, implying that the decision to engage in this program had already been made, even before the compensation dispute was settled. This 161 page document identifies the priority areas in Tarkwa’s mining area and is informed by a study that had been undertaken by “the professor”, when he was still a chairman of the Ghana Chamber of Mines. The project document identifies “the professor” as a lead consultant and advisor to the Community Relations component of the work plan and OICI as the lead implementing agency (OICI and GFG, 2003).

Picture 5-6: An example of a Training Session Conducted under the Auspices of UMAT



This provides a better understanding of the involvement of both “the professor” and “OICI” during the December 26 meeting in Accra . The design of the program and the implementation strategy of the alternative livelihoods program had been developed in such a way that management roles were clearly allocated among the various individuals representing the various organizations. In the implementation strategy, it was stated that all training components and community relations programs will be undertaken under the auspices of the UMAT, but the lead advisor to this process will be “the professor” (see picture above). Since the program was to be rolled out in Tarkwa, the chiefs had been identified as partners to the programs; every component of the program would be piloted by the chief, before expanding it to cover other community residents. The chiefs were also responsible for ensuring that all the necessary raw materials for implementing the programs were available. This included fishlings for fish farming, cassava sticks for the cassava etc. The overall supervision and management of the program would be undertaken by the Community Relations Department, while the board of trustees of the Foundation would be involved in coordination of funds and monitoring the implementation. A monthly meeting was planned for this team each month to review the progress of the implementation process. This group was then referred to a community consultative committee (CCC), (OICI, 2003)

The involvement of “OICI” in implementing the alternative livelihoods program is questionable. This organization has indeed had programs in Ghana for over two decades. Its core areas of work, though, is vocational training programs and self-help interventions. This organization did not have any programs in mining areas and neither did they have programs in Tarkwa before the SEED program. The Community Relations Officer mentioned during my interview that:

“.....a leading NGO with over 30 years experience in Ghana and other local partners, are collaborating with Gold Fields Ghana in the implementation of the “SEED” program”

According to WACAM, the imposition of “OICI” as implementers of the alternative livelihoods program is a symptom of how civil society activities have been commercialized and compromised. The popular term employed for this is ‘co-optation’ where an NGO is engaged as a contractor or consultant to implement programs on behalf of the private sector (Bryant and Bailey, 1997). A WACAM representative argued that, there is no problem at all to engage an NGO in partnership with the private sector, but when budgets of OICI are fully met by the company, including salaries, overheads, program and technical logistics, then the possibility of OICI remaining objective is very limited. While in the field, I also found out from “OICI” that its Tarkwa office was opened at the same time the program began, meaning that “OICI” had very little or no knowledge whatsoever about this area. It might therefore be in order to conclude that this NGO was driven by the interest to access funding for its programs and establish a name in the mining areas rather than the primary concern to ensure that communities access the benefits accruing from the compensation deal.

With the company spending USD 1.5 million each year on the program (see the quote below), it is no wonder that “OICI” is able to operate in a luxurious office block in Tarkwa, with program staff in possession of company cars and with high salaries paid in foreign currency.

“.....The Gold Fields Ghana Foundation is spending about \$1.5 million a year on the program from 2005-2010 to ensure that the stakeholder communities benefit directly from the growth and success of the Company’s operations”

I was not able to access the operating budgets of “OICI”, but I could observe that its operations were not basic and the lifestyles of the staff members was an indication of well paid individuals by Tarkwa’s standards. The relevance of this analysis to my work is, that it brings to the fore the realities of how hidden agendas by some individual actors does drive their choices and actions. If “OICI” was a local organization, working in

mining areas and having a component of rural development or alternative livelihoods, there might have been no question about its involvement. But for this particular organization, I was not sure why it would get involved in such a sector if not for financial gain. Off course because of the financial support from GFG Foundation, “OICI” was able to recruit qualified staff members with the necessary backgrounds. None of this employees were however from Tarkwa, meaning that there was little benefit to the local area.

Picture 5-7: Billboard Advertising the SEED Program outside Tebe Village



By the time, I was completing my field work, the SEED program was in its second year. Just before I wrapped up my field work, I had an interview with the program manager at “OICI” in charge of the SEED program. On the basis of his reflections (see below), I validated the information on the basis of local community perceptions and my own observations as I had done with the social investments above.

To date, in terms of some specific outcomes, 19 Cassava and Oil Palm processing machines have been provided to communities that have the raw material base for these activities. The Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology and Industrial Service (GRATIS) supplied the machines and are providing regular after sales service to ensure that all the machines are in good working condition and are being effectively used by the beneficiaries. Inputs have also been given to bakery, tie and dye, batik and soap making groups for their activities. Three micro-enterprise groups have been linked to the First National Bank in Tarkwa for micro-credit. All of the groups are also being supported with business development services. Over 3,000 community members have benefited directly from the alternative livelihood programme. There are, however,

an estimated 15,000 indirect beneficiaries of the programme.. The Municipal Agricultural Office is involved in all agricultural projects in the communities. By March of this year, over 17,000 oil palm seedlings had been distributed under the programme. The success of this venture is evident through records that show instances of facilities processing up to 5 tons of palm fruits during a quarter. Based on this success, the team at Gold Fields Ghana had conducted a full feasibility study on a large scale oil palm project (thousands of hectares in extent). However, under the initial project proposal, the necessary land assembly proved to be problematic and therefore the project is under review at this stage to chart a way forward. The livestock programme has proven to be hugely successful as indicated by beneficiaries that have received pigs and assistance with farming practices and are now generating good levels of income and are becoming self sufficient. This self sufficiency is evident through the move of these enterprising farmers to purchasing their own livestock feed from the local markets. This type of approach stimulates local economic activity and cash flow through creating an additional market in the area that was non-existent a few years ago. With Ghana's high rainfall, water is in abundance and therefore it was a natural progression for us to pursue aquaculture as a source of alternative livelihood. We have therefore facilitated the establishment of numerous fish farms in the area as yet another source of stimulating economic growth. We have also used aquaculture in compensation and resettlement processes and are encouraged that one of our fish farms has evolved to become one of the most productive in the country. This fish farm operates through a cooperative type model that has proven to be most successful.

The response from the manager of the SEED program was an attempt to show how much “OICI” had achieved and also came across like a public relations tool for GFG. There was a lot of information that was hidden in the story and which I focused on when cross-checking the information with local community members. The first question that ran through my mind, was how did “OICI” decide on livestock keeping and not artisanal mining for example. The manager of the mine maintained that the areas of focus were identified through a collaborative process with local communities, a position held by the Community Relations Department. At the local level, what was being referred to as community consultation was a meeting between the chiefs and “OICI” staff to decide on the pilot areas and to select the community members to benefit from the programs. One of my informants, who received 2 goats as a pilot under the livestock-keeping program, informed me that, he received a message from the chief that a few individuals had been selected for piloting on various SEED programs:

He mentioned to me that I was selected because I was able to take good care of livestock, since I also had my own personal pigs”, he stated.

What this quotation reveals is that, this alternative livelihoods program was not benefiting all the members of the communities, but had been designed in the form of a project. In this project, individuals will be selected from within the communities who will pilot the programs for a period of two years with percentage scaling. The problem with this approach is that it gave privileges to those individuals who were capable of managing the programs. For example, I observed that most of the individuals selected for the

cassava or palm oil project were individuals who already had large farms or who could show that they are able to manage the projects (see quote below). This however excluded those individuals who probably deserved to benefit directly from the program, but who for some reason or the other could not gain access to the farm lands. The manager of the project informed me that,

“we have to ensure that the program achieves maximum results and to do this we select individuals who can demonstrate they have basic skills, or knowledge about goat or pig keeping, or palm oil processing for example” (Interview: OICI – SEED Manager)

Picture 5-8: Pigs supplied to a community member in Huniso as part of the SEED Program



In addition to the selection criteria, the chiefs continued to assert their influence within the project. In Abekoase and Huniso villages, fishponds were piloted on the chief's farms and I also observed that chiefs received more goats, pigs or chickens compared with the rest of the selected community members. The implementation of the program did not generate a positive reaction at the local level. A section of my respondents, who comprised individuals piloting the program, mentioned that the selection of livelihoods programs did not match up to the local realities, as the quote below suggests.

If the company is really serious about restoring our livelihoods, they would have taken time to understand our way of life. As a village, we have never kept goats or sheep. In most cases we do not keep pigs, because they are really expensive to maintain. They require a lot of food and hygiene is a big concern. Traditionally, our village (Huniso) is known for its vegetables and the young people would also engage in artisanal mining (galamsey) during the dry seasons. The big farmers would grow cocoa, yams, and palm oil trees, though this would be on the family farms. This program is not benefiting us.....

Still not clear was the rationale adopted by “OICI” in selecting priority areas as well as the ‘beneficiaries’, as they referred to the communities piloting the project. Whatever approach they used was exclusionary, in the sense that the individuals who were benefiting from the program were not necessarily those who were needy, but those who could demonstrate that they are able to manage the program. While “OICI” denied this allegation, it still remained a fact that those who profited in the process were those who were well off among the communities, and, as pointed out by Kwesi Anyemedu (2002), the chief’s stake or claim in the project was much higher. He argued that, “OICI” like many other social responsibility programs in mining areas needed to be accepted at local level and they had to first of all win over the chiefs, before their programs could thrive. Because of the influence that chiefs command, such programs would be geared towards appeasing them by granting contracting and larger shares of the projects to the chiefs. In Tarkwa, the chiefs also played a key role in selecting the ‘beneficiaries’, a process that was not necessarily transparent. Allegation of bribery by some community members to be selected into the program was a common case and Akaabza & Darimani, (2001) notes that compensation politics provided a platform for the chiefs to re-assert their power and control of local resources in mining areas.

Another characteristic of the SEED program as implemented by “OICI” was formation of committees within the communities to facilitate or coordinate the implementation of the various programs. As illustrated in the quote below, community livestock workers (CLW) were in charge of the livestock program while the Community Health Facilitators (CHF) managed the health programs. The WATSAN group was responsible for water and sanitation in the communities.

“...For the livestock program, we have the Community Livestock Workers, who are trained in each community to give veterinary assistance to the agricultural beneficiaries. A quarantine station has also been constructed to serve as an observation point for animals to be supplied to the beneficiaries. With regard to health, Community Health Facilitators (CHF)s have been trained in all the communities to assist in giving first aid to the community members. Serious cases are referred to either the community clinic or the Tarkwa Government Hospital. The CHF)s also provide behavioural change communication (BCC) education and Maternal Child Health and Nutrition education in the communities. Abstinence Clubs have been formed in all schools in the communities. The teachers have been trained to educate the clubs in reproductive health issues. A health programme is also being sponsored at Tarkwa. Health related topics such as HIV, family planning, malaria, hypertension etc are discussed every week with interactive questions and answers sessions. On water and sanitation (WATSAN), WATSAN Committees have been established in all communities to manage water and sanitation facilities. Working tools such as wheelbarrows, pick axes, gloves, rakes and pump repair tools have been given to each committee to be used for hand pump repairs and clean-up exercises. Refuse Containers have also been supplied to some communities to improve on sanitation. The Municipal Environmental Health Officer is responsible for the disposal of refuse in the communities and also helps monitor the activities of the WATSAN Committees.

According to the manager of the program, the choice to establish the committees was largely to consolidate local commitment and ownership from within. To start with, I could not find any indication of how the committees had enhanced local ownership, instead the committees created divisions among the members, as I was informed in the field. *The problem with these groups is that we did not know who selected them. Why should they represent us? We already have a chief, unit committees and elders. Why should we have another group in charge of health or livestock?*, stated one of my respondents. This view was shared by many community respondents who perceived these groups as a strategy by OICI to gain entry into the community, but not really as an approach for local outreach. The selection process of the committee members was left solely to the chief and there was very little consultation with the community members. During a focus group interview with the WATSAN group of Huniso village, I learned that individuals were basically nominated and some of them did not even have knowledge of what was required of them. While the SEED manager argues that these communities worked collaboratively with other agencies such as the district health services, at the local level there was an increase in cases of conflict between these committees and the local institutions such as unit committees and the elders. A case in mind is in Abekoase, where a conflict ensued between the elders who historically play the role of collecting revenues from water and toilet users. In addition, the elders had the responsibility of mobilizing communal labour for community-clean-up days. The conflict ensued because the CHF and WATSAN had now assumed the above roles under the SEED program. In essence, these committees had failed to generate the expected local ownership, but instead generated conflicts and

confusion with existing local decision making structures.

The existence of the committees was however beneficial to “OICI”, the chiefs and also “the professor”. For the “OICI”, I observed that, some of the committee members had taken over the responsibility of implementing the programs, a role that was meant to be handled by OICI. This way, if anything went wrong, the committee members would receive the blame and not OICI. A good example is in June 2007, when there was a spread of water-borne disease, which affected most of the livestock provided to the communities. Instead of “OICI” taking responsibility, the blame was directed to the CLW in these communities for not being proactive and responsive to the issue. Another benefactor of the existence of committees was “the Professor”, who was coordinating the training component of the program. Each month, training programs on specialized topics ranging from livestock management and community health to resource management were provided for the committee members. I assume that there were budgets allocated for these activities and, as mentioned earlier, the professor was the lead consultant for these programs. I could not find any existing MOU between “OICI” and the UMAT to indicate an institutionalized partnership between the two. It is therefore correct to assume that this was a personal consultancy arrangement between “the professor” and “OICI”, although the professor was functioning on the basis of UMAT and with institutional support, because all the training sessions were conducted at the UMAT, which was close to the mine.

In conclusion there was very little to show that local communities had indeed benefited from this seemingly “expensive” undertaking. According to the company, this was the most elaborate undertaking and was presented to showcase the desire by the company to invest in a socially sensitive manner. From table 5-1 below, it is however a different picture all together as despite the USD 6.625,667 spend by 2007, there is very little to show in as far as community development is concerned. Either most of the investments are sub-standard and don’t last, or some are just misplaced. Out of close to 10,000 inhabitants in the area, only 200 have benefited through the alternative livelihoods program, which instead of transforming the lives of affected communities, it has enhanced competition among the inhabitants because of its project-level approach. These ‘fake’ investments however have provided a positive public image to the company which seems to yield dividends in terms of blinding or covering the negative effects of the operations (Volker, et al, 2006). While communities continue to get a raw deal, traditional rulers, academic researchers, development NGOs and a section of company

officials are swimming under the financial opportunities created by the compensation. By the time I was completing my fieldwork, OICI was implementing similar programs for Newmont and Anglo Gold Ashanti, - the other two large mining companies in the Area. ‘The Professor’ had been appointed the official Community Relations Advisor to the Newmont’s Ahafo community development program, while the Chief of Abekoase was the head of the Community Consultation Committee in charge of overseeing the implementation of corporate social responsibility programs in Tarkwa on behalf of GFG. At the same time, WACAM, the lobby group that had been influential in driving the struggle for compensation on behalf of the communities had gone missing. In the next section, I try to link my descriptions to some theoretical explanations where I place the compensation deal in perspective as well as identify the stage at which the hope created by the community struggle in chapter four turned into despair and hopelessness.

Table 5-1: The Status of Projects Implemented under the Compensation deal by 2007

FINANCIAL YEAR	BY FY 2007	STATUS	TOTAL AMOUNT (USD)
PROJECTS			
EDUCATION (schools + scholarships)	15 +92 scholarships	Served by a total of 6 teachers - National service Capacity of 150 per school; 22 (14 for SSS) scholarships from affected communities	1,621,296
HEALTH (Clinics)	12	Served by 3 nurses	931,274
WATER (boreholes)	18	Only 4 functional	805,194
ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMME	3	Total 221 individual beneficiaries out of 10,000 residents	1,900,000
OTHERS (Roads, Community Centre)	2	2 Mine feeder road	914,659
EMPLOYMENT	1,700	121 community members	1,258,337
		GRAND TOTAL	6,625,566

Source: Field Survey, 2007; GFG Annual Reports; EPA Reports (various)

5.2 COMPENSATION DEAL: A Platform for a New Power Struggle

“The concept of strategic group is embedded in the paradigm of power. Strategic groups have the power to shape society, economy and the political system in a way that long-term optimal conditions for the acquisition of resources are created” (Evers & Gerke, 2009:4).

The compensation deal was a source of hope and an encouragement to many local communities in mining areas. For the lobby groups, this was a measure of success, but little did they know that this was just but the beginning of a new struggle. Like the case of struggling for compensation, this one involved the struggle to control new resources that had been introduced into Tarkwa as a result of the compensation deal.

Compensation Deal and Injection of New Resources

Evers and Gerke (2005) argue that an introduction of new resources within a given society provides a breeding ground for SG. These resources could range from development funds, humanitarian supplies, social - economic investments to military weapons. The SGs that emerge comprise actors from different social - economic backgrounds, who position themselves with a goal to gain control and acquire long-term material and immaterial gains from the available resources. The newly introduced resources therefore become an arena for power contestation.

