

Addressing Mining Sector Conflicts in Ghana

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Abstract

During the World Bank and IMF-led Structural Adjustments Program implementation in the 1980s, the extractive industry was also targeted in many developing countries, including Ghana. Although liberalization was envisioned to bring the needed development to the country and mining communities, the evidence on the ground proves otherwise. The outcome has been the prevalence of conflicts between mining communities and mining companies, mainly over issues of environmental pollution, competition over land use, unfulfilled promises, resettlement and compensation.

Using online sources/data and adopting the ‘developmental state’ approach, which advocates for state-induced development as a conceptual model, this research investigates the Ghanaian government's role in addressing conflict in the mining sector and the challenges therein. The results show that the state has implemented several initiatives consistent with the developmental state approach. However, emanating from competitive clientelism, various challenges impeded the government’s initiatives from producing the desired outcomes, hence the sector's persistent conflicts.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
LSM	Large Scale Mining
SSM	Small-scale Mining
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
SL	Sustainable livelihoods
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
ICMM	International Council on Mining and Metals
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
LMC	Local Management Committees
MCDS	Mining Community Development Scheme
GRA	Ghana Revenue Authority
OASL	Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands
MDF	Mineral Development Fund
PMMC	Precious Minerals Marketing Company
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
ILO	International Labour Organization
ERP	Economic Recovery Program

Introduction

The natural resources of any country, especially a developing state, have the potential to transform its developmental trajectory when adequately managed. They can spur economic growth, improve infrastructure, and contribute to poverty alleviation. At the same time, the resources can become a prime source of discontent and conflict if poorly managed. Conflict is not always and necessarily a negative phenomenon because non-violent conflict can result in social change and development and form an essential aspect of human interactions. However, conflict can lead to violence when institutional and social avenues for managing and resolving conflict break down (UNIFTPA, 2012).

Ghana is endowed with natural resources, including cocoa, timber, crude oil, bauxite, and gold (Ibrahim and Liu, 2018). With a long history of gold mining, commercial gold mining makes a vital contribution to the Ghanaian economy (Ayee, 2011). But ironically, just like many mineral-rich developing countries, Ghana is also prone to community-level conflict caused by mining. The conflict impedes the sector's growth and can potentially compromise the peace and security of a given region or the entire country. As evidenced by the endless number of mining community demonstrations and agitations (see Ofosu-Mensah, 2012; Okoh, 2014), it appears that the Ghanaian government has not been effective in alleviating community conflict in Ghana's mining districts.

Research Problem.

Since the mid-1980s, Ghana's gold sector has expanded greatly in response to rising global demand and the introduction of market-based reforms that opened the sector to foreign direct investment (FDI). Although the government enjoyed increased revenues and gold exports became a primary source of foreign exchange earnings, the rapid and unregulated increase in large-scale mining caused significant social, environmental and economic harm to local communities.

The significant expansion of large-scale commercial gold mining in the 1990s thus triggered considerable community opposition worldwide (Engels, 2016). According to Andrews et al. (2017), since the year 2000, the industry (large-scale mining) has witnessed a speedy rise in the number of conflicts globally for varying reasons, including land and environmental concerns and an increasing rate of global exploration and mining activities. The nature of the discontent is complex and may differ from one party or location to another and has triggered violent confrontations between the feuding parties on rare occasions, resulting in the loss of lives and property. It is crucial to say that conflict is not always the result of a single party; it is the product of the interplay between or among many actors, such as companies, different hierarchies of government, communities, and civil society organizations, which contribute differently to the conflict situations (Andrews et al., 2017).

In Ghana, a significant cause of conflict is the failure of the sector's growth to adequately trickle down and improve the living conditions and overall development of the indigenes of mining and the surrounding communities, which bear the brunt of the harmful impacts of mining. The opening up of the sector to foreign investment in the 1980s led to land use competition between mining companies and local communities, including farmers and small-scale miners) (see Andrews et al., 2017; Hilson, 2002). Critically, many communities and people have been dispossessed of their lands (homes and farms) to pave the way for large-scale mining-related activities, including prospecting, exploration and mining (Andrews, 2018; Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009).

This paper analyses two possible explanations for ongoing violent and non-violent conflict aggravated by the expansion of large-scale commercial mining. The first explanation could be attributed to a subtle presence of the 'resource curse,' the notion that resource-rich countries tend

to experience unstable or low economic growth, mismanagement, corruption and conflict (see Auty, 1993; Cust and Viale, 2016; Sachs and Warner, 1995). This contrasts with the high levels of sustained economic growth and development achieved by many other economies without abundant natural resources, such as Japan and Singapore. Although recent authors have refuted this argument due to Ghana's relatively stable democracy (see Amundsen, 2016; Kopiński et al., 2013), it seems to be creeping in at the local level as mining-community conflicts rage on. However, these conflicts have not reached a level that can destabilize the country, such as the levels suffered by other minerals-endowed nations such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (the most resource-rich nation), Liberia and Nigeria.

The second possible explanation relates to the failure of the Ghanaian government to effectively implement policies that would mitigate the harm to communities and resolve ongoing sources of conflict. Such policies would be consistent with the 'developmental state' approach regarding Africa (see Ovadia, 2016). According to the developmental state approach, it can be argued that, despite the conflictual nature of mining activities, well-designed and implemented state-led policies targeted to the needs of mining communities have the potential to lessen or mitigate mining conflicts. However, poorly planned, inadequate or uneven policies will disadvantage mining communities, most of which are already deprived of any meaningful development.

Research Question(s)

From the above brief discussion, it is evident that despite the potential benefits mining generates for the country, conflicts in the sector have persisted to this day. The research seeks to answer the central question, what has been the Ghanaian government's role in minimizing or resolving conflicts and disputes in the gold mining sector? The second question, related to the first, is why

have the Ghanaian government's policy initiatives failed to address the underlying problems facing mining communities adequately?