Within the mining sector of Tarkwa, the compensation deal of 2003 could be argued as having injected new resources into the TGMC. It came two years after the cyanide spill of 2001, with the communities having successfully lobbied GFG into providing compensation for polluting River Arsuman. This deal was unique within the history of large-scale mining in Tarkwa in terms of the manner in which it was negotiated (see Chapter 4) and its magnitude. After the numerous negative, yet uncompensated, consequences of mining in Tarkwa area, many regarded it as a boom within the area. The compensation deal included:

- a) Direct compensation fund of 1,100,000 GH¢ (approx 600,000 Euro) as partial compensation to the affected communities. The administration and management of this fund, which will be discussed later, provides the arena through which power relations and conflict of interest could be visualized. This fund was made available by GFG and was the first instalment into the Gold Fields Community Development and Compensation Fund. Contributions to this fund would be made annually to finance and invest in rural communities affected by mining operations. A board of trustees was formed (see separate section) to

administer and manage this fund on behalf of the communities. The initial idea was that local communities especially those affected directly by the spill would develop community development proposals of their choice and submit them to the board of trustees to evaluate and authorize financing. The funds were administered in Tarkwa in an independent account at the Ghana Commercial Bank. By 2007, the GFG management in its annual report claimed the compensation fund had accumulated close to 3 Million USD (GFG, 2007).

- b) GFG – Trust Fund: In addition to the compensation fund, the second item of the compensation deal was the formation of a Gold Fields Ghana Trust Fund. Unlike the compensation fund which was established solely for communities directly affected by the spill and inhabiting the area in close proximity to the mine, the Trust Fund was established to make available funds for social and economic investments in all the 12 communities surrounding the mine (GFG, 2004). The Trust Fund was recommended as strategy to ensure a systematic and structured approach to finance development projects in communities within the concession. GFG proposed that the funding for the Trust would be based on the production and profitability of its operations through a yearly contribution of US\$1.00 for every ounce produced plus 0.5% of pre-tax profit (GFG, 2007). Of immediate priority would be the launch of a community alternative livelihoods program and social investment program to be funded under this foundation. During a presentation made during the visit of the Minister of Land, Forests and Mines to the Tarkwa mine, GFG officials indicated that over 10 million USD had been invested in the communities since the foundation was launched.

Within the mining sector, compensation deals play a key role in shaping power dynamics at the local level (Zandlert, 2004). This is because; unlike other payments like royalties, dividends and taxes that go directly to the government (see Ballard and Banks, 2003), compensations are paid to the benefit of local communities (Minerals and Mining Act 703, 2006). In this case, the opportunities and resources created by this compensation packages created competing interests and power struggles for control at the local level. The struggle is not just limited to the local communities whom we already saw as being heterogeneous (see chapter 4), but also amongst the chiefs, who perceive this as an opportunity to really re-assert their control and influence at the local level. Under normal circumstances, key decisions involving royalties to the district and land allocations for mining are made by the provincial chief (apintohe). But local decisions, like the

distribution of compensation deals falls within the domain of village chiefs and a key opportunity for them. As we have seen in this chapter, it can be argued that the Chiefs were key beneficiaries from the struggle because of how they controlled the contracts at the local level and labour allocations.

Compensation Package amidst Technological Change in TGM

“Professional problems require professional solutions” (Environmental Consultant Quoted in the Times of April 2002 – after the formation of the Cyanide Spillage Committee)

The introduction of new resources in a context or society undergoing technological changes creates an environment for strategic group formation. This argument is fronted by Evers and Gerke (2005) and rests on the premise that technological changes lead to power struggles between the so called “knowledge generators” who use their ability to explain or give meaning to phenomena as a strategy to gain control over resources. The assumption in this case is that technological changes create knowledge gaps between the known and the unknown (Luhmann, 1971, Evers, 2000). After the spillage of 2001, for example, a majority of the affected communities did not know what cyanide was nor its impact on their lives and the environment. To some extent, this ignorance largely influenced their approach to the struggle. Lobby groups as well as the media attempted to educate the communities, but this was done with an agenda to ‘name and shame’ the mining company. One would therefore argue that the information provided was not objective, but, rather, subjective. These knowledge gaps opens up spaces for an influx of knowledge workers, e.g. professional groups like consulting firms; intellectuals like lecturers and teachers; development experts like NGOs; company officials like corporate managers and so on, all of them keen to use their agency as knowledge custodians to claim a stake in the sector. Evers and Menkhoff (2002) refer to this group as *knowledge workers* who play a crucial role as strategic groups in influencing resource use, control and exchange. Their central argument is that technological changes especially ‘advancements’ bring with them a greater amount of what we ‘do not know’, a vacuum that is largely filled by those who either claim to know or who have the power of knowledge.

This dimension of ‘strategic group’⁴⁰ formation can also be visualized within Tarkwa’s gold mining sector. While the case might be different from what Evers and Menkhoff (2002) describe in Knowledge Economy of Singapore, the principles of how knowledge workers employ their knowledge for long-term economic gain are similar. To understand this dimension, however, it is important that I place the technological changes taking place in Tarkwa, within the bigger framework of the changes happening in Ghana’s gold mining sector. In Chapter 1, I described the gold mining processes and how these have changed since the late 90’s. With the influx of large-scale foreign mining companies into Ghana, the technologies for mining began to change. Mining companies, especially foreign owned large-scale investors, claimed that the costs of production using the underground shafts were high, while production levels were falling (Akaabza and Darimani, 2001). These companies abandoned underground mining and invested in surface mines for two reasons: one, to cut down production costs and two, to increase their production costs for profits.

The abandoned underground mining method was labour intensive and relied on manual labour and very minimal skills. In Ghana, underground mining was most widely used even before the coming of colonialists in the 18th C (Dummet, 1980). Being a traditional mining method, a lot was known about it; the problems associated with underground mining were adequately documented, as were the solutions to these problems. At the local level social conflicts between mine operators and local communities were reduced to a very small scale, as the operations were undertaken underneath the earth with minimal ecological effects. Local communities still enjoyed control over and use of their land respectively and questions of land encroachment, relocation and resettlement of communities were non-existent or, if any, minimal. The adoption of surface mining in the late 90’s however changed the dynamics in terms of what is known and unknown. Unlike underground shafts, surface mines required vast amounts of land and most importantly a small number of highly skilled labourers. The modes of production were highly mechanized and technical. The processing of gold was through cyanide heap-leaching and no longer through mercury amalgamation. In essence, as the mining process became more complex, so did the problems associated with the production process itself. The new technology therefore brought to the fore a lot of unknowns, in terms of production process as well as the problems and their respective solutions. Akaabza and Darimani (2002:53) for example argue that the cyanide spill of 2001 was a manifestation of the

⁴⁰ In this chapter I use the term Strategic Group to denote the three individual actors (NGO, Company Officials and Professor), because though acting as individuals, they legitimize their actions on the basis of the organizations or groups that they represent

ignorance created by the technological changes in Ghana's mining sector.

The shift in technology had varying consequences in as far as power relations at the local level are concerned. First, the basic training and manual skills possessed by the majority of the employees in the underground mines became redundant as the more technical and mechanized surface mining method took over. In Tarkwa, close to 5,000 locals were left unemployed as mining companies engaged in restructuring their work force. Those who lost their jobs were either absorbed in the small-scale mining sector, galamsey work, or resorted to the less profitable farming activities. While a large section of local community members lost their jobs, a new wave of skilled labourers from the urban cities of Accra and Kumasi were flocking into Tarkwa to compete for the available positions. The mining companies were also engaging in recruiting consulting firms and expatriates from the argument that they are not able to secure local skilled expertise from the local communities. Disgruntled members of the local communities who lost their jobs perceived the compensation deal as their opportunity to reap back the benefits. One component of the compensation deal under the GFG-Foundation was to create local level employment opportunities. The unemployed or former mine workers saw this as an opportunity to regain their sources of livelihood. The *Chiefs* on the other hand, perceived this as an opportunity to regain their control at local level by managing the community employment program (Dummet, 1980).

With the adoption of surface mines, the problems associated with mining became more complex. New problems were emerging each time and there was a lack of knowledge and capacity to comprehend and effectively deal with them. Unlike during the era of underground mines, where social conflicts and environmental problems were relatively well understood, surface mines presented a new challenge, not just to the local communities, but also to government agencies who were not well prepared for dealing with this set of challenges. A good example was the prevalence of cyanide spills due to the heap-leach method of gold extraction employed in surface mines. The officer in charge of EPA office in Tarkwa acknowledged that the agency is not well equipped to deal effectively with the environmental problems associated with surface mining. The Minerals and Mining Law (1986), which governs the mining sector, does not have any provisions for specifically tackling environmental problems or compensation related to cyanide spillages for example. While mining environmental guidelines and water laws do exist, there seemed to be no harmonization and I could find no statutes dealing directly with compensation costs, other than those stipulated in the Minerals and Mining Act.

According to the director of WACAM for example, the Minerals and Mining Act (703), 2006 - Article 4 on compensation was a response to the absence of proper information on compensation.

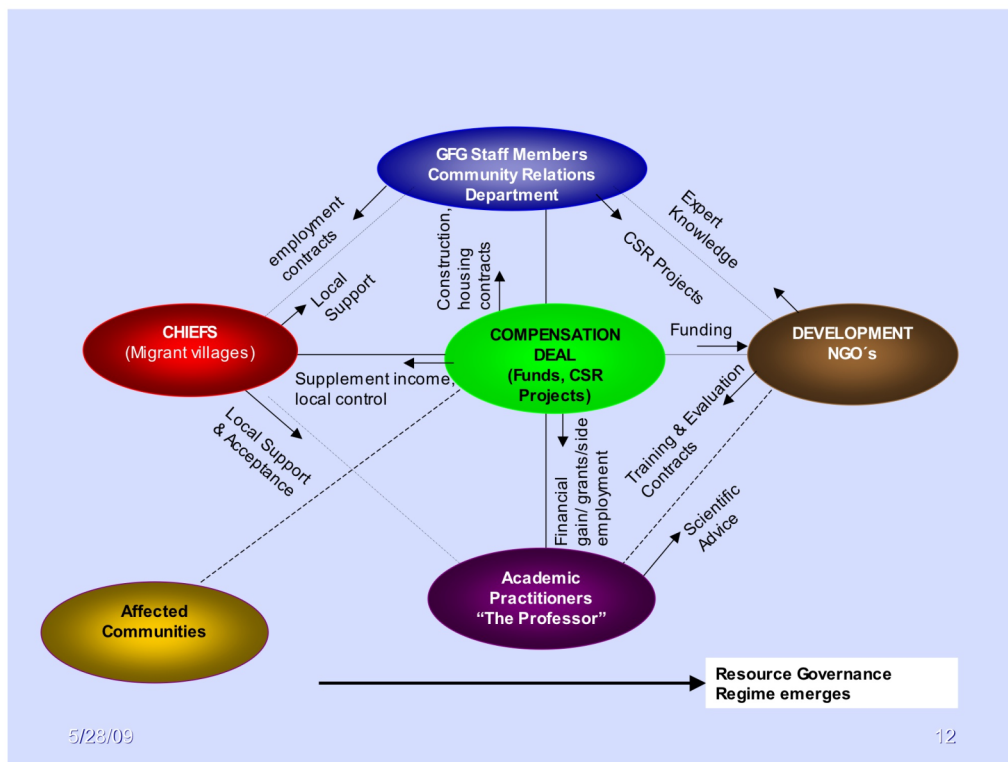
The environmental and social dimensions of technological shifts have therefore created spaces for the emergence of struggles between various knowledge workers. Universities, academic researchers, lecturers, consulting firms and development experts in the form of NGOs have flocked into Tarkwa to try to bridge the knowledge gap. NGOs claim that they have the grassroots experience and local level knowledge to bridge the gap between the private sector, the government and local communities. Posing as development experts, these NGOs perceive themselves as development partners who could collaborate with the private sector to heal the open wounds between communities and mining companies. Professional groups especially consulting firms argue that they have the expertise to support mining companies understand local community problems better and provide authentic advice on how and where to engage at the rural level. At the same time, Tarkwa witnessed the growing influence of universities especially UMAT offering to train and provide skill development schemes for company staff as well as surface-mining tailored courses for individuals seeking employment opportunities in the company. While this lobbying was happening on the outside, on the inside (within GFG), the Community Relations Department believed that it was their rightful place to lead and direct any issue related to community affairs, be it social or environmental. The strategic group of knowledge workers therefore became a key influence in the implementation strategy adopted for the compensation deal.

5.2.1 Who benefited? The Invisible Minority

From my analysis, it is very clear to identify the key losers and that is the local communities. On the other hand, the winners comprise of a small group of individuals and an organization who influence the implementation of the compensation deal to meet their personal gains. “OICI”, the “professor”, “company official” and the “chiefs” play a key role in influencing the design of the implementation strategy in such a way that their hidden agenda is protected. A common characteristic of all these actors is that they come from varying social and economic contexts, but are clearly focused on controlling the resources made available by the compensation deal. These individuals do not operate in a vacuum, but within the organizations that they represent. This process of controlling these resources is not a short-term arrangement, but a long term arrangement. Based on the nature of the resources and opportunities created by the compensation deal.

Throughout this Chapter, one can observe that over time a dependency partnership is established between these group of actors, making it difficult to hold each other accountable. It appears that they all knew what they were gaining from the compensation deal and, because of the dependency relationship between them, none of them was willing to question the other's choices or actions. For example, the "OICI" could not caution the "chiefs", even when communities complained about a lack of transparency in allocating alternative livelihood programs or construction contracts. The same was the case, when some communities complained about the ineffectiveness of the "OICI" to the community relations department. These individual actors had succeeded in turning the success of negotiating for compensation into a total failure.

Diagram 5-1: Strategic Group Action in Controlling Compensation Deal



Source: **Author's Own Construction**

5.3 INCOMPLETE STRUGGLES – Failure of NGO-Driven Community Struggles

While the compensation deal was being squandered by this group of actors, the question that remains in my mind is; where were the lobby groups that were quite instrumental and vocal in the struggle? WACAM (2006) see quote below, works to empower local communities to struggle for their rights. Did the struggle described in Chapter 4 empower the communities at all? A clear observation from this chapter is the absence of local community voices and one wonders what happened to the lobby groups who claim to advocate for mining communities. In my opinion, the war was lost at the most important time when local lobby groups should have monitored the implementation of the compensation deal. In my discussion, I employ Volker, et al, (2006), who argues that lobby and advocacy processes involve multiple stages, which have to be followed through if activism is to yield intended results. He argues that this framework has failed for a number of reasons, some of which are relevant to my case and which will be discussed in this sub-section. First of all, I will briefly outline the framework of lobby work as presented by Volker, et al, 2006 and the various stages of community struggles.

Community Struggles as a long-term and continuous process

Volker, et al, (2006), argues that, advocacy, lobby or activism (whichever word one uses) are one of the most challenging interventions by NGOs. He argues that community struggles especially those in areas where local communities come up against powerful business enterprises rely largely on lobby work in order to gain leverage against the “enemy”. Based on his research experiences on lobby activities especially in the mining sector in developing countries, Volker identifies five different that lobbyists can play and he argues that each stage of the process is important to ensuring that a struggle generates the intended results as well as ensure that end results benefit the vulnerable or affected groups.

Box 5-1: Phases of Lobby and Advocacy Work

1. Acting as Knowledge generators: The first stage of lobby work is arming oneself with evidence. This calls for research on specific themes so that credibility of a campaign process is based on the information they present before the public. Volker, et al (2006) does not provide the necessary skills for generating knowledge, but argues that by engaging in research, lobby groups shift from becoming trouble-shooters to solution seekers, especially if their knowledge also gives ideas of how businesses could engage responsibly and constructively. (Pegg and Wilson, 2002) argues that partnerships with academic activists is important especially for organizations that do not have the capacity to engage in scientific and objective research on the campaign theme. Writing for “advocacy”, they argue is a very important component of academic research, which could feed into lobby work. In the struggle described in chapter 4, we see WACAM partner with the TWN – Africa⁴¹, a research and advocacy organization with a reputation of commissioning reputable researchers both from local Ghanaian and foreign Universities to document cases on various issues affecting local communities in Ghana. The extent to which this research influences policy in mining areas remains to be seen and will be discussed later in this sub-section.
2. Acting as Activists: – On the basis of evidence (information) collected, Volker, et al (2006) posits that a lobby group then engages in activism. He argues that at this stage, the power of OICI rests on the amount of public trust that it enjoys. Activism according to him is a process where a lobby group’s weapon is the assault on corporate reputations, usually through mass media, public campaigns and protests. Activists base their work usually on so called “naming and shaming” campaigns – mostly directed at large multinational companies to unveil the hidden negative effects of their operations to the environment and society as a whole. Other instruments used include litigation, shareholding activism, grassroots mobilization and public demonstrations (Haufler, 2001: 663). The argument behind activism is that multinational companies thrive on the image that they portray and therefore focus on presenting the positive aspects of their work, while concealing the negative aspects of their operations (Gatts, 2001). Local level activism thrives on partnerships between local NGOs in the area of operations and NGOs in the home country of the multinational company. Local lobby groups raise awareness on these issues at the local level, while also providing useful information to the Western NGOs who often help in terms of resources, but are also better connected to company officials at corporate headquarters, shareholders abroad and also the international public.
3. Acting as Watchdogs – According to Volker et al, (2006), this is the final yet vital aspect of any struggle. Being a watchdog is largely being able to monitor a company’s performance and bring to the public’s attention the effects that its operations have on the environment, human rights and the community as a whole. If a company’s operations are seen as being negative, activists will try to raise public awareness and pressure the company to either review, pull out or improve its performance. Like in activism, local lobby groups establish linkages with international NGOs in the home country of the multinational company. The Western NGOs provide resources for campaigns, but are better connected to company officials at corporate headquarters, shareholders abroad and also the international public.

Source: Volker, et al, 2006

⁴¹ TWN list of publications some of which are related to mining issues in Ghana can be found on http://www.twnafrica.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=136:latest-publications

On the basis of the framework presented by Volker, et al, (2006) above, a successful community struggle for compensation for example, is one that ensures that the responsible company or government fulfils the promises made in the compensation and ensures that the end-results benefit the affected group of local communities. To achieve this, local lobby groups will have to assume the role of watchdogs with the responsibility of monitoring the designing of the implementation process as well as the actual distribution of benefits promised within the deal. As a watchdog, their role would include monitoring the implementation process to ensure that local communities are not excluded in the process and that their concerns take priority on the implementation agenda. In the event that this does not happen, lobby groups are supposed to engage the same strategy of activism and align with the media, the public and other international players to voice concern about the operations of the company. From this perspective, it is plausible to conclude that it is at the compensation implementation stage that local lobby groups, particularly WACAM lost the plot in the struggle. They were conspicuously absent in the implementation of the compensation deal (see table 5-2 below), where key decisions were being made. While the WACAM representatives argued that, they seldom received invitations to respective planning meetings, it still did not warrant their very passive reaction. In my assessment, I found out that it was not very difficult to observe that local communities had been excluded from the process, based on the composition of the management boards or board of trustees, some of which were known to the public, yet there was also very minimal reaction from the lobby group. Indeed my study was undertaken only two years into the implementation period; but it is evident that the implementation process had been designed in a way that marginalized local interests while prioritising the agenda of a small groups of actors as described in this chapter. After these two years, very little change could be visualized in the lives of the local communities, and by 2007, most of the interventions for example boreholes, were not in operations and the alternative livelihoods programs were benefiting individuals, but not communities as a whole (see section 1). The failure of lobby groups to follow through community struggles is not because they set out to fail, but some of them are products of the approaches to these struggles, the internal structure of these organizations and their failure to translate community struggles into community movements (Gailes, 2004; Petras, 1997; Volker, et al, 2006).

Table 5-2: Analysis of media articles on the spillage issue

Period	Issue	Concession owner	Medium	Number of articles
October 2001 – December 2003	Cyanide Spillage Tarkwa	GFG -	Print media, internet sources	234
December 2003 – November 2007	Cyanide Spillage Tarkwa	GFG	Print media, internet sources	8

“Ad-Hoc-Project” Approach to Community Struggles

“...When there is a spillage in Tarkwa, they are here...immediately a river is polluted in Obuasi, they are there...when local communities are relocated in Prestea, and we hear they are there again. It is very difficult to track them” (Interview: Resident of Abekoase Village)

In the quotation above, a resident of Abekoase village was narrating the difficulties that local communities face whenever they need support from WACAM. This quotation serves to demonstrate the ad hoc approach that most lobby groups adopt when dealing with community issues in mining areas. From table 5-3 below, I analyzed the various issues that WACAM engaged in after the settlement deal was signed in December 2003. I observed there was a very drastic drop in media reports presented by WACAM especially in relation to the spillage of 2001. The period after December 2003 was the period when the compensation deal was being implemented. From the table, WACAM was focused on other multiple issues in various mining areas of Ghana. This table shows the reality of some of the local groups and also an explanation of why community struggles fail to adequately lead to success. While this could be interpreted to show the dedication of lobby groups in addressing local interests, it also shows a very ad hoc approach to dealing with issues, which as argued by Volker, et al, 2006, require a very consistent and long term approach.

Table 5-3: Analysis of WACAM's media coverage on Various Mining Issues

Period	Issue	Concession owner	Medium	Number of articles
December 2003 – November 2007	Relocation of communities residing in mining concession	Golden Star Resources	Print media, internet sources	35
	Cyanide spillage incident in Teberebie Mine	Anglo Gold Ashanti	Print media, Internet Sources	50
	Land destruction and Water Pollution in Obuasi	Anglo Gold Ashanti	Print media, Internet Sources	84
	Compensation of displaced communities in Akym	New Mont	Print media, Internet Sources	60
	Cyanide Spillage Tarkwa	GFG	Print media, internet sources	8

The problem with the “ad hoc” approach is that, lobby groups do over stretch their already meagre resources in trying to solve every problem that comes up. Secondly, community problems are not automatically solved once they reach the hands of the media, as some lobbyists assume. These problems require a very strong dedication by the local organizations to monitor the implementation of every decision that is reached. (Giles, 2004), in his work with Asian and African NGOs, argues that in as long as community struggles are approached from an ad hoc point of view, then there will be very limited possibilities that single issues will be dealt with adequately. In his view, this observation is also reflected in how lobbyists define success or failure.

Compensation as a wrong measure of Success

WACAM, in its 2006 Annual Report, stated that one of its main achievements as a lobby group was to “support local communities negotiate for compensation after the cyanide solution leaked into their water source in 2001” (WACAM, 2006:23). From this statement, one is able to understand one of explanations to the ad hoc approach to community struggles by lobby groups. It appears that, according to WACAM, the compensation deal was its measure of success. To a large extend, one can not take away

the fact that the compensation deal was a measure of success, but the implementation that determines the fulfilment of the promise and distribution of the compensation is an even better measure of success. The view that lobby groups equate compensation deals for example as a measure of success is also presented by Giles (2004) who undertakes studies of community struggles in Asia. He finds that lobby groups as intermediaries fail in their role as catalysts of community struggles because of their narrow view of what a successful struggle should lead to. As Evers and Gerke (2009) reveal, whenever new resources are introduced in any given society, possibilities of a new power struggle instigated by strategic groups emerging is high. This power struggle is normally aimed at gaining access to and control of these resources, in most cases leading to the exclusion of the vast majority of those who ought to benefit (see section 2.1). So when a lobby groups assume that the compensation deal is the end of the struggle, they technically ignore the role of the power struggle that the compensation deal generates and the role of other actors in the process.

Who sets the agenda?

“WACAM is a human rights and environmental mining advocacy organization that works with mining communities to develop their capacities and empower them to struggle against the negative effects of mining.....the building of strong community movements is critical to the success of the mining advocacy objectives”(WACAM Official Website)

The other dimension to local struggles is the question of who sets the agenda? From the description of the struggle in chapter 4, I find out that the struggle for compensation was largely an “NGO – driven” process with very minimal involvement of local communities, either in the design or actual implementation of the struggle. This has a direct impact on the final outcome of the struggle, especially when lobby groups pull out or get attracted to other issues as we have already seen. (Giles, 2004) points out that many lobbyists or activists are directly involved in or take key lead in important struggles against local problems, denying local communities the opportunity to learn and become empowered in the process. He posits that the over-involvement of lobby groups in these struggles and the way that some of these organizations are organized internally makes it extremely difficult for these struggles to translate into people’s movements or grassroots action. He believes that lobby groups have therefore failed to generate local movements, which can carry on with such struggles in the absence of these organizations or when funds run out. He continues that lobby groups have developed a dependant people, who rely and call upon them whenever they have a local concern.

“...They come here only when there is a problem, and then when they think the problem is over, we do not see them again. In Tarkwa, we have problems everyday...It's better with the company, because they stay in Tarkwa and have given us boreholes. But OICIs only come and go...”

WACAM's official website states that the central role of the organization is to advocate for rights of local communities and in the process build their capacity and empower them to also fight against the same injustices. The implementation of the compensation program did not show any indications of an empowered local population, but instead one that crumpled down into despair after WACAM went missing. The problem might not lie with local communities who are regarded as disorganized and poor, but with the lobby groups themselves (Bryant and Bailey, 1997). A good example is the public protests organized in Tarkwa (see chapter 4). There was very minimal communication and involvement of the planning of the events. While WACAM argued that secrecy is a key tactic in lobby work, there was importance that trust is build among the local communities who are meant to engineer the struggle in the event that lobby groups pull out. In as long as the community members are not involved in the planning process, then it becomes impossible for them to be able to organize a similar resistance even when its clear that the compensation deal is not serving their needs or interests. This is because the local communities will lack the understanding of how the game is played. In the case of WACAM, despite the mass awareness campaigns, public protests and litigation, and the compensation deal that was reached, the unilateral approach was an obstacle to the empowerment of local communities as most activists claim to do.

Funds-driven community struggles

In terms of who sets the agenda, the question of funding comes into play. Most lobby groups tend to align their projects with those of the donors' wishes rather than with the needs of the people they serve. James Petras (1997) argues that this is largely due to the fact that funds for advocacy work continue to shrink. Local lobby groups are therefore left with no option but to compete for funds externally. These funding relationships however are not impartial, but come with conditions on how things should be done and also the measures of success. WACAM for example adapts a “rights-based-approach” to its lobby work. The main foundation of this approach is built upon the pillars of Oxfam International, especially Oxfam Australia, where each negative effect of mining is defined from a human rights abuse perspective (see

http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/mining/docs/minerals_council.pdf).

While this approach provides an opportunity for local concerns to receive public recognition, it hinders important local concerns getting the much-needed attention. For example, the cyanide spillage issue, largely affected water resources as an ecological resource. The focus on human rights abuse however as a campaign strategy did not give much publicity to the question of water management in mining areas. On the same question of funding, most of these organizations have adopted the result based program management approach where each of its funding partners (local organizations) have to show the actual results of their activities. In this program, these results have to be measurable and quantifiable

(See <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/EMA-218132656-PPK>).

This approach by donors has prevented lobby groups from investing in processes geared towards community empowerment, which are quite difficult to measure or quantify. In addition, they have reduced complex social problems onto logical frameworks of objectives and results without really demanding much more from their counterparts. The ad hoc approach to issues and definition of success in term of measurable results and not sustained processes like empowerment could be a failure of local groups, but the source can be found from the donors who create these measures as conditions for funding.

Internal structure of Lobby groups

“Normally, it is the Director and his wife (the co-founders) that provide a lead in our activities and programs. ...They are very busy because they travel a lot (in Ghana and abroad)
(Interview: WACAM staff member, Tarkwa)

While the struggles could indeed be influenced by OICIs themselves and the donors, the founders of the organizations also play a very important role when studying community struggle. Under this theme, my argument is set by Volker, et al, 2006, who posits that when an organization’s agenda is built around an individual, two things happen: one, this individual dictates the agenda or areas of focus of the organization, and two, the organization becomes unable to sustain local level struggles because of over reliance on one individual. From the cases in my thesis, the question of internal structure of lobby groups brings two additional dynamics to local struggles. First of all is the question of loyalty and representation. During my fieldwork in Tarkwa, I was observed that only the director or co-director of WACAM could make decisions regarding any issue that involves the organization. 100% of the press statements issued by WACAM, either on print, mass or online media, were made by either of the directors and no one else. I also attended four community training and awareness raising events organized by WACAM

where on all occasions, it was the director who moderated the sessions and offered the trainings.

Because of this approach, WACAM adopted an identity of its founders (see caption 1 below on the founders), instead of the identity of the local communities that they represent or the diversity in the organization. Giles (2004:11) supports this view in his research where he states, "the internal structure of most local lobby groups resembles that of a small private or family business". He argues that most of the local lobby groups are led by the founders of these NGOs, who automatically appoint themselves to be directors and never face election. This way, democratic values of the organizations are therefore questioned yet they claim to be representatives of local communities. In such cases, it becomes really difficult to ascertain whether these organizations are serving personal interests or are indeed concerned about the common good of local communities. In addition, when lobby groups assume the shape of a family business, one gets to understand why opportunities for sustained struggle and outreach becomes limited, as the energy of "one couple to cover all the regions becomes limited.

Box 5-2: Founders of WACAM

WACAM was co-founded by among others a couple (i.e. husband and wife). Both of them share similar characteristics though very complementary to each other's efforts in running WACAM. Hannah is a member of the royal family of Awudua. The Awudua family has a long mining history and owns the land under concession in Tarkwa. The provincial chief, the Apinto is currently the head of the Awudua family and a cousin to Hannah, with whom they have a good relationship. In my own interpretation, Hannah's social position within the royalty has worked in her and WACAM's advantage when it comes to mobilizing community support. WACAM is largely a membership organization that depends on voluntary involvement of local community members acting as mobilizers. Hannah's social position also allows her and WACAM easy access to vital information especially in relations to government plans or ploys and also to decision-making structures.

Secondly, both Daniel and Hannah began their working careers with MOFA district office in Tarkwa. According to Daniel, the nature of their work involved rigorous community visits, where they got to experience on a first hand basis the challenges facing mining communities. At the same time, they established good working relationships with other related agencies like the LVB, FC who turned to be strategic allies in their later work with WACAM. This partnership with LVB especially appeared to strengthen WACAM's position within the negotiation arena as they got access to land compensation and crop valuation rates, which is highly secretive information, rarely published publicly. Such information, including potential relocation dates, company resettlement plans because a secret weapon to WACAM's advocacy work. Access to such confidential information is also of value to WACAM whose work largely depends on the validity and evidence provided in each advocacy message that they transmit to the public and their partners. After close to ten years at MOFA, both husband and wife moved to Ghana's trade-union congress (TUC) where they focused mostly on lobbying for the interests of mine works within the union. During an interview with Daniel, he mentioned that his work with TUC enhanced his advocacy skills in as far as advocating for needy sections of the society was concerned. Their relationship with TUC stretches to date, where both the WACAM Accra and Tarkwa offices are hosted within the TUC buildings respectively. After the spill for example, TUC offered one of its offices in Tarkwa to WACAM to use as a secretariat for coordinating the public rallies and campaigns. This office has since remained on as WACAM's secretariat in Tarkwa.

Lastly, both Hannah and Daniel share the same academic foundation. Educational background as cited by Watts (1996) determines an individual's perception of a given reality and ability to conceptualize information and turn it into knowledge. Individuals who are knowledgeable therefore tend to act with vision, as compared to non-knowledgeable individuals. Volker et al, 2006 argues that when selecting an

organizations board of directors, the selection team will tend to focus on highly experienced and properly trained individuals. Both Hannah and Daniel received their training in Rural Development and by the time I was completing my fieldwork, they had enrolled in a long distance masters program in Human Rights. Their education background and especially focus on human rights issues could be a plausible explanation to their focus on human rights abuses in the course of their work.

Sources: (Interviews with WACAM Directors; WACAM Annual Reports, 2004; 2006)

Growing distance between lobby groups and government

“They always act like members of the opposition. They thrive on being radical to every decision that the government makes. At times, we wonder if they see anything positive from the mining sector and the efforts by the government?” (Interview: EPA representative, Tarkwa)

The final aspect in terms of how lobby groups have failed local level struggles is in regards to their growing animosity with government agencies. Giles (2004) argues that historically, lobbyists have tended to be anti-government and there has been a growing love-hate relationship between these two important actors. Bryant and Bailey (1997) believes that while lobby activities are crucial, there is need for these activities to be linked to policy discussions as change depends on the decisions made by the government. He posits that, governments find it difficult to work with lobby groups because their antagonistic approach to issues, which as my respondent mentioned above, appear to be in constant opposition to the government. Through a review of media articles, I could not find any that had WACAM acknowledging the role of the government or any positive attempts geared towards mainstreaming community issues in legislation for example. According to an employee of the Ghana, Chamber of Mines, “it appeared as if WACAM’s main responsibility was to identify all the negative things going on while failing to recognize the fact that Ghana is by far advanced as a mining country”. She went ahead to argue that the government is willing to work with organizations capable of being objective enough to identify problems, but also propose solutions, but not just to demonize everything that it does. An official from the EPA added that, “we are all Ghanaians, and should work towards making our country better. We should not specialize in tarnishing the name of our country for selfish gain”, he added.

A second argument that was used to show the growing mistrust of WACAM among the policy makers is the one-sided view to issues in the mining sector. This argument was brought up by an employee of the Minerals Commission in charge of mine safety. He argued that, *“why haven’t WACAM tried to lobby the communities to adopt safe galamsey operations and stop using the mercury which is not only poisonous, but dangerous to the environment? We would be very happy with them if they joined in our efforts too. However, it always comes across as they oppose everything we do”*. As a researcher, I would find it hard to contest this view, because WACAM operates with a strong bias towards areas which have a high concentration of

large-scale mining multinationals, which they argue have huge cases of negative effects to local communities. The point by the Mine Inspector however is that the mining sector as a whole (large or small scale) generates negative impacts to the society and environment, in fact more so the small scale sector which is much harder to police and regulate (MMSD, 2001). A one-sided view of lobby groups to mining issues therefore raises questions about the objectivity of WACAM for example, indeed whether their agenda is to serve local needs. As discussed earlier, it could be possible that this biases could be reduced to individual ideologies of the founders or the anti-privatisation or anti-liberal sentiments, fronted by their donors in the West (Green Peace Movement, Earth Works, Fatal Transactions, Oxfam International, Action Aid) (Bryant and Bailey, 1997).

Because of the growing distance between lobby groups and policy making institutions, it becomes difficult to see the silver lining of community struggles and whether anything will change in the process. There has to be a balance between lobby for change and influencing policy change. Influencing policy change might call for strategic partnerships between WACAM and government agencies, not to become insiders as “OICI” in chapter 5, but to identify strategies for ensuring their reports and those of their partners receive an audience among policy makers and enforcers. NGOs who ostensibly support the struggle of the working class.