Purpose

The study's primary purpose is to determine to what extent the government of Ghana has successfully designed and implemented aspects of the 'developmental state' to address the failures of the mining sector's growth to 'trickle down' to the mining and surrounding communities. The study will consider whether policy initiatives intended to offset the failure of market-based reforms to deliver the promised development were effective (i.e. ability to address the concerns and needs of mining areas). The continued prevalence of conflict (seen in the form of the number of protests, demonstrations and lawsuits) in Ghana's extractive sector, arising mainly from various forms of community agitation, suggests that those policies may not have yielded good benefits for indigenes of the mining areas. The paper thus also aims to uncover why the Ghanaian government's efforts to alleviate community conflict may not have been effective, helping to contribute to the literature on the ongoing debate about the impacts of mining and mining sector conflicts in Ghana and beyond, and the relevance of peace for the sector's growth and development.

Conceptual Approach

In order to answer the research questions, I will contrast the expectations of the 'resource curse' thesis against the developmental state concept to assess the government's response to conflicts in mining areas. The 'developmental state' concept emerged as the theoretical explanation that underpins the achievements or success of the East Asian economies starting from the 1960s (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). A developmental state is imagined as one that prioritizes economic development at the top of governmental policy and is able to design instruments to effectively promote its goals (Bagchi, 2000). Among the available policy instruments, they might include

making new formal institutions, weaving and promoting formal and informal collaborative networks between the citizens and officials, and utilizing new trade opportunities and profit maximization by production (Bagchi, 2000; cited in Tshishonga and De Vries, 2011).

Two significant assumptions support the concept of the developmental state; most developmental countries are in a disadvantaged position such that market forces hinder substantial economic growth; and the state in some countries provides a viable means to overcome the challenges facing late developers (Tshishonga and De Vries, 2011). In essence, the development conditions of those countries demand that the state take a leading role in designing and promoting policies that can spearhead an economic turnaround. There are two main models of developmental states, the liberal democratic model and the authoritarian model (Kieh, 2015). The main difference here is the liberal democratic model's commitment to democratic principles such as guaranteed human rights and freedoms, checks and balances, and periodic, free and fair elections.

In applying the concept to Ghana, the government (state) is expected to take centre stage in pioneering the country's development and in accordance with other relevant stakeholders, particularly the private sector. As such, the state will leverage its power and influence to design the overall developmental trajectory of the country and call on others to support it by creating an enabling environment for them to thrive. Consequently, the role of the Ghanaian government (state) in devising initiatives to mitigate the negative impacts on mining communities, along with the associated conflict, is the central focus of enquiry.

Methodology

This paper employs a purely qualitative case study approach in order to highlight the complex and multidimensional factors causing conflict in Ghana's mining communities. Case studies involve the in-depth, qualitative study of the lived experiences of people (Lowndes et al., 2017). A case

study will allow for a deep and nuanced understanding and examination of the conflicts and the mitigating policies implemented by the state. The research relies on multiple sources of data, including primary document sources such as the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, Acts of Parliament, company and civil society organization reports, and other relevant organizations. Relevant information was also sourced from peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and grey literature (such as NGO reports), which have become an essential source of knowledge for research. Most of the discussion is primarily centred on the country's Southern half. The fundamental reason for the selection is to identify areas with a representative sample. That area contains the most significant mineral deposits in Ghana, with Obuasi, in the Ashanti region being home to Ghana's largest underground mine and producer of gold, AngloGold Ashanti.

Also, the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality of the western region contains the largest concentration of mining companies in West Africa, with the majority of the mining activities undertaken in the area being large-scale surface mining. As would be seen later, this has a negative implication with regard to environmental degradation and pollution and triggers social unrest and conflicts. It was thus expected that these areas would be able to give sufficient information to make any relevant analysis of the issues. The following map displays the major gold mining areas in Ghana.



Map showing mining towns in Southern Ghana (black spots). Photo credit to www.ccarto.com

Three main search engines were used to source the necessary data; Google Scholar, Brock university's online library "OMNI," and regular Google for grey literature search. Among the keywords and phrases used to scout for the data included "sources of mining conflicts," "mining conflicts in Ghana," "economic impacts of mining in Ghana," "environmental impacts of mining,"

"mine-community clashes," etc. These keywords and phrases were developed and modified as the research evolved, and the searches returned vast numbers of results. Although no complex method was used in identifying the correct papers, a quick skim was used to sample articles most likely to contain the necessary data to complete the research. Coding was also not required in the process.

In that regard, Google Scholar and OMNI produced a significant proportion of the data, especially journal articles. At the same time, grey literature sources, such as company and institutional websites and Google, produced information on critical reports and unpublished works. Citation tracing was deployed to identify the dominant themes in the literature on conflicts and policies of the government of Ghana. Concerning the causes of mining conflicts in Ghana, several dominant themes emerged, including; compensation and resettlement, unfulfilled promises, migration, environmental and health risks and human rights abuses. The state initiated several policy initiatives, and the main aim of the research was to determine whether they had achieved the intended purpose. By deduction from the literature, I identified some challenges that have impeded the state's capacity to alleviate conflict in the mining industry.

Although the methodology used to complete this study effectively produced the expected outcome or results, there were some limitations. Firstly, because this was a desk study and relied on online sources, it did not provide me with first-hand information about the origins of conflicts and the reasons for the state's failures to mitigate them. The limitations of writing a Major Research Paper (MRP) only enabled the study to run a surface-level dissection or commentary on the relevant themes. However, many of the sources I depended on were the result of ground-breaking research conducted in the field, thus furnishing me with enough insights. Finally, due to the widespread nature of the conflicts, the policy responses were holistic and not targeted at some specific areas. Thus, the sources I used could not have touched on all the mining conflicts in the

country. This partly informed my decision to concentrate mainly on the Western and Ashanti regions, which contain the country's most critical and productive mines, while referencing a few more to support my arguments.