5.3.1 The Missing Majority...Present Minority

The Tarkwa struggle for compensation was long. In Chapter 4, it appears as if the struggle lasted for a few days based on the events that I describe, but in reality, from the period between the spillage occurred to the time when the compensation was tabled, it was two years later. While this struggle was long and tedious, It generated a lot of hope for the affected communities and was regarded by some as a new beginning of respect and cordial interaction between mining companies and local communities. This chapter however shows a totally different story. The struggle generated hope that quickly fizzled into despair and hopelessness for the affected communities. The organizers and key players in the struggle focused on getting the compensation, but ignored the reality that implementing the compensation required further monitoring and if possible new strategies in the struggle. In the end, we clearly see that four years after the compensation struggle, nothing has changed among the local communities. My overall conclusion was that the compensation struggle was indeed a victory for the community, but by losing the compensation, it was equivalent to losing the war, given the long term benefits expected from the compensation package and compensation politics in Tarkwa.

I began this chapter by questioning whether, the struggle as described in chapter 4 indeed served the concerns of the local communities. As I have shown, it did not, instead it served the interests of a few individuals who currently continue to gain access to these benefits. The failure is partially to the system as a whole, but I single out the lobby groups who claim their mandate is to empower communities to fight for their rights. Based on the framework of NGOs as presented by Volker et al, 2006, lobby groups failed in their responsibility as watchdogs, where they should have monitored the implementation of the compensation deal to ensure that local concerns are served in the process and that individual interests do not override the total good of the deal. I question whether indeed the community struggle for compensation after the 2001 spillage was a success.

CHAPTER 6 COMPLEX REALITY OF COMMUNITY EXCLUSION

Theoretical and Policy Conclusions Based on the Tarkwa Case

In the previous chapters, I have been building up a case to demonstrate that unequal distribution of mining benefits in Tarkwa's gold mining area is an outcome of power relations in these areas. In chapter 1, I discussed the historical perspectives and mining reforms that currently underlie the trends of gold mining in Ghana. I showed how these foreign-induced reforms shaped the power balance in mining communities, especially the role of new players like mining multinationals and government regulatory agencies. With the introduction of new technologies and injection of foreign investments, knowledge plays a central part in legitimizing actions of specific actors with the role of universities and scientists coming under scrutiny. A central outcome of the reforms was increased production of minerals especially gold, which resulted in increased cases of negative social and environmental effects, leading to conflicts between mining communities. A common view shared in the literature, was that even the benefits emanating from the sector were not equally distributed, with the majority of the local communities, having to bear the brunt of the costs. In chapter 2, I review research debates around these issues and present the competing views upheld therein in an attempt to explain the unequal distribution of mineral benefits. From these reviews, I identify two main categories; one which perceives the unequal distribution of benefits as a governance problem therefore calling for institutional or legal reform, and the other that defines unequal distribution of benefits as an outcome of a power struggle between societal actors interacting over a given resource to meet their desired goals. Researchers aligned to the latter school of thought recommend a multi-level and multi-actor analysis and interventions as the strategy for better understanding the problems in mining areas.

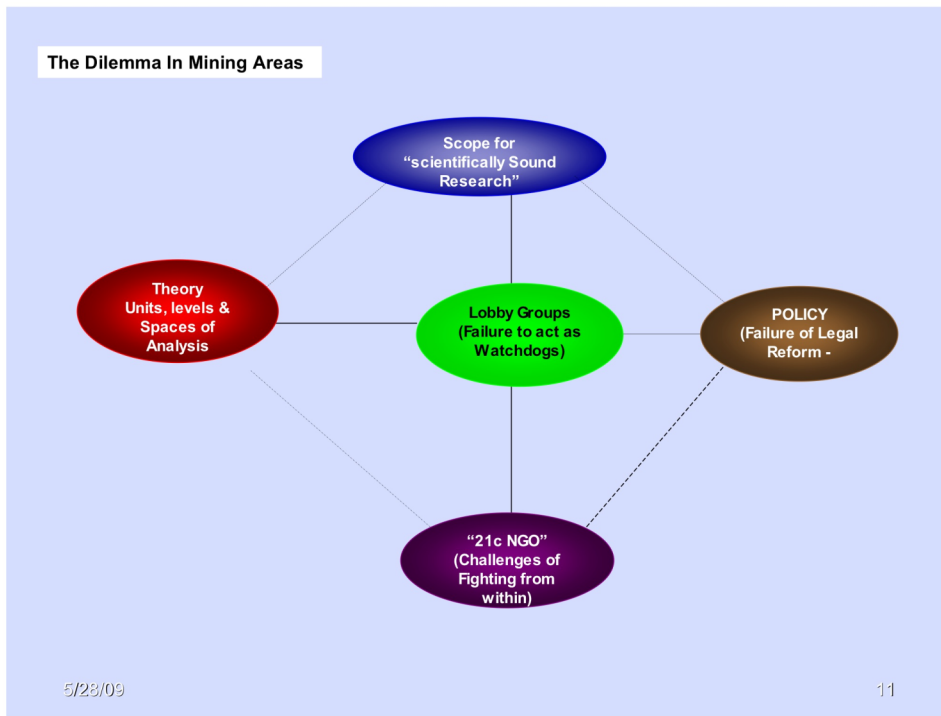
My study is aligned to this latter view and my chapters 3, 4 and 5 have tried to demonstrate the process of unequal distribution of resources by using case studies around compensation to show how a small organized group captures or gains access to benefits meant for local communities, after a community water source is polluted by a mining company. These three chapters demonstrate a complex interaction of various actors who possess varying levels of power and are driven by competing and at times conflicting interests. Unfortunately, the analysis shows that local communities continue to get the losing end of the bargain. My thesis therefore paints a rather pessimistic image in as far as local community interests and the environment in third world mining countries is concerned. While I have already demonstrated that legal reforms and

regulatory frameworks do not guarantee equity and sustainable mining, policy actions in today's mining spaces still follow the simplistic approach of reform after reform, regulation after regulation. With the governance agenda still presented, very few attempts are being made to create spaces for local community involvement and participation to reverse the situation. As a result, every reform process continues to exclude local communities from setting the agenda, while legitimizing the actions of otherwise powerful interest-driven groups or individuals.

6.1 Understanding the Politics of Benefit Distribution

In this conclusion chapter, I draw my arguments together by summing up my work to place the small Tarkwa discussion onto the bigger frame of things. Firstly, I demonstrate why solving community problems in mining areas remains a research and policy problem requiring further inquiry and probably a new approach. I base my conclusions on the finding that any policy changes or interventions have to be informed by a thorough understanding of the various units and levels of analysis within the mining sector. Secondly, policing or regulating the mining sector is hampered by the fact that decision making in this sector does not happen in board rooms, during international conferences, but in behind-the-scene events; night hotel meetings, fund-raising visits abroad among others. The agenda in most of the behind-the-scene events are set by individuals who hold independent interests, separate from the ones of the larger organizations that they represent. Such deliberations are however not documented or recorded and seldom reach the media because, in most cases, they are meant to be under-cover meetings. Local communities or the broader constituents represented by these individuals are sometimes not aware of these events and the decisions that emerge seldom represent the grassroots actors. Such informal spaces of decision making fall under the radar of formal legal frameworks, making regulations much harder, but in the process, the same legal frameworks end up providing the spaces for endorsing the decisions made behind the scenes etc. Finally this chapter elaborates on the practical and theoretical challenges for conceptualizing unequal distribution of benefits in mining areas. It links exclusion of local communities to the failure of policy regimes, theoretical dilemma of identifying the appropriate units, levels and spaces of analysis as well as the failure of civil society and scientific knowledge to actively influence change in these highly politicized environments (See diagram 6-1).

Diagram 6-1: Theoretical and Policy Dilemmas in Addressing Unequal Distribution of benefits in Mining Areas



Source: Author's construct

6.1.1 The Complexity inherent in Units of Analysis

Researcher: Who do you think is to blame for all this?
Local Community Member: I do not know whom to blame any more!
EPA Officer in Tarkwa: These NGOs and the Chiefs who are greedy!
WACAM Official: The government and the chiefs have failed their people!
Chief: I think it's the companies, but some of the communities too!
Company Official: We have lived with the people well. It's some of the NGOs!
(Source: Research Interviews, 2007)

Towards the end of my field research in Tarkwa, I asked some of my respondents how they perceived the problem in mining areas and who was to blame. In the excerpt above, I have summarized some of the responses I received from individuals representing NGO, government, company, community as well as traditional rulers in the mining area. The responses provided above do not provide the full story and are not meant to prove any point or make an allegation in terms of who is responsible for the unequal distribution of benefits or increase in environmental problems in Tarkwa. I use them however to show the general problem in conceptualizing social problems, whether in the

literature or policy debates. In this section of my conclusions, I dwell on the nuances of understanding the units of analysis, where social problems still remain a question of the unit. While it is largely understood that communities are heterogeneous units, as are governments, we still find ourselves at a place of convergence of wholesome generalization of actors as some of my respondents did above.

First, I did observe that disputes within mining areas are not necessarily between local communities and mining companies, but involve many other actors, all who represent varying interests and at times, not in line with either the company or the communities. In chapter 3 for example, I outline the various actors who directly or indirectly influence decisions within Tarkwa's mining sector. In this chapter, I demonstrate the complex composition of societal actors, because of the competing nature of the interests that they represent. For example, it is very misleading to argue that all mining communities are driven by the goal to protect their cultural identity, as some sections of these communities are also driven by the desire to make economic gains from the mining areas. On the same point, it might not be necessarily true that all village indigenes are primarily driven by the desire to protect their ancestral heritage, and chapter 3 indeed shows that identification of interests is a complex process as not all interests are visible or are what they always appear to be.

Secondly, disputes within the mining sector or decisions are not undertaken individually, but in coalition with other actors. In chapter 4 for example, I show how local Advocacy NGOs establish coalitions with media groups to publicize the concerns of the affected communities. They also build partnerships with international NGOs who fund their campaign activities, provide the technical expertise and a platform for international lobby activities. A combination of local and international agency, as well as the courage and support of some chiefs and local communities does play a role in influencing the actions and choices of companies. The end result, whether negative or positive is not an outcome of a struggle between communities and the company, but with many other actors. As we shall see later, these other actors also possess their own interests and use these battlegrounds as a platform to advance and protect them. In terms of identifying the unit of analysis, it becomes a challenge to state exactly who is influencing whom, and who is driving the agenda. The reality presented in this chapter serves to show that decision making in most mining areas are power struggles that go beyond the two primary parties to the battle, but includes other players who might not even be located in the local action arena. This aspect of analysis will be revisited later in this chapter.

Coalitions as vehicles for mobilizing bargaining power and wielding the same play a key role in negotiations and decision-making, an aspect that can be so complex to map and understand for a policy maker.

Thirdly, the questions of actors whether engaging in isolation or in coalitions still poses a challenge in terms of conceptualization. In most cases it has happened that the actions of an individual are mistaken to represent the choices and actions of a larger organization. This mis-conception has also been reflected in how various groups (individuals, governments, donors) define problems or shape interventions within the sector. From my study, I observed a trend that is not new in social science power analysis, but which is rarely reflected in drafting policy options and this is the role and influence of individuals operating or working within organizations. In chapter 4 and 5, I show how individuals drive agenda and shape the actions and choices of other actors within the mining sector. In the first case, I link the influence of WACAM partially to the individual characteristics of its co-founders. The two share a common education and professional background and subscribe to a specific ideological orientation in as far as mining issues in the country are concerned. These combined individual characteristics shape the interests of WACAM and determine its approach in dealing with community issues in mining areas. The role of these two individuals is paramount to the analysis of WACAM as an organization, but this is seldom the case. In the second case, I use the example of “the Professor” in chapter 5 who despite holding a public office as a senior civil servant engages in the mining sector in his individual capacity as a consultant for the mining company. He however uses his public office and role as knowledge worker to assert his influence in mining decisions, but also employs his office to advance his own personal interests. It might be misleading to analyse the role of UMAT based on the behaviour and actions of *‘the professor’* as the latter does not necessarily represent the overall goals of the University. On this basis, it is therefore possible to argue that the professor does not necessarily represent the interest of the company or that of UMAT, but largely an individual desire to gain financial rewards from his interaction with the company. He does not serve the interests of the academia or those of science, because most of the research or reports written under his partnership with the company are seldom published or made public. The question still remains, - how WACAM would look without the two co-founders and whether UMAT would have a different image in Tarkwa without ‘the Professor’. These questions are valid and raise theoretical as well as methodological questions in identifying and mapping actors, their roles and interests in a given sector or local contexts.

While still discussing ‘the individual’ as the unit of analysis, my study also brings to the fore the question of hierarchy in negotiations and decision-making. It is simplistic to assume, as has been the case, that state agencies like the EPA, MEST for example share the interests of GFG or that they represent the interests of the company. It is important to understand that the EPA, just like the NGOs example above is not only headed by an individual, but is also guided by a hierarchy of decision makers. While the EPA is a legal entity and constitutionally protected, it operates under the Minister of Environment Science and Technology, who sets the agenda and directly serves the interest of the president. As a politician, the role of his position might not be in line with that of the EPA which is largely a specialized agency charged with ensuring environmental regulations are observed. While the EPA would desire to engage objectively and undertake its role impartially, it is worth noting that the key and final decisions are taken elsewhere. The same could be said of the Minister who receives orders and instructions from the President and whose sole role is to protect the interest of the government in such matters. The same analysis would be made of the chiefs, who operate within the framework of the Traditional council and whose actions are either enabled or limited by the Apintohene or Paramount chiefs as the custodians of the chieftaincy hierarchy. A good example in chapter 4, is when the chiefs of Pepesa, Huniso, Samahu and Tebe decline to offer support for public protests based on instructions from the Apintohene and the decision by the MEST not to disclose the contents of the incident report despite having received them from the EPA district office. The frameworks and hierarchies under which most of the actors operate are a reality in life, but the role they have on key decisions like the one discussed in this chapter seem to be largely ignored.

The unit of analysis is an important starting point for defining a social problem and greatly determines the nature of solutions proposed. From my thesis, it is important to note that ‘the professor’ represents an individual, who despite using or abusing his office to meet his personal gain, does not represent the entire academic community. The actions of such an individual unfortunately bring to question the credibility of the institution like UMAT because of the senior position that ‘the Professor’ holds at the University. In terms of lobby work by NGOs, if meaningful change is to be achieved, a proper analysis that identifies or separates the individual from the broader institution is important. The challenge however is how to be able to remain individual and separate individual interests from the broader constituents, without drawing generalizations. In addition to the unit of analysis, my thesis also places emphasis on the levels of analysis in

trying to understand the interaction between actors and how this interaction creates incentives for exclusion, hence unequal distribution of benefits.

6.1.2 The Various Levels of Analysis

Researcher: In your opinion, where do you think the problem lies?
Local Community Member: With our chiefs!
EPA Officer in Tarkwa: Mother countries of the companies, donors!
WACAM Official: The government, company and shareholders!
Chief: Company and community level
Company Official: NGOs, International NGOs and donors
(Source: Research Interviews, 2007)

Like in section 6.1, I was curious to understand from a section of my respondents where they placed the blame. From my chapter 3, we observe the understanding of the unequal distribution of resources also depends on the levels of focus. In the literature, some have argued that you have to focus on the local level and observe the interactions of actors who engage with the resources on a daily basis. Others have critiqued this view, by stating that the actual state of affairs at the local level is not only determined by the local actors, but also shaped by external players. In this case the actions of local actors are influenced by the agency of external players (Moore, 1978). By understanding the various levels of analysis, one is able to make valid and objective policy recommendations and also develop change driven interventions for NGOs for example.

The discussions on levels of analysis have been limited to the global verses local, in as far as the global actions influence local behaviour (Wolfgang, 1985). Within the mining sector, or at least using my case of Tarkwa, I observe that levels of analysis is not just a geographical issue, but also a question of space, in terms of local verses meso or national; it's a question of how actors in the external arena interact with local actors to influence their choices and behaviour. For example, we do observe that decision-making within the mining sector of Tarkwa cannot just be limited to the inhabitants of Tarkwa for example, given the ethnic differentiation of the area. Migrant communities, just like indigenes, represent an interest group and their role in shaping the state of mining activities cannot be ignored. In terms of policy interventions, labour movements and internal migration patterns have been ignored and very little of this is addressed in mining legislation. Differentiating interests so as to identify the individual actors does pose a challenge; a common debate in the literature (see Bryant and Bailey, 1998) involves the question whether 'chiefs' should be perceived as part of the community in analysing actor

behaviour. This question is valid, but again points in same direction as the discussion in this conclusion chapter. While local communities present one level of analysis, it is very important that the multiple units (see 6.2 above) are discerned and separated. Chiefs in Tarkwa for example are justifiably a part of the community, but it is misleading to analyse them collectively with local communities. The overall analysis changes, but also obscures the reality that chiefs as an individual actor behave based on the social practices that govern the chieftaincy, but are also driven by individual interests which are at times not in line with the local communities that they represent (see chapter 5).