Organization

The research is organized as follows: as outlined above, the introduction elaborates on key issues such as the research problem and question(s), the study's purpose, and the conceptual approach. The second section surveys the theoretical literature surrounding the debates on natural resource extraction related to the resource curse debate and the potential of a developmental state approach as a means to mitigate conflict. Section three provides an overview of the economic, social and environmental impacts of mining and how they contribute to conflict in mining communities. The last section analyzes the government's response to community conflicts and considers why initiatives to mitigate the underlying causes of conflict have been largely unsuccessful. The final section analyses the research findings in relation to the debates in the literature on the resource curse and the factors impinging on the government's ability to employ elements of the developmental state to address conflict.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The debate about the relevance of natural resources to developing countries with abundant resources is an age-old one that continues to command researchers' attention. In this section, I will address the debate on the economic and political sources of the resource curse, the role of state institutions, whether minerals fuel conflicts and the expectations of the developmental state approach. Literature on both mineral and oil resources will be referenced to support the arguments since both are types of resource wealth.

Overview of Resource Curse Debate

Historically, scholars, including David Ricardo and Adam Smith, believed natural resources could propel a nation to attain economic development (Badeeb et al., 2017). On the contrary, other scholars have also warned about the dangers of natural resource discovery. Montesquieu argued that citizens tend to be myopic and slothful when their countries have resource wealth (Ross, 2018). Research addressing the adverse effects of resource wealth has highlighted how resource wealth negatively affects other sectors of the economy, such as agriculture and manufacturing (Cordon and Neary 1982), vulnerability to price volatilities (Davis and Tilton, 2005; Koren and Tenreyro, 2007; Van der Ploeg and Poelhekke, 2009), and how resource rents fuel political corruption and rent-seeking behaviour (Iimi, 2007; Gylfason, 2001; Ross et al., 2011; Ross, 2018).

However, other researchers have criticized and sought to dispel the notion that resource wealth does not promote growth. Manzano and Rigobon (2007) considered the possibility that Sachs and Warner's (1995) resource curse model reflected the results of the shocks in oil prices experienced in the 1970s and early 1980s instead of their underlying tendency to experience reduced growth. Alexeev and Conrad (2009) argue that the assertions in the resource curse literature are due largely to the misinterpretation of data with a timing interval starting in 1965 or 1970. They noted the gap is troublesome since it leaves over 15 years omitted from the data analysis since commercial exploitation in most oil-exporting countries commenced before 1950. Frankel (2010) attributes the mixed results of resource wealth to the different resources being produced and the different levels of human capital and export diversification of countries.

At the same time, natural resources have also been at the centre of conflicts throughout history because they are treasured but scarce and are unevenly distributed with varying geographic concentrations worldwide (Corrigan, 2014). However, the rate of disputes also raises the critical

question of why such conflicts seem prevalent in some countries and not others. In the dominant literature, the sources of the resource curse have been divided into two broad and interrelated causes; economic and political (Badeeb et al., 2017). Consequently, the proceeding sections will survey the literature on natural resource extraction, focusing on the economic and political dimensions of the resource curse debate. This section will then turn to the literature on the developmental state as a possible antidote to the resource curse thesis.

The Resource Curse Debate: Economic Dimensions

From an economic perspective, natural resources are assets with three main benefits for countries. First, the income can improve real living conditions by financing higher consumption levels. Second, finances directly increase levels of investment and indirectly by leveraging them to borrow. Lastly, revenues can avert the lack of the needed fiscal space to finance critical public projects, including infrastructure (Sachs, 2007; cited in Badeeb et al., 2017). Humphreys et al. (2007) identify two key distinguishing features between resource wealth and other types of wealth. First, natural resources are only extracted and not produced; thus, they are not affected by different economic processes and create little employment due to the sector's capital-intensive nature. Secondly, many natural resources are non-renewable, especially oil and gas; hence, their depletion is permanent (Humphreys et al., 2007).

In the last few decades, researchers have sought to investigate whether natural resource reserves can bring about significant levels of development in resource-endowed countries. Although there is no agreement on the benefits of natural resources, some authors have argued that discovering mineral resources in the developing world cannot boost those economies. Instead, these countries experience lower economic growth, economic instability, conflicts, marginalization, and underdevelopment, compared to countries without natural resources (Auty,

1993; Sachs and Warner, 1995). For example, despite boasting of 42 percent of the global deposits of both bauxite and gold, 38 percent of its uranium, and 88 percent of diamonds, sub-Saharan Africa has consistently proven that resource abundance does not automatically result in an overall improvement in the standard of living of the population (Engels, 2016). What follows is an overview of the leading economic causes of the resource curse identified in the literature.

The Dutch Disease

The Dutch disease incidence can negatively impact resource-endowed nations. The Dutch disease phenomenon first appeared in the work of Cordon and Neary (1982), who researched the decline of the Dutch manufacturing industry after the discovery of natural gas (Amundsen, 2016; Badeeb et al., 2017). The Dutch disease is a circumstance in which growth in a country's national income from natural resource extraction damages or displaces other sectors of the economy (Cust and Viale, 2016). The damages are usually due to a shift from different sectors of the economy to the new industry due to its lucrative nature. The windfalls from natural resources typically raise domestic income, and people's spending power or their demand for goods increases inflation, causing the real exchange rate to appreciate (Amundsen, 2016; Badeeb et al., 2017).

The relative increase in the prices of non-resource commodities makes exports expensive relative to world market prices, negatively affecting the competitiveness of those commodities and the investment they attract (Badeeb et al., 2017). At the same time, the movement of productive inputs to the new sector over a long time phases away agriculture and manufacturing, making it difficult for them to recover and reverse the economic downturn due to the neglect and high cost of inputs (Amundsen, 2016; Humphreys et al., 2007). The series of studies by Sachs and Warner marked the first scholarly and empirical studies confirming a negative correlation between dependence on natural resources and economic growth (Badeeb et al., 2017).

In their research on Africa, Sachs and Warner (1997) attribute the probable negative growth impact of natural resource wealth to the Dutch disease syndrome (Iimi, 2007). Because many African countries are dominated by agriculture, resource windfalls will influence many people to exit the sector. Also, Atsushi Iimi, in his cross-country study focusing on Botswana, observed that the Dutch disease is the most prominent economic channel or means for the natural resource curse (Iimi, 2007). On the contrary, Siakwah (2017), in his study on Ghana, argued that *"the country's experience seems to defy a traditional notion of the resource curse where natural resources windfalls can lead to a Dutch Disease."* He notes that the export of oil, which commenced in 2011, has not been able to reverse the depreciation of the cedi. This discovery raises critical questions about the orthodox belief that a sudden influx of resource windfalls could be solely accountable for currency fluctuations in mineral or oil-rich economies (Siakwah, 2017).