Another example, and which provides a different level of analysis, is in regards to NGO partnerships and relationships with external donors. We see for example how local lobby groups gain access of the agency of international watchdogs, which through their networks and partners are able to influence the actions of GFG in Ghana. The partnership between the two is not one-sided as some have argued, rather a symbiotic relationship where local lobby groups provide useful information to sustain international campaigns, while the international organizations provide funding, technical expertise and campaign platforms (Volker, et al, 2006). These external actors do have a direct influence on the behaviour of local actors, which then plays a very direct role in determining the choices and action of such stakeholders within the mining sector. In chapter 4, I have argued that WACAM's strategic choice to adopt a rights based approach to campaigns in mining areas is largely influenced by its strong partnerships and funding relationships with Oxfam International, a pioneer and driver of the approach among lobby groups. From this discussion, one is able to observe that the negotiation spaces are much broader than the local context and at times targeted intervention seems to ignore the silent or hidden voices of the actors not directly involved or visible in the day to day decision making over the use of the resource.

6.1.3 Mapping the Spaces of Interaction

Lastly, the interaction of these actors (individuals or groups) does not happen in a vacuum. They happen within the spaces of a mining sector that 'ought' to be governed or regulated by mining laws, policies and regulations set by government. These laws set out the parameters of engagement and determine the entitlements between the surface owner (e.g. local communities) and the mining right holder (e.g. the mining company). They also prescribe the roles of various government agencies in ensuring that the laid down legislation is enforced and protected. The role of the EPA, Land Valuation Board, Minerals Commission, Forestry Commission and the MEST are clearly stipulated in the

minerals and mining Act (703) – 2006. In my thesis, I argue that mining laws do provide the legal spaces of interaction, but from the cases in chapter 4 and 5, we observe that actors driven by their own interests derive strategies or bargaining tactics that either use existing legislation to legitimize their actions (for example mining companies), or in some cases they devise strategies to overcome the constraints created by some of the existing legislation.

While discussing the spaces for interaction and decision-making, I should start by opening a debate on the sticky issue of informal verses formal spaces of interaction. In this chapter, I am not arguing that norms can be categorized into these two groups, but am stating that, decision making based on my case mostly took place in informal settings created by the interaction of unequal power relationships between actors. Bryant (1997) argues that the interaction of actors or power struggle between groups of actors creates spaces or informal patterns of interaction, which provide the spaces for decision-making or negotiation. In chapter 4 for example, the coalition between local lobby groups, the media and international agencies, despite taking place within the principles of democracy, free association and freedom of expression, is not guided by any legal procedure or law. It is however propagated by loose partnerships in some cases instigated by individual contacts and personal networks within these organizations. These networks and personal contacts develop into coalitions, which then play a key role through campaigns, lobby and advocacy to influence the nature of compensation reached in 2003 in Tarkwa. The process described in chapter 4 is not a linear legal process or does not follow the pattern described in section 74 of the Minerals and Mining Act 703 that talks about negotiation for compensation. I also show in the same chapter that key decisions are not made in formal boardrooms, during conferences, rather in secretive hotel meetings, after work evening drinks on casual telephone conversations etc. These settings are difficult to police and records of such events are hard to come by. While analysing such spaces proves cumbersome to most researchers and rarely catch the attention of policy makers, they influence the bulk of decisions made within the mining sector. These decisions determine who gets what, how and when and hence a key aspect of my work.

On a separate note, the existing legal frameworks or legislation are not impartial. While some may dispute this, it is my position that legal reforms are set in place to address a development problem. This problem might be assumed or articulated. Bryant (1997) argues that an assumed problem is one where an outsider or an insider decides that something is wrong and needs to be fixed. An articulated problem is one that is voiced

by a local constituent for example a community or country. In most cases, reform processes in Africa's mining sector are based on assumptions or perceptions of how the sector should look like. This is mostly by the World Bank or IMF in collaboration with local political elites in respective recipient countries. Assuming that such legal reforms are impartial and seek to serve the interests of the people or the environment, is ignoring the influence and mandate of some of the drivers of the reform agenda. In my chapter 1 for example, I discuss the reform processes that have inundated Ghana's mining sector since independence. Through all the stages of the reforms, we are able to visualize the hidden agenda behind the reforms. Through out all the reforms, there has been a very systematic target of increasing gold production and despite the lip service directed towards to community and environmental interests, very little has changed (see chapter 1). Legal spaces of interaction for example formal laws and policies drive a particular agenda, just like the informal processes that emerge as a result of a power struggle.

The unit, levels and spaces of analysis as discussed above are of direct relevance in as far as unequal distribution of mining benefits are concerned. The relevance is not limited to the conceptualization of the problem, but also includes the theoretical perspectives that inform research and policy discussions that culminate into action for possible change. The interactions between various units operating at different levels and within multiple spaces provides a conclusive view as to understanding how local communities are excluded and their interests less prioritized in mining areas. The previous sections of this chapter draw also from my theoretical background, which as I detailed adopt a political ecology view to resource use and benefit distribution.

According to this theory, unequal distribution of benefits in mining areas is a product of the unequal power struggle between actors as they seek to gain control and use the resource to meet a particular goal or interest. They divide actors into the powerful and less powerful on the basis of each one's ability to overcome resistance and meet a set of desired goals. While some (see Walker, 1991) have argued that political ecology has a strong inclination towards ecological costs of human- resource interaction hence ignoring social costs, my analysis of the theory, demonstrates the opposite and instead reveals a hidden treasure within the approach. I find that, political ecology simply provides a framework for understanding (multiple) competing interests and how these interests then determine the actions of multiple actors. What is being mis - understood as a focus on ecological costs is what Bryant and Bailey (1997) refer to as the logical consequence of ecological problems. For example, water pollution in Ghana's mining

sector leads to social problems just the same way land encroachment does. A strand of political ecology of the Third world by (Bryant and Bailey, 1997); Blaike, 1985 and Paul Robbins (2004) clearly establishes the link between competing interests, unequal power relations, resource access and ecological problems as social costs. This theory is probably more applicable to the extractive industry than other sectors because, in mining for example, a larger percentage of the costs are of ecological or environmental nature, but with far reaching social consequences.

The hidden treasure in political ecology as a theoretical tool however and in specific comparison to the more favoured political economy is its conceptualization of interests as a concept of analysis. Political ecology unlike the latter distances itself from the more rational thinking which posits an actor's actions as being driven by material gains. One is tempted to believe that gold mining is all about money and material returns. That is true to a larger extent, but while in the field, I strongly observed that some sections of local communities are driven by the cultural interest of protecting their "farmer-miner" identity for example (see chapter 3). In other cases, the primary focus of some individuals is to gain more prestige or build upon their social or local position – which has nothing to do with material wealth. While some politicians are driven by the quest to gain from the "golden-cake", some make their choices based on the political clout they would like to continue enjoying. This extended categorization of interests as a concept of analysis, for me draws the line between political ecology and political economy, which implicitly and sometimes explicitly assumes that actors act to gain material wealth of some sought.

In terms of how actors go about meeting their specific needs and interests, the political ecology approach provides inroads into the concept of coalitions, which is off course useful. In its analysis, it presents coalitions as a short-term dynamic partnership, mostly between actors seeking to achieve a short-term goal. I noticed that the perception of a coalition within this approach is one where a central actor, say a local community leader, collaborates with NGOs (as in Chapter 4) to influence the choices and actions of a more powerful actor (e.g. a mining company) to meet a specific goal (e.g. appropriate compensation). This coalition is what I refer to as a "power network", mostly of like-minded individuals (sharing the same position over an issue). They come together in an ad hoc manner to meet specific short-term goals. They are issue driven and not really bound by any common goal or say, a long-term agenda. This conceptualization of coalition building as a strategy of meeting specific needs is indeed useful as I outline in

the Chapter 4. It however falls short, as my findings in Ghana's mining area of Tarkwa revealed a different kind of coalition comprised of actors from varying social contexts and whose common goal is long term access and control of material gains within the sector. It was however evident that this group of actors only emerged whenever new resources were made available and when new skills or knowledge was required to implement the use of the funds.

The theory of Strategic Groups therefore as presented and broadly discussed by Evers and Gerke (various) compliments the works of other power-centred theories especially in understanding the process of benefit appropriation, use and control. While this theory has never been used in the mining sector, I found it applicable based on its position that whenever new resources are made available in a given context, strategic groups emerge with an aim of gaining control of this resources. These strategic groups might neither necessarily be a group of elites and nor share a common identity. They would only be joined together by a common interest of long-term resource control. In chapter 5, I apply this theory to my data from Tarkwa's mining area and provide a plausible explanation of the why and how resources or benefits get to be concentrated among a small group of actors. While popular class theory has either perceived resource struggle as being between elites or the higher class, strategic group theory as applied in that chapter reveals that a strategic group does not necessarily need to be from an elite class. Strategic groups form coalitions to gain control of long-term resources; the benefits and most importantly the opportunity to structure the patterns of resource exchange and distribution. Within the case of Tarkwa and specifically the implementation of the compensation deal, we observe how a coalition, between a University Professor, Development NGO, GFG Company Officials and Local Leaders, positions itself for long-term control of benefits from the compensation. The consequence in this case is that those who should benefit, in this case, local communities, miss out in the process.

In addition to the dilemma of the appropriate units, levels and spaces of analysis, I would argue that the blend of strategic group theory and the foundations laid by political ecology as a framework for conceptualizing a research problem provides inroads and an appropriate entry into the complexities and politics of unequal benefit distribution within the mining sector of Tarkwa in Ghana. This does not mean that other theoretical perspectives like the game theory etc are not valid, rather that these perspectives could be perceived as being supplementary to the more power-centred theories. The

conceptualization of research problems and choice of theoretical tools becomes useful to science and policy depending on the lessons and knowledge that I generate.

6.2 The Complex Story of Missing Majorities and Ever - Present Minorities

How does this complex story of actors, their interests and unequal power relate to the everyday folk on the streets of any mining country of Ghana or Africa? What does the unequal power struggle mean to the policy makers, practitioners, intellectuals, civil society who are in their own way engaged in shaping the state of affairs within the mining sector? From the first day I stepped foot in Tarkwa, I began asking this question, which has guided my thinking and analysis throughout the writing process. With every finding or piece of evidence I collected, I wondered about its relevance to the people who co-exist with the reality described in this thesis, day-in day-out. Towards the end of my fieldwork, my questions were resounding more with frustration than hope as the complex process of actor interaction described in this chapter isolated local interests, while excluding local communities from the management of these resources or even the platforms for decision making. The spaces or opportunities for change created, either through community struggles or legal reforms isolated the local communities further and the exclusion process was a product of a small group of actors driving the agenda to protect their own interests. The actors who should supposedly create or protect local interests are also embroiled in the power struggle, where their actions either isolate the communities further, pushing their interests to the periphery while maintaining the status quo.

By maintaining the status quo, I conclude that the coalitions of powerful actors, whether chiefs, academicians, NGO groups or community relations officers of companies are positioned to control resources within mining areas and ensure that benefits from a particular sector continue to meet their specific interests, but for legitimacy purposes distribute or allocate meagre returns to members of the community who either belong within their networks or are within their spaces of interaction. A small club of actors have therefore emerged within the mining area that drives the agenda and shapes the actions and choices of the sector as a whole.

On one hand there is the lobby groups whose dependency on external funding and over-reliance on external networks of INGOs has undermined their ability to effectively transform community struggles into social movements through which local communities are empowered enough to adequately engage with mining companies. From my research

in Tarkwa, I did observe that lobby groups have generated a dependency relationship with local communities to the extent that, left on their own; they fail to voice their concerns or even lobby for change. Lobby activities have on the other hand depended on funding from international organizations, which in most cases is neither sufficient nor in some guaranteed. Community struggles turn into ad-hoc fund-driven projects with minimal opportunities for continuation and meaningful change. The lobby groups do not escape blame as we saw in chapter 4 and 5. The internal dynamics of these organizations and their individualistic-orientation reduces their capacity to deal with the broader challenges of mining areas reducing the hope for mining communities.

On the same issue of NGOs, a common trend emerging in mining areas which has compromised the interests of local communities is that of the 21C NGO. According to Bryant (1998) this NGO is a product of the corporate social responsibility agenda and private public partnerships, which call for the involvement of civil society in the implementation of social developments in mining areas. The argument behind this principle is that mining companies ought to cease operating purely on economic grounds, but rather engage in the social welfare of the society as well. This agenda is driven by the World Bank as a strategy to suppress civil society protests against mining activities in developing countries. In terms of partnerships, NGOs have been identified as allies to this process and one requirement is to encourage a shift from confrontation to collaboration with governments and mining companies. This shift has created opportunities for change, but evidence from the field reveals continued problems. This is largely because most of the NGOs that have landed in collaborations have ended up depending on the mining companies for funding, a dependency relationship that has greatly impaired their objectivity and independence. This is shown in chapter 5, where OICI for example fully depends on GFG for funding of its programs, paying of salaries as well as meeting of other operational overheads. In such a case it is no wonder that fighting from within becomes a difficult goal. The consequences to local communities who rely on NGOs as their key intermediaries are major, because the larger budget for corporate social responsibility programs serves to meet the overhead costs of such organizations. In return, the mining company receives further publicity based on programs being implemented by such NGOs, which have very limited bearing on local communities. Corporate social responsibility programs aimed at serving the interests of communities, end up serving such NGOs while profiling the public image of the company among its shareholders and mother countries.

Besides the NGO problem is the concern regarding academic and research influence in such areas. Knowledge is power and knowledge workers are generally perceived as agents for change especially when it comes to bridging the gap between the known and the unknown. Technological changes as discussed in chapter 1 and 4 have had an impact on mining in as far as the problems associated with the sector are concerned. The prevalence of cyanide spillages as well as demands for community relations and conflict sensitive development has called for increased specialized skills and expert knowledge into the sector. Development experts, mining experts from the universities, government agencies and other private firms have been perceived as a hope to generate sufficient information and knowledge in order to close down the gap between the known and the unknown facets of mining. In terms of opportunities for scientific knowledge to influence change, the hope lies with research institutions and universities capable of building synergies and partnerships with “Research and Advocacy NGOs” in these mining countries, or in the West, and together engaged in advocacy research on mining issues. I draw this recommendation based on the conclusion that, some of the lobby groups engaged as part of civil society in Ghana for example, undertake scientific research, by highly qualified academicians (PhDs as well), either contracted or employed by these organizations. Some of these studies are highly scientific and objective, though they are limited to the foundations and mandate of the contracting company. The positive side, unlike those mainstream university researchers who fall to the temptation of financial benefits and act as individual contracts, is that these works are published and largely available to the public (see chapter 5). These scientists have attempted to question the power dynamics in mining areas, but their work has also not found recognition within mainstream university research circles (Pegg, S and Alissa, W., 2002). During my literature review, I observed that research reports by some of these agencies, produced more up-to-date studies, as compared to academic writings that probably require more intensive and time-consuming, yet useful, peer reviews before being published for public consumption.

While I argue that advocacy research organizations like the Third World Network plays a key role in shaping discussions in mining areas, I should also mention that such reports are not very well received among some policy makers. Bryant and Bailey (1998) argues that this is because most of these organizations focus on building allies with like-minded organizations and categorically ignore or isolate government agencies, the private sector and any other actor who might be having a different view or position to an issue. On the

other hand, he also believes that advocacy research receives more acknowledgements among lobby groups or opposition members of government than the ruling group. This is because most of the research developed for lobby and advocacy focuses on raising questions of exclusion, social justice and environmental degradation, which do question the power behind actors and how these powerful actors, mostly governments and private companies impoverish communities.

In terms of mitigating or intervening in these areas, the failure of most governance regimes has been the focus on reforms as a solution to this problem. I began my study by questioning this approach and I must end with the same argument. From independence, Ghana's mining sector underwent numerous reforms, based on various assumptions. First, the African state was inherently corrupt, inefficient and broke. There was need for a more efficient and sustained way for translating natural resources into national wealth. Solution? Privatization of the sector, injection of foreign investment and relegation of the state into a regulatory role. All the nations through out Africa were conditioned into reviewing their mining code and privatizing their mining sector. During these reforms, the market or the private sector was perceived as the agent for effective exchange of resources and that benefits and allocation would be made easier. Market-regulated-production was also deemed a vehicle for economic development, - hence betterment for all. Research works and practitioners later found out that this 'solution' was not working, and instead was creating more problems. Environmental and social problems were on the increase given the stiff competition from mining multinationals, and neither were the high returns from the sector being well appropriated nor were public accounts being well managed. In fragile economies or so called weak states, revenues from mining operations were fuelling violence and civil war, and rebel groups and authoritarian governments sought to gain control of these resources. Policy recommendations in most research works called for a more sustained international framework, to hold mining companies accountable while heaping pressure on host governments to take more responsibility. International frameworks like the Kimberly process, international cyanide management code, extractive industries transparency initiative, 'publish what you pay / publish what you earn' came into being. Embedded in all this frameworks were principles of collaborative management of resources, self-regulation, broad-based stakeholder participation and corporate social responsibility. While these initiatives have contributed extensively to streamlining the mining sector today, the question of distribution of benefits and empowerment of local mining

communities economically still remains elusive. Reform processes; be they local or international have failed to create spaces for community involvement and participation. Instead, they have created new power balances in mining areas and opportunities for continued exclusion of local communities. In essence these reforms have failed to adequately address power relations in mining areas.