Price Volatilities

The volatile nature of the prices of extractive resources in the global market also significantly impacts the possibility of countries falling into the resource curse enclave. Economists have intimated that volatile markets enjoy less foreign direct investment and suffer from reduced economic growth compared to countries that specialize in commodities that command more stable prices or industrialized countries (Blattman et al., 2007; cited in Badeeb et al., 2017). Volatilities heighten uncertainty, make predicting and measuring the revenues generated from natural resources challenging, and impede countries' effective economic and development planning (Van der Ploeg and Poelhekke, 2009). According to Davis and Tilton (2005), volatility shrinks government revenues and foreign exchange earnings and hampers countries' abilities to meet the required conditions for beneficial expansionary monetary policy. Elbers et al. (2007) observed

about 40% suppression in capital accumulation or formation and output due to commodity price volatilities.

Although countries can benefit from the sudden increase in commodity prices, the positive direct effect of resources on growth can be swamped or undone by the indirect negative impact of volatility (Van der Ploeg and Poelhekke, 2009). Furthermore, volatility also stimulates more borrowing by resource-reliant countries, especially when there is a fall in commodity prices because it serves as collateral for government borrowing. The ease of securing loans due to their status as resource-rich countries puts such countries at risk of debt overhang over time. Resource or oil-induced borrowing is influenced by countries' 'false sense of perpetual wealth' (Siakwah, 2017).

The Resource Curse Debate: Political Dimensions

Political corruption is a feature of many resource-rich countries worldwide. As Amundsen (2016) posits, political corruption is defined according to the actors involved. Motivated by either personal or group enrichment and the maintenance of political power, the actors are primarily at the apex of the political echelon. In many resource-rich nations, revenue windfalls increase the power and influence of the elites, who have the ability to widen the income inequality between different groups (see Gylfason, 2001; Iimi, 2007). Instead of investing in infrastructure and sustainable developmental projects, the elites or politicians generally loot and distribute a large share of the revenues to benefit their immediate circles. For instance, over one billion dollars of Angola's oil revenues have gone missing every year since 1996, about 20% of total revenues (Herringshaw, 2004). In competitive democracies, the resources, in theory, are distributed at all levels of government to appease and sustain power. By impoverishing communities, corruption can weaken the social contract between the state and citizens (Church and Minerals, 2018).

Rent-seeking enhances state power since it provides the means for politicians to buy loyalty and allies (Ross et al., 2011). Also, perceived and potential rivals can be paid off with the rents (Amundsen, 2016). Generally, rents are used to build clientelist networks, silence critical voices, buy votes and bribe the institutions of checks and balances and oversight, especially lawmakers, election commissioners, anti-corruption officials, and auditors (Amundsen, 2016). Finally, rent is appropriated to maintain the state's political stability by acquiring important military and security hardware, and little or no taxation reduces the demand for accountability by citizens (Ross et al., 2011). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a quintessential example of a country that has been able to maintain stability for more than six decades, and Libya until 2011, with oil rents (Ross et al., 2011).

A key concept associated with the political dimensions of the resource curse is 'competitive clientelism.' According to Lust (2009), competitive clientelism is the mechanism by which elections provide political elites and their supporters the means to compete over access to limited state resources, which they can, in turn, distribute to clients. In the context of Africa, these practices date back to the gate-keeping states of the post-colonial era in which political elites devised the above means to stay in power (see Hillbom, 2012). Szeftel (2000) also traces African clientelism and corruption to the development of the colonial era and the post-colonial settlement that produced clientelist networks engaged in power struggles between factions. African clientelism is used to refer to the kind of politics emerging in resource-rich fledgling democracies, in which parties rely on the distribution of rents to win or maintain power during elections. In Nigeria, Africa's most populous and largest oil producer, evidence suggests that at least one out of five people are directly exposed to vote-buying, which strengthens electorates' loyalty to partisanship (Bratton, 2008). The tendency of politicians to buy off electorates means that mineral revenues

will most likely not be appropriately channelled into critical developmental projects. Instead, they will be diverted to fund the campaigns of political actors.

Researching mineral-rich Argentina, Brusco et al. (2004) found that where parties are able to track or monitor the actions of voters, vote-buying is an effective electoral mobilization strategy, particularly among low-income earners. Vote-buying thus persisted against the hope that neoliberal economic reforms would raise people's income levels. The ability to accurately guess the voting decisions of voters and threats of sanctions against defectors also enhances the phenomena of vote-buying. Therefore, amidst secret balloting, vote-buying persists because parties use local informants to observe if a person voted, used a party's means of transportation to the polling centres or attended a rally (Brusco et al., 2004). However, in fledging political institutional settings, clientelist politics is perceived by political actors as an appropriate party-building strategy (Kitschelt, 2000; cited in Brusco et al., 2004).

Clientelist politics affects the ability of voters and authority to make independent judgements. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, citizens' access to state resources is the primary driver of elections. This perception significantly influences voters' choice of candidates and willingness to vote (Lust, 2009). By and large, people are inclined to vote for candidates they believe can deliver and direct desired services to them. Such events imply that they erode elections as a means by which electorates hold their political leaders accountable for their actions and inactions (see Bratton, 2008). It also affects the capacity of institutions such as parliament, as in the case of the MENA regions, to adequately carry out its mandate of executive oversight (especially on using state finance) because parliamentarians are themselves beneficiaries of such arrangements (Lust, 2009). As Bratton (2008) summarized, defective election campaigns, including vote-buying, set or prep the platform for governance by corruption. This is because

elected leaders will immediately begin to recoup what they invested in the elections from the state through corrupt and dubious means.