6.2.1 No Simple Answers

Back to the question I posed as the title of this chapter, I will admit that there is neither a simple answer nor a simple solution to the challenges facing the mining communities of Tarkwa. I do not presume to speak for the Ghanaian mining sector; neither do I even argue that the small case of a few villages in Tarkwa could represent the continent as a whole. In any case that was not my main aim or the focus of my study. I was hoping and still do believe that this thesis would generate some knowledge and present the situation as it is in Tarkwa's mining sector and, based on my findings that similar work can be undertaken in other mining areas or countries. There are definitely similarities with other studies undertaken for example in Tanzania, Indonesia and Peru, but such comparisons can be very misleading because of the varying social, political and economic contexts as well as differing levels of development in these countries.

In general, some of my peers as well as authors in the literature have had some strong criticisms of research projects undertaken from a political ecology perspective. One critique is that political ecology approaches, like many other power-centred theories, have failed to live up to the task of providing tangible, practical, take-home solutions to social and political problems. In such cases, research work undertaken from this perspective tends to leave behind many questions as compared to answers. Some have also argued that political ecologists place their blame on the government and seek to question the legitimacy of the government in decision making. These views can be debated at varying levels. What I know is that political ecology as an approach is indeed limited, an aspect that I discuss in my chapter 2. As a theory for conceptualizing research, I do think however that it provides an opportunity for a research to paint the picture of complex social problems as they are. Unlike some have argued, political ecology questions the aspect of unequal power relations in resource use contexts. These power relations are not limited to the government, but to various units, levels and spaces of analysis. Power relations do exist at household level, the same way they exist at organization levels. These power relations and how they influence the use of ecological resources is the backbone of political ecology research.

Tarkwa provided an ideal environment where I could observe the interaction between various groups and individuals from varying social, economic and political backgrounds. In my work, I found out that, at the lowest village level there are power structures of exclusion; structures advancing special interests at that level and which lead to isolation and disempowerment of vulnerable groups. The case of social groupings and kinship groups demonstrate that power and unequal power relations are a complex and deeply embedded reality. Any reform process should therefore holistically adopt and integrate all these levels – local, meso, and national. To focus on a particular actor and expect a solution is oversimplifying a highly complex reality. The reality in this thesis is that unequal distribution of benefits from the mining sector and increase in social and environmental problems needs to be understood as an outcome of the interaction of actors (not a single actor) operating in a context of unequal power relations.

Those actors, in turn, are motivated by often quite complex interests and objectives. As such, a more appropriate course would appear to be a social-political engagement on several fronts, at different scales and which various actors, as part of a multifaceted campaign on behalf of environmental protection and social justice. The attainment of social justice and environmental protection will ultimately be achieved by a vast array of actors operating at the local, regional and global scales, and among this great assemblage, the activist scholar will indeed be a relatively small figure. For scholarship, however, I have a humbling reminder of the limitations of all scholarship embedded in a power paradigm in the face of such complex and rapidly changing political and environmental conditions. It is on this basis that I hope my thesis can provide some answers or raise questions about interventions that have not worked or approaches that could be adopted through a full-power shake up. Any actor, including you and me and who perceives him or herself as an agent for change, is welcome to reflect on the realities presented in this thesis.

The description in this thesis however provides an exploratory piece and presents the reality of decision-making and actor negotiations within the mining sector. This thesis does not claim to explain the reality in Ghana's mining sector, but uses the case of Tarkwa to present some snap shots of aspects that could be investigated in other mining areas. Overall, a mining area could be defined as a complex interaction between various societal groups driven by cultural, economic and political interests, possessing varying levels of power and seeking to either overcome any resistance to meet their goals, or wield power to overcome any constraints.

ANNEX 1: Methods and Research Design

RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN
<p>In this Section of my thesis, I reflect upon my research methods and design, where I describe the nuances, challenges and approaches I employed to collect data in the field. I briefly outline my research area, focus as well as the strategies I dependent upon to collect, analyse and give meaning to my findings. This section will be organized in the following manner: One, I will present a snap-shot of my research area, primary research communities. Secondly I will present the first dilemma that I faced when I arrived in the field. I refer to this dilemma as the dilemma of „researching the powerful“. I follow up the dilemma by detailing some of the strategies I used to gain „strategic“ entry into my research area. This will be followed by a presentation of the two main levels of research where my work was positioned. These are community and district levels where I demonstrate the groups that I interacted with and the value this had to work. Having discussed the levels, I will then provide a summary of my research methods – especially those that I employed to collect data. I also discuss the approaches I used to record and analyse the same, with extended case study method being key to this process.</p>
The dilemma of <i>Researching the Powerful</i>
<p><i>What exactly do you want to study? What are you here to prove? Many people come here to prove things, - I am really curious to know what you want to prove?</i> Question by the Paramount Chief in Tarkwa</p> <p>These were the first questions posed to me by the Paramount Chief of Wassa Fiase Traditional Council in Tarkwa during my courtesy visit to him. I had been told that he was quite a toughy, but I hoped he would go slow on me. As I thought of what to tell him, he went ahead to mention that a few months before I arrived, two M-Phil Students, one from Denmark and the other from The University of Berlin had been to Tarkwa where as part of their field research, collected information which they used to conduct an anti-mining campaign in collaboration with the human rights watch dog, - Amnesty International in Berlin. So, the paramount chief is very cautious before welcoming students and particularly foreigners into the area without ascertaining their intentions. I am glad he mentioned all these before allowing me the chance to explain what my study was all about. This gave me the opportunity to think very first and ensure that I give an answer that will not jeopardize my chances for conducting a successful research. I was well aware that my study was focused on questioning the motives, choices, actions and strategies that the most powerful actors employ to influence decisions in their favor. I knew that questioning power structures from a research perspective demanded innovative field entry strategies because I still needed the blessing of the „powerful“ to access the research field.</p> <p>The questions that lingered in my mind was whether I should disclose the bitter truth. Was it ok to disclose that I was seeking to investigate the negotiation strategies and tactics employed by various actors within the sector? That I was trying to provide an explanation as to why some people benefit and others loose within the mining secto? Was I going to disclose that one of my key assumptions was that there was a mismatch between the macro – benefits and micro – costs within the mining sector? Was I going to disclose that my literature review had revealed that the chieftancy, - the institution he heads is one of the most corrupted institutions within the mining sector? <i>Is massaging the truth in research going against the ethics of research?</i> How I approached the field was therefore key to either overcoming some of these realities.</p>
Field Entry
<p>Before heading to Tarkwa (my research area), I spend a few days in Accra to get a feel of the „rhetoric“ and perceptions from various key research partners on how best to approach my research field and area. I had the priviledge to present my research ideas at a workshop organized by ZEF and the Sociology department of University of Ghana, - Legon. This was useful as I received good ideas as well as comments to my intended work. This this seminar, I got insights into some strategies to better</p>

position myself in the field as well as how to be sensitive to the various levels of power and influence that I will be confronted with as I undertook my work. I also set out to meet some NGO representatives. NGOs are somewhat a good source of information especially if one is interested in gaining knowledge about the „state of things“ in a given location. I began by meeting an NGO representative whom I was introduced to by a colleague. I discovered that her NGO was responsible for implementing corporate social responsibility programs on behalf of the mining multinationals and was therefore a key player within the mining sector. As we kept talking, she warned me about *a particular NGO that was known for its lobby activities against mining investments in Tarkwa*. This first meeting unveiled the power struggle among NGOs working in mining areas. While she did not discourage me from interacting with *this particular organization*, she made it extremely categorical that their approach was wrong and that people had lost trust in them. She however went ahead to unveil the extremely colourful CV of her organization, which among others included being a contractor of the three main multinationals, - Goldfields Ghana limited, New Mount and AngloGold Ashanti, - whom they partner with by implementing their CSR programs.

Curious like any other researcher, my next step was to visit this *organization*, that I had been warned against. I came to find out that it was a lobby group, named - WACAM. I met with the executive director at the Trade Union Congress in Accra. I wondered why his office was situated at the trade union congress offices, - but ignored that for later (you can see the reason why in chapter 4&5). My immediate intention was to hear his 411, if any, regarding the reality on the ground. I had been introduced to WACAM by a Fatal Transaction colleague based in the Netherlands. I also got their contact from a German based lobby group, - FIAN-Germany which has been organizing campaigns against large scale surface mining. What I found interesting is that the two lists of contacts, - one from IFC and the other from Oxfam International and Fatal Transactions were mutually exclusive and in no way were there any similarities. The names and organizations provided by both were different and I later noticed the pro verse anti approach. IFC's list was of people / organizations supporting large scale surface mining and later I discovered that IFC is the leading funder of mining investments by multinationals in Ghana. On the other hand, the contacts from Fatal Transactions comprised largely of individuals and organizations who acted as lobbyists and anti-mining watch-dogs in Ghana and abroad. This was drawing me home to the challenges inherent in my research. Like his OICI counterpart, the WACAM representative left in my hands notes of who to be ware of and who to seek most earnestly.

After my short stay in Accra, I had a vivid picture of what to expect in Tarkwa. I had already recieved a first hand feel of the competing interests, claims and positions between NGOs working within the mining areas. The challenge therefore was to design a field entry that will allow me access to information from both groups (pro and anti-mining respectively). With this image in mind, I was convinced that the communities must be divided in the same way as well. I left for Tarkwa with a list of does and don'ts, - people to interact with and those to avoid; - organizations to visit and those not to trust; - communities to interact with and to be careful with. Such is the level of contestation within the mining area. All the contestations are basically engrained in the deeply rooted interests by various stakeholders and perceptions of who seems to missing or gaining from the „golden“ cake. My journey to Tarkwa, was characterised by an internal dialogue on how I will deal with the does and donts; how I shall talk to some people and avoid others, visit some places and ignore others, - such was the methodological dilemma that I found myself in. I suddenly realized that all the effort to have a methodology chapter of my proposal before leaving Bonn was fruitless given this new reality. Believing that life has a sense of humor, the dilemma in front of me was such that all the people, organisations, communities and organizations that I needed to avoid were the most important for my study.

I needed a quick strategy, that will allow me to work with everyone and go to every place including those that I was discouraged from interacting with. Interacting very closely with OICI (pro-mining NGO) meant that I loose face with some communities that perceived them as betrayers and beneficiaries of that which is meant to be theres. I needed them however because they had a very good relationship with Gold Fields Ghana Limited which was also my target company and whose concession, my research was situated. I needed entry into the mines and contacts to the key people. How was I going to secure this without interacting with OICI as a research ally? Interacting very closely with WACAM (Anti-mining NGO) would on the other hand mean a strained relationship with OICI as well as the mining companies. This is because the companies perceived WACAM as spoilers and so did

OICI. WACAM however had a very great relationship with some sections of the communities, traditional authorities as well as government representatives. As an activist organisation, it has established allies with most stakeholders, meaning they were crucial to the success of my work. This also meant that they had an array of protagonists in the process of their work.

I therefore came up with a field entry strategy that could allow me the liberty to collect information in a balanced manner without excluding anyone or making anyone feel excluded and most importantly without jeopardizing my research. As a strategy, I decided to rent a room within the OICI guest house which was within the town and where the staff lived. Strategically this allowed me preview into the politics of what went on within OICI as a key ally to the mining „infrastructure“. I also got a chance to undertake informal research with my house-mates, - who worked with OICI. OICI also offered me an office space to work from, which I respectively declined fearing that in so doing, I will be stretching the collaboration way too far. As for WACAM, I knew that they have a very dedicated local staff member. He served as a part-time journalist and for long time wrote largely on mining issues in Western Ghana. I approached the organization and requested to have him as a research assistant. This way, I was assured of gaining access to his knowledge, his contacts within the mining sector as well as those of WACAM as a key player within the mining space. As a journalist, my research work as well as my knowledge could also be useful for him while writing his journalistic articles. Since he understood the politics within the mining sector especially the pro- and anti-mining campaigns, he maintained his journalistic identity which many people knew, and less of his WACAM identity (see history above).

Using OICI's contacts, I was able to gain entry into the mines and build my initial contacts. I got the opportunity to also access information that OICI had used in developing their programs on behalf of the mines. This information was however confidential and I might not have gotten it in any other way. I also got to secure meetings with the Chamber of Mines which is the main statutory body governing and representing the interests of large scale mining companies. Through Tarkwa also, I was able to meet with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Mines in Tarkwa. The University collaborates with the Mining companies and OICI is providing trainings to community members engaged in artisanal mining. My attempts to get in touch with the Uni had been fruitless. With WACAM, I was able to meet with the traditional chiefs including the communities which were mostly affected by mining activities. I was able to establish links with the closed ‚galamsey‘ illegal miners who proved to be a useful knowledge custodians for my work. The two field entry points provided me with the opportunity to establish long term research contacts and start building relationships. This however did not dispell the issues regarding the contestations within the sector which makes data collection an uphill task.

Research Location

The research project was undertaken in **Tarkwa Area** of Wassa West District, - Western Region of Ghana. Case studies are being developed around two catchment communities; - **Abekoase** and **Hunisu** respectively. These two are located on GFG's mining concession. Tarkwa is the administrative headquarter of Wassa West District. This district is endowed with well over 90% of Ghana's gold reserve-rock, known as the Tarkwarian rock. This rock has attracted the world's leading mining multinationals as well as expansive small scale mining companies into the area. Mining areas are also home to multiple local communities who depend on the same land for their livelihoods and income generation activities. Mining however brings along both positive and negative impacts in such rural areas. The positive impacts which include employment generation and sprouting of local economies lead to increased in-migration and emergence of other mining supporting investments e.g. laboratories, contracting companies etc. The negative impacts however lead to the influx of government regulatory agencies seeking to regulate the mining industry so that environmental impacts are minimized and benefits are equally distributed among local communities. In addition, civil society groups, mostly NGOs, media, Universities emerge as knowledge generators, capacity builders, lobbyists as well as development partners within the sector. Such rural areas are however controlled by traditional leaders who act as gatekeepers or custodians of local resources, mostly land. In tarkwa for example, land is owned chiefs who manage and administer it on behalf of their subjects. The Tarkwa area, therefore provides a viable arena to study and observe decision making and negotiation processes between multiple actors. As a study area, it provided an appropriate „negotiation arena“ (See chapter 3), where

multiple actors, driven by multiple and competing interests compete for benefits (expected and actual) within the mining sector. My field work focused pre-dominantly on two communities, **Abekoase and Huniso**, located in GoldFields Ghana's (GFG) Tarkwa Mine. My choice of these communities was influenced by the case study built around a cyanide spillage that occurred in Tarkwa in 2001, sparking off the first of a never ending conflict between GFG and mining communities in Tarkwa. These two communities were directly affected since the river that was polluted served large sections of their inhabitants and negotiations for compensation were largely influenced by the two. The next challenge in my setting was collecting data. Which methods should I employ.

Semi – Structured Interviews and Participant Observation as my Core data collection Methods

Overall, my study was qualitative in nature and the data collection was based on semi-structured interviews and participant observation methods. Through semi-structured interviews, I was able to record and document views, perceptions, perspectives from various respondents within the mining area, while through participant observation, I was able to better understand and explain the nature or culture of negotiations between various parties. My approach to participant observation involves constant interactions with my research partners (communities, parties being investigated) and where applicable participating in their daily activities to the extent that I can watch what is going on.

Before actively engaging in participant observation, I undertook expert interviews at national and district level to get insights into the roles of various key players within the mining sector. I interviewed representatives from government regulatory agencies, - notable ones being – EPA, LVB, LC, FC, MC, WRC, CoM and the DA to understand the legal framework within which the mining sector is embedded. I got a better insight into the distribution of roles and decision making processes which is key to understanding negotiation processes. This expert interviews also opened my eyes to the various structures, both political and traditional employed the the governance of the resource as well as distribution of benefits emerging from the sector. Secondly, I interviewed representatives from NGOs as part of the civil society. I focused on those working in the mining sector and particularly in Tarkwa. I was therefore confronted with two kinds of NGOs, - those pro-mining and the ones that are anti-mining. This was a great discovery for my analysis later in the study as it was evident that NGOs play multiple roles in understanding the power game within negotiations of a highly politicised issue like the Gold in Ghana. Through the interviewing various representatives, I was able to gather information on the perceptions held by the two categories, towards each other or the sector and their role within the mining communities. Thirdly, I conducted interviews with research and academic institutions, - both the University of Ghana, - Legon as well as the University of Mines and Technology , - Tarkwa. These interviews provided an insight into the extend to which scientific knowledge is employed in influencing decision making within the mining sector. At the same time, it was vital to get some understanding into the role of academia within the mining sector. Through this interviews, I was able to get information regarding the interlinkages between these diverse groups as well as establish the common forums or social situations (see the next section) where they engage within this complex setting.

From a participant observation point of view, negotiations between and amongst parties takes place in what J.P. Spradley, 1980 refers to as „situations“ or what Elenor Ostrom refers to as „action arenas“. Different parties with different agenda, interests, positions and needs engage in bargaining one with the other to influence the final decision in their favor. My first impression of Tarkwa as a mining area was that parties are constantly engaged in negotiations of one sought or the other. This could either be over employment contracts, land allocations for resettlement, compensation packages, resettlement deals, contracting offers etc. I therefore perceive the area as one large „negotiation space“. Given the political nature and sensitivity of the gold mining sector because of the stakes and money involved, conventional survey, questionnaire and direct interviewing does not suffice as an appropriate data collection method, - particularly if seeking to identify the strategies and tactics employed in negotiations. Participant observation and follow-up informal (semi) structured interviews became the central modes of explaining the culture of negotiations. Participant observation provides a feasible method of data collection, because it all happens within social situations. My main task therefore was to identify this social situations and position myself to be able to collect all the relevant information according to the

interest of my study. Social situations as defined by S.P. Spradley, 1980, are places where actors engage in activities with a central goal, to enforce their norms. As an anthropologist, he argues that social situations are the spaces for understanding or studying cultures through participant observation. In doing this activity, I had to constantly locate myself in some place, watching actors of one sort or the other as they engage in one activity or the other. Negotiations take place within both formal and informal spaces where various parties engage in mobilizing bargaining power to influence decision making in their favor. The survey and expert interviews at the local and district levels respectively gave me an insight and understanding of the organization of the communities as well as the decision making system at the district level.