Governments in resource-reliant economies have weaker incentives or motivations to invest resources in costly monitoring and control institutions that detect and punish corrupt activities. Also, some prominent state actors may be beneficiaries of bribes relating to control over natural resources (Knutsen et al., 2017). In some instances, companies and state actors can change the game's rules to favour them (Standing, 2007), which goes a long way to undermine transparency, accountability and development. Political corruption and rent-seeking drive countries towards the resource curse in many ways; fees and commissions paid to officials rob the state of maximum revenues since resources are given for cheap; it undermines the redistribution of wealth as more income is expended on power preservation and luxury projects to the detriment of real development; and compromises the institutions of checks and balances and power-sharing (Amundsen, 2016). Overall, corruption has a corrosive effect on governance by threatening the rule of law, respect for rights, and the ability to entrench undemocratic or unaccountable rulers (Standing, 2007).

However, it is not the case that voters always vote for candidates offering them goods and cash inducements. Bratton (2008; cited in Gadjanova, 2017) found in Nigeria that vote-buying does not guarantee voters will comply with the demands of politicians (i.e., vote for them). Interestingly, voters will take gifts yet will vote for their preferred candidates. Gadjanova (2017) concludes that while vote buying does not influence voters' choice, it demonstrates candidates' viability, leadership, popularity and concern for voter welfare. In competitive elections, the result is partly due to ballot secrecy and partly because of the tactics the opposition adopts to undermine the incumbent (Gadjanova, 2017). Although it might not influence elections, it negatively affects

the ability of the state to mobilize resources to finance development as politicians amass wealth to fund their campaigns at the state's expense. As this paper will demonstrate, competitive clientelism has been important in explaining the inadequacies of the Ghanaian government's pro-development initiatives.

The Role of State Institutions

Institutions are critical to shaping the everyday life of humans. Institutions are explained as the *"humanly designed constraints that structure political, social, and economic interactions"* (Richman, 2020). They could be formal or informal and democratic or non-democratic. In resource extraction, political corruption is cited as undermining the effective functioning of institutions by promoting bad governance practices such as political manipulation, lack of transparency and accountability and threatening the conduct of free and fair elections (Amundsen, 2016). In contrast to the earlier assertion by Sachs and Warner, studies suggest that countries that meet a certain threshold on the quality of institutions play a critical role in avoiding or reversing the resource paradox and facilitating development (Mehlum et al., 2006). Botswana and Norway are resource-rich countries whose institutions have played a significant role in their progress (Corrigan, 2014).

According to Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003), there is an indirect link between growth and natural resources concerning institutional quality. They find that although natural resource wealth has a negative effect on institutional quality, institutions' quality impacts development. That is to say, 'good' institutions can spur growth and vice versa. This argument is corroborated by Boschini et al. (2005), who, in their study, concluded that *"sufficient improvement in institutional quality turns resource abundance into an asset rather than a curse."* Also, the level of democracy has a bearing on corruption which in turn has an impact on the effectiveness or the level of accountability of governments (Bhattacharyya and Hodler, 2009). To this end, quality

regulations and corruption mitigation channels are essential to maintaining quality institutions, resource management and the possible reversal of the resource curse (Iimi, 2007).

Research on the ability of institutions to promote effective, transparent and accountable extraction and use of natural resource income has produced mixed results. For instance, Gyampo (2016) and Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh (2012) intimate that gaps in Ghana's petroleum sector's legislative and institutional frameworks have signalled the presence of monumental inadequacies in the nation's current democratic dispensation. Adams et al. (2019) also recognize the need to augment existing efforts with country-level institutional factors such as quality institutions of governance, accountability, anti-corruption, natural resource sustainability and effective accounting practices. Although Kopiński et al. (2013) recognize the presence of challenges, they noted that Ghana's stable political system, together with its relatively diversified economy and vibrant civil society, makes it unlikely that the discovery of oil will ruin the economy. Instead, the 'curse' must be perceived as a 'treatable disease' (Corrigan, 2014). Finally, Amundsen (2016) concluded that Ghana could escape the resource curse due to its positive level of democratic institutionalization, especially parliament and the judiciary and the ability to hold free and fair elections. Subsequent analysis will consider whether this expectation is, in fact, correct in the context of Ghana's competitive clientelism.

Does Mineral Extraction Fuel Conflict?

The question of whether natural resource extraction fuels conflict is straightforward yet complicated and challenging to answer. Research to examine the relationship between the extraction of natural resources and conflicts has returned mixed and conflicting results (Andrews et al., 2017). Significantly, the extraction and trade of mineral endowments can fuel tensions, grievances, and conflicts. Conflicts may take different forms, including protests, (violent)

demonstrations, petitions, lawsuits and, at the far extreme, civil war. An environment defined by weak governance, multidimensional poverty, human rights abuses and youth unemployment can heighten conflicts (Church and Minerals, 2018).

Research that supports the assertion that resource wealth fuels conflicts have come from two sources. Echoing the economic and political dimensions of the resource curse debate, on the economic side, the focus has been on how the 'resource curse' results in lower growth and income levels, creating a low opportunity cost situation for people to rebel, thereby increasing the likelihood of conflict. In contrast, the political dimensions point to the relationship between resource wealth and weak institutions; thus, resource-rich states largely depend on patronage relations at the expense of a robust democratic system of competitive elections, checks and balances and civil rights (Collier and Hoeffler, 2005).

Ross et al. (2011) point out that two strong arguments explain why resource wealth, especially oil riches, makes low-income countries more conflict-prone. When oil is extracted from a region under occupation by a religious or ethnic minority, it increases the benefits of secession and, thus, the possibility of a secessionist rebellion. The second mechanism linking oil wealth to violent conflict is looting; due to their high sunk costs and often remote locations, criminal gangs or political movements target petroleum facilities for looting and extortion. Two other means with weak evidence are macroeconomic shocks and a region's high fertility rates due to oil wealth which can raise the risk of conflict by causing a youth bulge in the population (Ross et al., 2011).

According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004), countries with a larger share of primary commodity exports have higher chances of experiencing civil wars. The explanation is that rebellion makes extortion possible and attractive or that reliance on primary goods worsens governance, spurring more substantial grievances by competing factions. According to U.N.

Environment (2009), over 40 percent of internal conflicts from 1950 to 2009 were associated with natural resource extraction. Even more worrying is that disputes connected to natural wealth are twice as likely to relapse during peacetime (Church and Minerals, 2018). Using geo-referenced information from 1997-2010 on the location and characteristics of violent events in the extraction of 27 minerals in Africa, Berman et al. (2017) found a strong correlation between mining activities and the possibility and intensity of conflicts at the local level. The results hold for low-level violence such as riots, protests and organized violence (battles). They further estimate that the historical boom in mineral prices over the same period was responsible for close to 21 percent of the average country-level violence in Africa (Berman et al., 2017).

However, Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) findings that lumped all primary products together have been heavily criticized. It has been argued that primary resources are not homogeneous, and thus the likelihood of conflicts may vary from one resource to another. There are efforts to segregate natural resources into diffuse resources, including agricultural products and point resources (resources concentrated in a region or area), such as minerals (De Luca et al., 2012). It is argued that point resources are more attractive to violent entrepreneurs who compete over the control of rents generated by the resources (Andrews et al., 2017). Consequently, mineral resources serve as catalysts to ignite and sustain civil conflicts.

Also, the connection between natural resources and conflict is potentially endogenous, as the reliance on them directly results from the civil war (De Luca et al., 2012). Ross et al. (2011) argue that the link between oil and conflict risk is non-linear because oil wealth only fuels the risk of conflict in states with relatively low incomes; insurgencies are less likely if they are wealthy enough to push the per capita income above about \$5000 even if they became rich through oil. They find that the conflict rate in a country increases as oil income moves from zero to about

\$1000, the average level of Russia during the same period. However, it drops to zero above this level (Ross et al., 2011).

Also, in rejecting the linear relationship between natural resources and conflict, Fjelde (2009) argues that political corruption may not necessarily produce higher risks of conflict in oil-rich countries because the stability of the regimes is reliant on political corruption. Here, the focus is on how resource rents are used to sustain the state, as is done in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere (Ross et al., 2011). However, political corruption generates specific symptoms and outcomes threatening virtuous transitions (Andrews et al., 2017). For example, the emergence of factions within the same ruling party over leadership succession can cause the regime's demise.

Finally, on the type of resources and conflicts, Bond and Kirsch (2015) find gold and copper mines to be associated with violent conflict when compared to other mined minerals. They concluded that fierce clashes are positively correlated with the perceived worth attached to specific types of minerals. The understanding is that warlords or factions will target resources that generate the highest possible income, as in the case of the diamond wars in Sierra Leone and Angola (Church and Minerals, 2018). In a sense, the findings of Andrews et al. (2017) support this point of view. They find that the majority (49%) of conflicts happened in mines extracting precious metals, followed by non-ferrous metals (26.3%) and 8.8% for energy minerals. The result also holds for many geographical regions of the world with slight variances. For instance, in North America, the conflicts were most frequently associated with energy minerals (e.g., oil sands), whereas specialty metals were mainly linked to the conflicts in Africa. In contrast, Bond and Kirsch (2015) note that conflict intensity levels are not simply tied to the type of minerals extracted, but a possible association with conflict intensity is mining methods (e.g. surface or

underground mining) since some are more associated with environmental and health concerns (Andrews et al., 2017).

On the contrary, the findings of Haslam and Tanimoune (2016) in five Latin American countries on gold mining contradict Bond and Kirsch (2015). They find no evidence of any unique relationship between gold mining and conflict and that gold mining is loosely linked to conflicts compared to other minerals and metals (cited in Andrews et al., 2017). Andrews et al. (2017) also debunk the notion that the type of resource plays an essential role in the emergence and sustenance of conflicts. From the above discussion, it is evident that the debate about the relationship between resource extraction and conflicts is inconclusive and points to the importance of the state's potential role in mitigating conflict.

The Developmental State and Resource Extraction

A developmental state is viewed as one that prioritizes economic development at the top of governmental policy and can design instruments to efficiently promote its goals (Bagchi, 2000). The developmental state literature is helpful for my case study because, aside from regulating the sector, the Ghanaian government has also designed and implemented policies to ensure that local communities benefit from mining. Also, the successes of mineral-rich Botswana and Mauritius have drawn renewed attention to the concept on the continent. In analyzing the speedy growth and successes of Japan's post-war reconstruction and industrialization from 1925 to 1975, Chalmers Johnson (1982) pioneered the concept of the 'developmental state' (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). He contended that East Asia's newly industrializing countries' successes were not command or laissez-faire free-market-inspired economies. Instead, it was based on what he calls "*market-conforming methods of state intervention*" (Johnson, 1982; Musamba and Meyns, 2010), in which the state played a critical role without hampering the market principles. Johnson's main argument

is that examining the peculiar occurrences that shaped the country's history best explains the origins of Japan's developmental state, especially the efforts targeted at grappling with the Western-dominated international order.

As a result, Japan's status as a 'late developer and location in the East Asian revolutionary nationalism served as the two motivations for establishing a developmental state (Johnson, 1982). Accordingly, there are three (3) distinctive institutional features of the developmental state; small but cost-effective, merit-based professional and efficient state bureaucracy; the availability of political conditions that render sufficient guarantees for the pilot agency, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) to retain a high prestige, legitimacy and authority in fostering relationships between the agency and the private sector; and granting bureaucrats additional authority to design state interventions in the economy without hindering market principles (Johnson, 1982; Musamba and Meyns, 2010). The developmental state has viable institutions that guarantee, promote and achieve high economic growth by providing the right conditions for development (Tshishonga and De Vries, 2011) and the prudent allocation of resources.

I agree with the argument that the presence of opportunities for citizens' active participation is vital to a developmental state (Nwapi and Andrews, 2017). Due to their relative successes since the 1960s, East and South East Asian countries are often related to the concept of the 'developmental state' because their relative success has been attributed to it. On the contrary, the world has witnessed several developmental state-oriented countries in the past, including the Netherlands (16th and 17th centuries), Britain (1560–1851), and Japan from the 1950s (Amuwo, 2008). The developmental state can, however, be contrasted with the predatory state in which

resources are exploited for the benefits of powerful rent-seeking elites (Musamba and Meyns, 2010), which was identified earlier as a significant source of the 'resource curse.'