I recall the day I was invited into attend the Wassa Fiasa Traditional Council general assembly meeting in Tarkwa. This is a high level forum where the Paramount chief (President) of the council, presents the progress and informs his chieftdom about the work, achievements and failures of the council this far. Though a one time affair, this forum puts together the who and who of traditional authority ranging from the Odikro's to the Divisional chiefs or Apintos. At the helm of this forum is the distribution of power based on the sitting arrangement and the nature of consultations depending on the levels of power depended on who is from the royal family and who is not. I reported to this event feeling like a stranger among all the traditionally dressed chiefs and local leaders. From the beginning, I felt at a loss as to how to conduct myself, where and how to sit. As a visitor, I had no prior knowledge of the mannerisms that I should portray. From the arrangement of the room, I could sense some form of hierarchy either because of the size and level of the seats as well as the proximity of the seats to the biggest one. I adopted by watching carefully what other people said and did. I continued acting much like an observer, trying to learn to behave as a seasoned participant. This was the beginning of my adventure as a participant observer. Through observation, I was able to identify the ranks within the traditional council. Based on my observations, I was able to identify the individuals I needed to schedule further interviews with. Through keen observation and listening, I was able to note some of the statements that yielded heated debates, how the plenary responded and how the speaker engaged. The plenary tended to respond based on the speaker. I noted that there wasn't much heated debate or rejection to ideas advanced by the apintobene who is Tarkwa's divisional chief. I pursued this angle further, and noticed that he is slightly powerful and argued to influence the decisions made by the Paramount chief, because of the valuable land that he owns. I noticed that chiefs from the royal family were highly regarded and tended to have their seats closer to the paramount chief as compared to those appointed from within the society. Such unfamiliar situations allow one to build on this common experience. Because I felt like a stranger and didn't know the rules of engagement, I fell naturally into the role of participant observer. By assuming this role, my study benefited extensively from participant observation as a data collection method.

To effectively employ participant observation as a data collection method, I needed to identify appropriate spaces where I could observe actor behavior.

Social Situations as Spaces for Observing Actor Behaviour

Borrowing from J.P. Spradley, 1980, social situations is the arena where a researcher positions themselves to observe actor behavior, listen to messages as well as document the various artifacts that explain the culture of a phenomena being investigated. In my study, Tarkwa is one large negotiation space defined by mini- social situations where I needed to position myself so as to better explain the negotiation culture characterising the mining sector. Social situations can be defined as having three main elements:

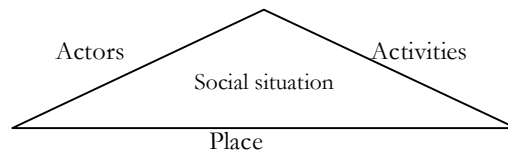
- a) Place
- b) Actors
- c) Activities

A **place** is any physical setting (formal or informal) as long as it has people who engage in one activity or the other. This could be a street, chief's palace, market place, office reception, board room etc. At the chief's palace, people come in to meet, its host of the elders council meeting, its also the chief's home where domestic activities take place, it's also a mediation and conflict resolution spot. So at one point or the other, various people (actors) are engaged in one activity or the other.

Actors are characteristic of people who play a given role, involved in a given activity, with a particular interest(s). At a supermarket, a woman, man, children, teacher, all assume an actor role, - named

customer. When you visit the chief's palace, where a conflict is being resolved between two community households or individuals, all become parties to the conflict given their roles. Every social situation therefore includes people who are considered particular kinds of actors (J.P.Spradley, 1980; 41).

Every given place where people adopt an actor's role cannot be complete without **activities**. At an office reception, the front desk officer is involved in welcoming visitors, directing and answering calls, responding to requests from staff members as well as ensuring the visitors in the waiting area are well catered for. Visitors on the other hand are involved in waiting either through reading a newspaper, sending text messages from their phones or commonly reading through the office notice-board hangings. All these people are actors of a particular kind involved in some sought of **activity** which explains a culture evident in reception areas.



SOURCE: J.P.

Spradley, 1980, p.p 40

Before identifying appropriate spaces for observing, an indepth knowledge of the actors, their interests and common areas of interaction is needed (Spradley, 1980)

Actor Mapping – a Pathway towards Identifying Appropriate observation spaces

The interest of my study is to identify and investigate into the strategies and tactics employed by various interest groups within the mining sector in negotiating for their interests. This study is therefore investigating the negotiation process to explain how various actors engage in mobilizing bargaining power so as to be able to influence decisions in their favor. To be able to visualize a holistic picture, I sought to identify social situations that are appropriate for my study and capable of allowing me a double view into the key players at local and district levels. Especially at local level, where roles are not clearly developed and actors seem to overlap in terms of responsibilities. The first step was to map the actors, then identify the social situations where their behavior can be observed.

Actor analysis and mapping

Before identifying the social situations, I embarked on mapping the key stakeholders / actors at the local as well as district levels. At the community level, I engaged a group of 10 individuals selected from the 2 communities. We developed a matrix (see below) with the criteria together giving their perception of who defines an actor for them. The column below (vertical) is the characteristics of the actors. The row is the list of individuals and organizations perceived by the community as actors. The analysis that follows is a reflection of the raw information provided during the mapping exercise. The figures represent the number (frequency) of appearance of the actor. Since EPA and GFG had been captured at district level, and the Unit committee was only mentioned once, I chose to focus one remaining 6 major groups, that is, - Chiefs, (WATSAN; CHF, CLW, TFG) as a group, OICI, WACAM, Community negotiators, community members, Galamsey, community relations department etc.

Table 4: Sample Actor Mapping matrix developed during my field work

GENERAL LIST OF PEOPLE, ORGANIZATIONS (PERCEIVED AS BEING ACTORS)	(TFG), CHF, CLW, WATSAN, CHIEFS, some community members	TFG, CLW, WATSAN, Chiefs, (OICI)	Chiefs, OICI, WACAM, Community negotiators, representatives to CCCM, GALAMSEY	Galamsey, mine employees, Chiefs, Traders	Elders, Chiefs, GFG, COMMUNITY NEGOTIATORS	OICI, WACAM, TFG, CLW, CHF, WATSAN, Unit Committee, Council of Elders, Chief	GFG, OICI, WACAM, Chiefs, Galamsey, UMAT, EPA, COMMUNITY NEGOTIATORS
	THE ANALYSIS BELOW IS BASED ON THE FREQUENCY OF EACH ACTOR. HOW MANY TIMES IS THE ACTOR PERCEIVED AS CENTRAL WITHIN THE CRITERIA MATRIX?						
CHIEF	7						
TFG, CHF, CLW, WATSAN	3						
OICI	4						
WACAM	3						
GALAMSEY	3						
UNIT COMMITTEE	1						
COMMUNITY NEGOTIATORS	3						

Criteria for Selecting Appropriate Observation Spaces

The stakeholders listed and identified in the section above have an interest within the mining sector. Some of the interests are clearly demarcated based on the institutions they represent, yet some are not very visible and need to be investigated and probed further. Secondly, most of the interests represented at local and or district level are not normally in harmony with each other, - therefore antagonistic, conflicting or competing. The process of harmonizing, compromising or at times managing these conflicting interests, sees most actors engage in negotiations amongst and with each other. Negotiations therefore take place in certain social situations which in themselves are a host of daily activities. My immediate task was therefore to identify social situations where I could effectively observe the behavior of various actors on a frequent basis, record the activities they are engaged in as well as make notes of the messages they communicate to each other. While I had an idea of some of these social situations, I chose to develop a criteria for selecting the best 10 spaces. The social situations had to be:

- **Simple:** Instead of complex situations which ethnographers argue that observing complex situations lead to an overload.
- **Accessible:** The social situation had to be easily accessible, where I can participate and record my observations. It might be difficult to access the board room of GFG for participant observation as compared to the community and public relations office where there is constant traffic of people. So while the Board room might be a setting to monitor decision making, it is not conveniently accessible.
- **Unobtrusive:** These social situation should not be one where I stand out like a sore thump. Keeping a low profile within ethnographic work is a methodological challenge. Some settings therefore provide better possibilities for remaining unobtrusive than others. Public places or situations where the public is allowed entry tends to reduce the chances of being obtrusive. Doing participant observation on a community market day as compared to during the council of elders meeting?
- **Permissibility:** some social situations cannot be studied without permission from someone. There is therefore those with free entry (Edgerton, 1978), those with limited entry (Verin, 1978) and those with restricted entry (Walters, 1977). Free entry are mostly public places for example main streets, markets or community centers. Some situations can have limited entry for example the GFG Senior Club house which a members only club, yet one can always visit when accompanied by a card holder. The Traditional council annual general meeting is open to the public though only those invited by the paramount chief, - meaning that there is limited entry. Restricted entry on the other hand is where there is a high possibility that permission will be extremely difficult to acquire. For example entry into the Judges chamber in Tarkwa High

Court where there is a proceeding between a Mining company and local community member. If this case is heard in the main court, then chances for free entry are possible as compared to if heard in the Judge's Personal Chambers

- **Frequency of recurring activities:** In order to discover the culture of negotiations within the mining sector in Tarkwa Area, I needed to observe a large sample of similar activities repeated over and over. It was therefore vital that I observe social situations characterised by a high frequency of recurrent activities. The Council meeting of the traditional house of chiefs is held once every year in the month of May. While this one-off activity is vital for understanding the pole position of chiefs and chieftaincy as an institution, it fails to provide a viable chance for inferring behavior, because of its one-time occurrence. The Community consultation committee meeting however, which brings together chiefs, community representatives, mining companies, NGOs and media however is held once every month and therefore one is able to identify the behavior of various actor groups and with time infer the sought of messages being communicated across.
- **Situations with heterogenous actors:** The council of elders meeting brings together elders of the community. This place can be setting to observe the nature of interactions between various elders and one is able to identify the elder who seems to domineer discussions or whose ideas seem to be taken on board or abandoned for that matter. This space however, does not provide a forum for observing the way the elders interact with their subordinates, - community members or with their seniors – chiefs etc. Effective observation given the interest of my study therefore required that I get a blend of both homogenous spaces as well as heterogenous ones.

Sample Social Situations for Participant Observation

1. GFG - Community and Public Relations Office

Set up of GFG, this office was a response after pressure from civil society regarding the company's poor relations with the respective mining communities. This office is headed by a Community Affair officer and is located at the main gate just before entering the mines. All issues regarding relationships between the company and the communities are addressed in this office. A public complaints unit is set up within this office where communities petition the company on various issues as well as voice their concerns. This department is also host of the company's sustainable development programmes being funded by the company, but currently being implemented by supervises OICI. On every occasion, there is a host of activities going on and various players streaming in and out of this office. The office is open to the public.

2. OICI-Tarkwa Office (Reception area)

OICI - is an international NGO, but with localized programmes in Ghana. In Tarkwa, OICI has set up a program funded by GFG to implement the alternative livelihoods program as part of the compensation / CSR activities of the company. This five-year project is referred to as SEED Program and targets 16 catchments communities, which fall within GFG – Tarkwa and Damang mines. The project office is therefore the base for interaction between the program staff as well as beneficiary communities who come to make enquiries, raise concerns etc.

3. WACAM - Tarkwa Office

WACAM Tarkwa office is a community mobilization unit of the organization. As an anti-mining NGO, WACAM has evolved from its roots as a community based organization and now drives anti-mining campaigns in Tarkwa and Ghana as a whole. WACAM has facilitated the recruitment of volunteers in almost all the mining communities. Referred to as the WACAMITES, these volunteers cut across the social divide, and include, - chiefs, youth, women, local government officials, professionals etc. The Tarkwa office is therefore the information-clearing house where volunteers come to report of any events taking place within their communities regarding mines and also where aggrieved communities come to seek support for lobby regarding an issue.

4. Market days (Huniso & Abekoase)

In Huniso & Abekoase, the 3rd Friday of the month is usually a taboo day. As a taboo day, community

members are not allowed to work on the farm or engage in any other reproductive activities. This day is mostly set aside for communal market where traders from within and from Tarkwa bring their wares to sell. This day is also set aside for use by the unit committee and chief to hold community meetings on any issues of concern. Community labor is also mobilized on this day which then provides an effective avenue to observe the decision making processes of the community and the various social-economic interactions between various communities members.

5. Community Consultation Committee Meetings

Pressure for better public and community relations between mining companies and communities resulted in the formation of community consultation committees. This committee is comprised of three representatives from each (beneficiary or catchments community), including its chief. This committee is responsible for monitoring CSR activities within the communities and reporting every month to the company. This team is also to act as a representative or negotiating arm of the community on any issues affecting the whole unit. These committee meetings are held every month and bring together the representatives, NGOs, media groups, representatives of the DA and the EPA as well as the mining company itself.

6. Chief's palace

Each chief (Odikro's) has a palace, which is also his or her family home. The palace is also the venue for hosting unit committee meetings, council of elders meetings as well as the chamber for settling intra-community disputes or conflicts. Members of the community come to the chief's palace to voice concerns, report any issues affecting them, pose complaints, praise the chief, bring gifts or just loiter. The chief's place is also the first stop for any visitor coming to the village and therefore host to a large traffic of people. At one time, the chief's place can be a host over three activities or events.

7. GFG - Senior Staff club house

GFG has set up a senior clubhouse, which is a membership recreation facility but yet open to the public as long as you are in the company of a cardholder. As a social facility, the club brings together mostly the mining elite of the town, the community top brass as well as individuals of status.

8. Hotel Da Hilda Bar area

Hotel Da – Hilda is the only 3 Star Hotel in Tarkwa. Being an expensive hotel, most of the occupants are foreign mining expatriates. In most cases, they occupy the hotel for long periods as they wait for permanent accommodation spots to be provided by the mining company. The Public and Community Relations Officer of GFG LIMITED owns this hotel. He is the most accomplished businessman in Tarkwa, a planner by profession and previously the chief environmental officer of the times. His hotel serves as the hub of most if not all workshops / conferences in Tarkwa. Activities of the community relations' office therefore take place in this hotel as well as hosting participants or visitors in town looking at the mining sector. Numerous activities defined by diverse actors take place at the same time at this hotel

9. Galamsey Ghettos / Mining sites

Tarkwa is home to one of the leading artisanal mining activities in the Western region after Prestea. Despite the government's attempt to criminalize the activities, Galamsey activities are on the increase and are gaining root as key influencers of decision making within the mining sector. The Galamsey Ghettos as popularly referred to are a site with multiple interactions and diverse activities taking place at the same time. From the shoveling, to the sifting, grinding, washing and processing, one is able to observe various decision-making roles, stakes, interests as well as messages being passed across by different actors.

10. Monthly meetings of WATSAN, CHF, CLW

The sustainable livelihoods development program (SEED) being implemented by OICI on behalf of GFG Limited has facilitated the emergence of social groups at local level. The Watsan, CLW and CHF are an example of these social groupings which play a role as project implementing partners to OICI and a stretched link to the mining company. These social groups are assuming responsibilities at community level. Every month, these groups meet to provide feedback on the various resources at

community level. The pose any complaints to the OICI staff whom then communicate to the company.

Justification:

Given the complex nature of relationships within the gold mining sector in Tarkwa, I sought to position myself within social situations that are related in one way or the other. In so doing, I was able to observe the behavior of one actor in different settings, undertaking different or related activities, and in interaction with diverse actors across the board. From the start, I was able to observe how my single situation was linked to my research project. With time, I included other social situations, which were either related because of proximity e.g. the chief's palace and the market place. This formed a cluster. I added more given the demand for more information, and found out that there are social situations related because they share the same group of people who move from one place to another. This formed a network of social situations. For example, it is possible to observe the behavior of the chief at his palace, at the market during a community forum, but also during the CCCM. Given my focus on negotiations, I chose to identify strategic positions where I focused more keenly on identifying tactics for bargaining and coalition formation.

Data Collection Levels

a) Local / Community Level Data Collection

This was the beginning of my literal confrontation with multiple, contestations and conflicting interests between various groups and individuals, - interest groups. It is easy to assume that communities or even households are homogenous units. This was not true atleast in Tarkwa. My first experience was with the Chief's home in Abekoase where his wife's elder brother is a member of the Gold Fields Task Force. She was therefore very protective of the mining company, while the chief on other hand was keen to share the challenges that the community faces in articulating their interests to the mining multi - national. The sensitivity of undertaking research on mining issues is because mining investments are normally situated in rural villages where communities dwell. These investments tend to destabilize rural livelihoods through land encroachment, pollution and or diversion of water sources besides other social and environmental problems. On the other hand, they also do open doors for micro-economic growth mostly through the provision of employment opportunities and expansion of other private sector enterprises. The costs and benefits however are not distributed equally meaning that some people are advantaged, while others are disadvantaged. This disparity of cost - benefit distribution is as low as at the family level meaning. The daily business at this level is by those who are trying to move from the cost level to the benefit level, on one hand, - and those striving to enforce norms and stay within the benefiting class.