In the East Asian experiments, an autocratic rule was perceived largely to have aided solid political leadership and autonomous state bureaucracy, which are considered essential features of developmental states (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). Therefore, what mattered most was the state's developmental performance, while how its governance was conducted was deemed redundant. However, Edigehji (2005), referencing the failed post-colonial statist experiences, argued that African states would have been part of the most developed worldwide if a positive correlation existed between autocratic regimes and development (Edigehji 2005)!

A large number of studies have tried to account for the success of the developmental state model (Chang, 2002; Johnson, 1982; Weiss, 2000). Although different reasons have been provided, the crucial role of the state in development remain a constant in the majority. For example, Johnson (1982) credits Japan's MITI as the fulcrum of its developmental model, especially the bureaucratic coordination of the industrialization process. Chang also reiterates the state's vital role in constructing and visibly influencing market operations (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). In surveying the contributions of critical authors to the literature, Musamba and Meyns (2010) identified four essential characteristics of the developmental state; development-oriented political leadership, an autonomous and effective bureaucracy, a production-oriented private sector, and performance-oriented governance. These dimensions, however, play out differently in different countries.

The post-colonial African states were known for their state-led development (Kieh, 2015). As Musamba and Meyns (2010) note, many post-colonial African countries were state-led developmental, leading to short-term economic growth and improved social infrastructure. Those

policies can, however, be distinguished from the East Asian developmental states of the 1970s, which depended on increased exports for economic growth and development. However, post-colonial African states failed primarily due to the state's predatory nature and partly because of world market changes, which ushered in a seemingly enduring debt crisis by the 1980s and the subsequent implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which ushered in market-based reforms and lessening the role of the state in the economy (see Kieh, 2015; Musamba and Meyns, 2010).

Two different positions dominate the developmental state thesis in Africa. The first argues that, unlike in East Asia, the conditions that facilitate a prosperous developmental state do not exist in Africa. For example, East Asia was unique as the countries (i.e. Taiwan and South Korea) with large amounts of United States aid developed rapidly in a given geopolitical climate (Bishop et al., 2018). The other is of the view that Africa needs a "*democratic, developmental and socially inclusive*" strategy, given the failures of both post-colonial state developmentalism and market-led structural adjustment (Mkandawire, 2005; cited in Musamba and Meyns, 2010).

Further, the majority of sub-Saharan African states, under patronage-oriented political leadership, lacked the determined focus on development required to establish a functional developmental state and became the problem impeding development rather than the solution to their development challenges (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). This thus explains why, with their abundant natural reserves, most of these countries have not been able to produce any meaningful development and fight poverty. For example, in analyzing oil-rich Nigeria, Amuwo (2008) explained that its state and political elite relinquished the country's development to market forces, thus rendering the state bureaucracy and technocracy, ideology, and other vital actors short-circuited and compromised in the development chain (Amuwo, 2008). So, despite investing over

\$100 billion between 1975 and 1995 in enterprises, they failed to yield results due to inadequate entrepreneurial skills, corruption, capital shortage, and foreign capital scheming to obstruct them from playing a pivotal role in the Nigerian economy (Amuwo, 2008).

South Africa also presents another largely unsuccessful test case of the developmental state. In its quest to retain power in the national elections of 2004, the governing African National Congress (ANC) introduced the theme to its alliance with the radical Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party. Although it achieved the short-term purpose of uniting the alliance (Southall, 2006), debate on the problems and prospects of applying the concept to South Africa persist (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). Southall (2006) further identified divergent positions regarding the developmental state and doubted whether the conditions, including adequate state capacity needed for the establishment of a developmental state, are present in South Africa, albeit there is the need to learn from the developmental state experiences of East Asia. Those fears were given credence at the 'developmental state' national conference in 2007 in Pretoria, which concluded that *"in the absence of a comprehensive development strategy, South Africa could not presently be characterized as a developmental state."* Although it lauded the state's efforts in that direction, the country's prevailing unemployment, poverty and inequality rate called for a developmental state to address them (Turok, 2008).

However, Botswana and Mauritius have been referenced as developmental states that have stood the test in Africa (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). As a mono-crop economy at its independence in 1968, Mauritius has attained an upper-middle income status with a highly diversified economy. Between 1961 and 2013, it witnessed an average of 5.3 percent real GDP growth annually. While also embracing neoliberal policy shifts (Kieh, 2015), it relied on subsidies and incentives to attract

private capital into new industries. The country also embedded social welfare policies into its developmental state architecture (Bishop et al., 2018).

Similarly, Botswana's rise from the threat of severe poverty at independence has been consistently remarkable (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). As a landlocked and diamond-dependent nation, its achievements since independence have been attributed to an enlightened political leadership who possessed a modern foresight of embarking on a nation-building project (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). Its first generation of leaders thus adopted a pragmatic approach to establishing a liberal democratic developmental state (Kieh, 2015), abandoning the radical nationalist and statist approach, which led to the collapse of most post-colonial African economies (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). With development funded by a combination of domestic capital, foreign aid and FDI, Botswana thus committed to and pursued the promotion of human rights and moderate human development (Kieh, 2015). As Kieh (2015) notes, the state prioritized human development (the coordinated efforts to improve people's accessibility to basic needs and essential services, including education, safe water and health and good governance (IMF, 2012), as a national project and designed and implemented effective and efficient public institutions. The professional bureaucrats played critical roles in national development planning, natural resources management, development integration, and financial planning (Bishop et al., 2018).

Botswana has steered clear of the problems of many mineral-rich and failed developmental states, particularly in Africa, with effective and efficient management of the country's diamonds. It has a development plan that articulates its goals, targets and the mechanisms to achieve them, including the provision of public goods as proven by an increased life span and literacy rates, and professional civil servants, which emphasizes the need for expertise, efficiency and effectiveness in governance (Kieh, 2015). However, there still exist critical challenges that ought to be addressed

to consolidate the gains further, including the continuous reliance on diamonds, the tendency to subordinate the state to the desires of aid donors due to the dependence on foreign aid as a significant source to fund development, and the persistence of poverty barring progress in human development (Kieh, 2015; see Musamba and Meyns, 2010).