Having positioned myself at the community, I set out to identify the groups represented at this level and how they engage in trying to shift from the cost class to the benefit class. I was also observant to investigate how those in the benefit class seem to be engaging to enforce norms so that they can keep their positions. The challenge was therefore to try and understand the socio-political organization of Abekoase and Huniso communities. I had the advantage of being an outsider, that is Kenyan, but yet insider, - African. I noticed that people were willing to share their opinions with me because am not Ghanaian and secondly because I should understand because it is an African Problem. I remember some respondents requesting me to meet them in private locations and to make sure my assistant does not accompany me. I met several people all alone meaning that being an outsider is helpful unlike I earlier thought. In some cases I observed that at this level, some respondents shared freely in the absence of my assistant as compared to when he was present. To get a basic idea of the structure of my community, I designed a set of simple structured questions with an aim of gaining knowledge of the patterns of social interaction and economic exchange within the two villages. I assumed that by understanding the patterns of social interaction and exchange, I would be able to better understand the decision making institutions, structures and individuals. In what I later referred to as instruments of power, I was able to get insight into the individuals and institutions that define the mode and patterns of interaction at village level. As I further interacted with my research communities, I was able to draw maps of how these institutions, social groups and respective individuals influence negotiations within

the mining sector. Research at this level also opened my eyes to the power bases and vested and mostly hidden interests between various groups and individuals, - some of which one could not see with the naked eye. I made a follow up through continuous observation of patterns of behavior as well as through informal semi structured interviews with those individuals I identified as being uniquely different in perception.

Data collected at this level gave insight into how strategically positioned individuals, social groups and institutions shape social relationships that influence patterns of interaction between and among various community members. My survey results revealed that patterns of economic exchange are defined by those groups who own or control decision making power. These groups are the most commonly approached for support by the rest of community thereby providing both material and non material help. Because they influence exchange patterns either as a result of their wealth, knowledge, age or political position, they are in positions where they can mobilize bargaining power when it comes to decision making. By interacting with the community, I observed that most of these strategic groups are not necessarily embedded within the formal units of norm enforcement, but rather mobilize power from the informal settings of which they have dominion over.

At the community level, I interviewed individuals representing various social, political and economic groupings. This included:

- b) Traditional leaders (chiefs, village elders, unit-committee members, assembly men / women and other opinion leaders)
- c) Community members / Individuals participating in NGO funded / driven programs for example: WATSAN committee members, community Livestock workers, community health facilitators, community task force - all initiatives of GFG-OICI Sustainable development program
- d) Community members differentiated along cultural lines, - for example, indigenes and migrant communities
- e) Alluvial miners from within communities – galamsey workers, machine operators, concession owners
- f) Community members who largely depend on farming (small scale) for both their food as an a source of income
- g) Community members employed in large scale mining companies
- h) Land owners and tenants
- i) Other randomly selected community groups

The goal of this assessment and interviews was to identify and map the competing interests represented within local mining communities. Through this local level study, I was able to observe that communities as a unit of power analysis is highly differentiated and that individuals as well as groups are driven by conflicting interests in as far as mineral access, use is concerned. I also got knowledge of the fact that these individuals command varying levels of power and therefore driven by a conscious effort to meet their respective goals.

District Level Data Collection

Like research at the community level, I began by interviewing representatives from the regulatory agencies to get an understanding of their roles as well as the legal framework within which the sector is embedded. By mapping the roles, I was able through actor-analysis to identify the respective interests of the institutions and how they shape decision making within the gold sector. The same exercise was undertaken with the GFG representatives particularly the community relations office which is responsible for interacting directly with the catchment communities. The role of academic institutions was important given scientific knowledge applied in the sector. Through interviews I was also able to get an insight into NGO activities as well as the role of traditional council of chiefs within the mining sector in the district. (see section 3.2.1 for institutions interviewed)

The data so far reveals that while authority provides access to a multitude of power bases, its structural source is also likely to constrain the use of power by those embedded within the structure. For example a District Executive officer (DEO) at the department of mines (Mines Inspectorate) in Tarkwa at the district office is limited to the decisions he can make based on the fact that he has to obey the orders of his boss, - Minister in Accra at the head office. This same DEO however is sub-contracted by the mining company to issue employment contracts because he owns most of the land upon which the GFG's mining concession sits. Within negotiations, GFG is therefore able to build alliances with both the Minister as the boss, to acquire the legal licence, but also with the DEO to mobilize some level of legitimacy at the local level. At this level, my data revealed that Authority as compared to influence played a key role in enforcing norms. Individuals or even agencies can only exercise power only if their positions (Authority) give them the ability to make final decisions. Unlike at the community level where influence plays a great role in authority bestowed in structural roles of organizations and positions of individuals within them is central. Within negotiations, Interest groups are therefore engaged in identifying the various „power positions“ or „power instruments“ as I refer to them in my study so as to amass bargaining power. Lastly, those driving negotiation agenda might not necessarily be visible within a given institution, - be it NGOs, mining company or government agencies. The role of invisible actors / strategic groups who influence decision making based on their institutional powers was also evident. Through participating in various activities including workshops, round tables, community consultations, I was able to observe or pin-point hidden agendas and their respective drivers.

My data also revealed two categories of interest groups. One who is the power-source-holder and the other who is a power-base-holder (see section 7). In some incidences there were overlaps, most of the time the distinction was very visible. In my study, I argued that „power sources“ are those required by interest groups trying to control the available „power bases“. For example, since the GFG has access to remunerative / material power, they are able to purchase the scientific knowledge base (Power base) by contracting the Vice chancellor of UMAT to act as their leading Public and Community relations Consultant. My field experience has revealed that this move is not solely because of the need to marry scientific and objective knowledge with the highly technical mining field. Its one geared at enhancing the public image of GFG by engaging the *cream of the nation* in their work. Another example is GFG having been able to tap into the legitimacy base (Power base) of the MP of Tarkwa who is also the chair of Ghana's Parliamentary Group on Mining by making her the assistant chairlady of its board of directors. This therefore makes GFG untouchable when it comes to negotiations of key issues affecting the sector in the national parliament. My preliminary analysis reveals that most of the holders of power sources are individuals who are mostly invisible, but capable of influencing decisions and shaping agendas within a negotiation space. At district level, most of the power base holders are engrained in institutions which they represent. Most of the power source holders seem to lack the necessary bases to enforce norms without resistance and therefore engage in coalition building as a tactical strategy for mobilizing bargaining power. At the district level, I interviewed representatives from:

Government mining regulatory agencies:

- a) The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- b) Ministry of land, forests and Mines
- c) The Land Valuation Board (LVB)
- d) The Land Commission (LC)
- e) Water Resources Commission (WRC)
- f) The Minerals Commission
- g) The Chamber of Mines
- h) Small Scale Mining Center
- i) Association of Small Scale Mining Companies

Political and Traditional Authorities:

- j) The District Executive at the District Assembly
- k) The Wassa Fiase Traditional Council of chiefs

Mining Companies with operations in Western Region:

- l) Golds Fields Ghana Limited
- m) Anglo Gold Ashanti
- n) Bogoso Gold Fields Limited

Research and education institutions:

- o) University of Mines and Technology Tarkwa (UMAT)
- p) University of Ghana’s Department of Geology
- q) University of Ghana’s Faculty of Law

Civil Society Organizations working on Mining issues in Tarkwa:

- r) Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM)
- s) Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OICI)

At the district level, I also participated in the following activities as an observer:

- a) Civil society and government round-table to deliberate the 2006 Mining and Minerals Act
- b) NGOs parallel Forum on human rights abuse within the Mining Sector
- c) Monthly Gold Fields supported Community Consultation Forum meetings
- d) Transparency Initiative Monthly round-table at District Assembly’s development Unit
- e) WACAM – Community Leadership and Volunteers training forum
- f) Monthly Wassa Fiase Traditional Council meeting of Chiefs from Tarkwa
- g) Civil society and Journalist Forum on Mining Sensitization
- h) EPA’s Forum on Consultative Participation for Sustainable Mining in Tarkwa
- i) WRC’s Stakeholder Forum for Conceptualizing Water Management in mining Areas
- j) OICI’s monthly Beneficiary Community group feed-back meetings

Data Recording

My very first trial interview was with an EPA officer. I was just keen to learn about the role of the agency within the mining sector. Being a keen researcher, or rather I thought, I carried along my note book and pen. He was so relaxed as we began talking and he began by talking about the challenges the agency faces in doing its work. I then pulled out my notebook to take some notes. His contenance totally changed and he then became extremely formal. I had this similar experience with the chief of Huniso and the Chief Coordinating officer at the District Assembly. The chief of Abekoase was honest enough to mention that he preferred that I don’t take notes, - he was bold enough to request me to work on my memory. I laughed in my heart, but I later noticed what he meant. I needed to sharpen my memory as my research partners were either not being willing to be quoted neither did they want me to take notes. After a few days, I was able to handle a one hour interview then sit under a tree and uphold from my hard disk (head) onto my note book.

For data collection purposes as well as building relations within this sector, I would visit each one of these situations at least once every week. My research Assistant was a journalist affiliated to WACAM. I therefore took my mornings at his office where I will observe the community members coming in with complains about mining companies and the responses they offered. I visited OICI on a daily basis too as they offered me an office by the reception. Like WACAM, they had a different set of clientele who streamed in each morning. I did the same to the Chief’s palace, community relations office, - where I would make follow-up interviews whenever I observed or recorded an “interesting” finding to my study. I also attended the monthly meetings of WACAMITES, CCCM as well as those of Community groups. Because of my frequent visits to these places, I soon became a familiar person in the audience and began receiving nods of recognition from the traders, community members, elders or even the mine officers. Many issues came up into my field notes.....

(.....) on 21st May 2007, I walked into the WACAM office as usual for my meeting with my research assistant. The office reception area was a hive of activity as usual. The community mobilization officer had been speaking to a lady from a neighboring community who was complaining about the intimidation being posed by GFG after the spillage in 2001. My research assistant then affiliated to WACAM was mentioning to her how human rights is one of the targets for dem.....I was seated at the office one afternoon, hoping that something interesting would happen. Suddenly something did happen.....the EPA officer from the district headquarter walked in. Without saying hallo, (though shook my hand) he handed a letter to the community mobilization officer. I later came to learn that this letter was an invitation to a mining stakeholder’s conference to be held the next day, the 17th of August 2007. This program within EPA had been going on since the 14th. I found that interesting that WACAM is invited into a vital stakeholders meeting only on the last day. The community mobilization officer mentioned how that had become the order of the day, and

when I investigated further, I got to learn that pro-mining agencies have learned to use that tactic to keep out WACAM from the any decision making forums. I later invited the EPA official for an informal lunch where he argued that WACAM is only known for making invalidated speculations about human rights abuse while using local communities to advance their own interests. "No one takes them serious nowadays, my brother" he said. Hahahaha, I laughed to make him keep talking.....

The mix of participant observation and semi-structured interviews required innovative methods of data recording, processing and analysis. Unlike in conventional research where survey material is compiled, audiotapes or notebooks are used during interviews; I had to rely on my memory during interviews and field notes during observation exercises. The majority of my interviews were conducted informally, normally after work hours, and most respondents appeared comfortable and relaxed when I did not have to use note books or recording instruments during the study. The sensitivity of my topic was such that I had to conform to some ethical issues of research, which involve guaranteeing anonymity and promising not to reveal the identity of informants. My first experience in Tarkwa was with an Italian PhD Candidate who was investigating into the various identities manifesting within the Galamsey community. Quite a sensitive topic, Moses revealed to me how he had over months developed a memory disk in his head that enabled him to record and paint mental pictures of his interviews and observations without taking notes. This however meant that he had to confine himself to engaging in not more than three interviews a day, so as he is able to recollect his ideas and translate the mental pictures into notes. I was not so sure how possible this was going to be until I held my first interview with a representative of the EPA. After the usual rhetoric, which took the first half an hour of my interview, she had settled down to sharing some in-house information regarding the internal wrangles between the mining and environmental protection within EPA. With my naivety, I thought this was superb opportunity to pull out my made in Germany notebook and demonstrate to her how serious a researcher I was this. Believe it or not, her body language said it all. On a split of a second, she drifted back to the role of the EPA, changing the topic and adopting a very formal approach to the discussion. Meeting Moses was mind transforming; -and we together agreed to write a chapter on the role of memory as an unconventional research data base.

The next step therefore was making my research record. This included taking field notes, taking photographs, making maps and using any other means to record my observations. This bridges the gap between observation and analysis. Unlike in other modes of data collection, I am forced to analyze my compiled field data from participant observation to be able to discover more questions for the next observation or interview exercise. Walking through one of the largest Galamsey pits in Kwontakrom, I overheard one of the young men complaining about a notice that had been put up by GFG prohibiting the youth from mining on their concession. I got interested and pretended to be looking at the stones nearby to eardrop into the conversation. When I asked my research assistant what they were talking about in pigeon English and the local fante language, he mentioned that the young man was arguing that large scale companies are using galamsey as a prospecting tool. The young man was asking why every large scale mine tends to displace galamsey activities? This observation session raised several new questions on the role of galamsey's local knowledge in influencing decision making within the sector. I therefore had to seek further interviews with this young man and some of the senior miners in the area. I therefore had to analyze my field notes after each period of field work in order to know what to look for during my next period of participant observation.

So during my study, I took field notes in all these situations, recorded my own reactions and assumptions, collected secondary information from the registrar of the high court, the archives, university libraries, NGOs documentations, government websites, took pictures and short videos on my digital camera and compiled the notes of my informal conversations of my follow-up interviews. I collected and made copies of newspaper cuttings, police reports, bulletin board notices. I always made notes about my experiences actually doing the research.

I made two kinds of field notes:

1. **Condensed accounts:** - Because of the sensitive nature of my study and the unobtrusiveness of most of my social situations, I could find no way to take notes in the setting or during my interviews without drawing attention to myself. Given that I was a passive participant in some cases and a non-participant, but observer in others, I waited until I returned home to write up

the findings. I was lucky because all my social situations or interviews were within the space of 7km from my guesthouse. By the time I got home, there was a minimum amount that was forgotten or left out. Most of my observation and interview sessions lasted for not more than one hour, covering most days of the week. In my condensed notes, I was keen to describe what I saw, heard, the interviewee as well as the major events that transpired. In situations where I have to cover long distances, I had this habit of finding the next restaurant where I would quickly make my condensed notes before embarking on my journey home.

2. **Expanded Accounts:** - Besides the condensed accounts, I always made a habit of developing an expanded account of my condensed notes. This normally formed the basis of my analysis as I reflected on the condensed descriptions vis-à-vis the goal of my study. For each field session, I would fill in details and recall things that I was not able to record on the spot.

.....*During the first week of July, I spend most of my time observing and holding informal conversations with galamsey operators in their ghettos. This took place at their places of work where numerous activities were going on at the same time. Besides my observation, I mingled informally with my informants, mostly the grinders, headmen and middlemen while they supervised, had their lunch or sifted through gold ore. Occasionally I took photos of interesting incidents or jotted condensed notes in my small pocket-handbook. After several hours of doing this back and forth, I would slip away to a shade near the sample flower (a different story all together) to expand my notes with as many details as I could remember. Like Moses had mentioned to me earlier in April, I discovered that my ability to recall events and conversations, i.e. memory increased rapidly through the discipline of creating expanded accounts from condensed ones.....*

3. **Fieldwork Journal:** - In addition to field notes that come directly from observing and interviewing, I made a point of constantly keeping a journal. Like a diary, this journal contains a record of experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs and problems that arose in the course of my work. Every time I read through my journal, I get a sense of a personal drive through my research work. In this journal, I also recorded some reactions to informants and the feelings I sensed from others. Example...

.....*During my first week in Accra, I scheduled a meeting with an NGO representative at a hotel in the city. I figured lunch on me on a Saturday would not be a bad idea for building a relationship with an individual who has since turned out to be central in my work. The first question she asked after a hard dragged small talk was... "William, What do you plan to prove in your study"? This question threw me off, because I was not out to prove anything, to the best of my knowledge I was only seeking to study and provide an explaining to the actor negotiation culture within the mining sector in Ghana. I had to journal that question which has been so helpful because I noticed that most of the researchers coming to the area are either natural scientists or economists who seek to explain relationships between variables. For example, the relationship between technological advancement and depletion of mineral reserves.....etc. My experience with the EPA officer was also worth journaling. The articles in my journal have contributed to drafting this methodology section...*

4. **Analysis and interpretations:** - Like ethnographers, I constantly engaged my field notes to regular analysis, interpretations and inferences. This I recorded in a separate notebook, mostly on my computer using mind-manager software. This was mainly an internal brainstorming where ideas came from my past readings, some from my theoretical perspectives of the study theme, some from the comments or narrations of my informants, or general discussions of my work with fellow colleagues in the field. I began drawing categories of various actors as located in my social situations and thinking in terms of their characteristics as shaped by their interests and needs. I began thinking how their interests and value they attach to a given issue influence the tactics and bargaining strategies that they do adapt. Such ideas would be recorded on my mind manager software and already began forming the basis of analysis.

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