Recently, Nigeria and Angola, which have not adequately benefited from many decades of oil production, have taken different steps consistent with the developmental state to support and promote local industries. In Nigeria, the 2010 Act on local content stipulated quota requirements which companies must follow for projects, such as the need to locally supply 45 percent of high-voltage cables (Ovadia, 2016). Similarly, Angola plans to initiate local content requirements in signed production-sharing agreements (PSAs) with oil firms. Critically, Angolan companies that provide services and have ties to the national oil company, Sonangol, appear to be flourishing (Ovadia, 2016). Ovadia's central argument about the important role of local procurement policies in enhancing local employment opportunities is a key component of the developmental state in instances of natural resource abundance, as is the case in Africa.

Ghana has implemented aspects of the developmental state through various policy initiatives. Some of these have been directed at mitigating some of the causes of the ongoing conflict in mining communities. In the next section, a brief overview of Ghana's political economy will be followed by an account of the leading causes of conflict arising from large-scale commercial mining. The paper will then provide an overview of government initiatives consistent with the expectations of the developmental state and explain why they have proven ineffective in mitigating conflict.

GHANA CASE STUDY

This Ghana case section discusses some critical themes regarding mining. It starts by providing a brief background of the country, the Economic Recovery Program and the contested benefits of the expansion in mining activities. The last part thoroughly examines the main sources of mining conflicts in Ghana, which is the focal point of the research.

Background

Ghana, officially known as the Republic of Ghana, and with an estimated population of 30.8 million people (GSS, 2021), is located in West Africa and shares borders with Burkina Faso to the North, Ivory Coast to the West, Togo to the East, and the Gulf of Guinea to the South. It attained independence from British colonial rule in 1957 as the first sub-Saharan African country. Political instability and military rule in the post-independence era (1966-1992) impeded Ghana's development. However, it has enjoyed political stability since returning to constitutional rule in 1993, with eight successive elections. It currently runs a hybrid system of government, with an executive and parliamentarians elected every four years (Electoral Commission of Ghana, n.d). Ghana runs a decentralized system of government with 16 administrative regions and 261 districts. The country is culturally diverse regarding language, ethnicity, chieftaincy, and religion.

Ghana is endowed with many natural resources, such as cocoa, timber, crude oil, bauxite, manganese, and gold (Minerals Commission, 2015) which contribute to its socio-economic development in diverse ways. With a mining history dating back over 2000 years, the country was named the gold coast during the colonial era (Ayee et al., 2011; Garvin et al., 2009). Behind South Africa, Ghana is currently the second-largest producer of gold in Africa and among the top ten (10) globally as the mining industry continues to grow.

The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and Ghana's Mining Sector

During the 1980s, many developing countries faced severe economic challenges due to poorly executed development strategies, bad monetary policy or political instability (see Wieland, 1998). In Ghana's case, failed efforts to promote import substitution industrialisation policies (replacing foreign goods with those produced by locally protected firms) (Steel, 1972), together with inefficient state-owned companies, contributed to significant economic difficulties by the early 1980s (Hilson, 2002b; Minerals Commission, 2015).

In turning to the IMF and World Bank, developing countries were mandated to implement specific prescribed economic and political reforms reflective of a global paradigm preferring private sector-led industrialization and development for economic recovery. African states possessing significant mining sectors were required to shift their primary focus to maximizing tax gains or revenue from mining over time while promoting private-owned industries, including mining firms (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). As Campbell (1998) argued, the process of commercial, financial and economic liberalization was intended to reduce the state's role in the economy, thereby privileging the promotion of private economic interests and correcting economic stagnation caused by failed Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) policies.

In Ghana, similar to worldwide industry trends (Campbell, 1998), the Jerry John Rawlings-led Provisional National Defense Council regime, in 1983 officially commenced market-based reforms under the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) (Hilson, 2002a; Hilson, 2004). Critical measures implemented included the privatization of state-owned enterprises, trade liberalization, public sector retrenchment, budgetary cuts and subsidy removals. Later, the Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) under the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative, sought to address issues of poverty (IMF, 2012).

Under the ERP, Ghana's declining mining industry received priority attention (Hilson, 2002c; Hilson, 2004). As the bastion for the reforms in Africa, Ghana liberalized its previously nationalized mines (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Hilson, 2002a). Thus, between 1984 and 1995, many significant institutional development and policy changes were tailored to mirror the new paradigm, commencing with the establishment of the Minerals Commission in 1984 and the 1986 enactment of the Minerals and Mining Code Act (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). The ERP brought onboard measures to improve industrial resurgence through economic restructuring, improved financial access and encouraged investment in critical industries, namely mining, in which Ghana has a comparative advantage (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Ayee et al., 2011). About 25% of Ghana's land area is pinned down for prospecting, reconnaissance survey, or mining activities, with many concessions crowded in regions with more mineral reserves (Patel et al., 2016). The ERP and the expansion in mining activities revived both the Ghanaian economy and the mining sector, but at some cost to human development; defined as the coordinated efforts to improve people's accessibility to basic needs and essential services, including education, safe water and health and good governance (IMF, 2012).

Mining post-ERP: A blessing or a curse?

Following the expansion and revival of the mining sector, its actual contribution to the Ghanaian economy has been highly debatable. This section begins with an account of the benefits, before turning to the harms to communities that contributed to conflict in mining areas. Although Ghana's mining sector benefited from privatisation, the economic benefits failed to trickle down to most people, especially communities residing in mining areas.

The fast evolution of mineral laws and policies facilitated the quickfire growth of Ghana's mining environment, with the sector attracting an estimated US\$ 3 billion worth of FDI between

1986 and 1997 (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Significant industry investments contribute to the economy's overall good outlook. The table below indicates the recent massive investments in the mining sector from 2015 to 2020. Also, the extraction of minerals has generated enormous government revenue and foreign exchange from exports (Aryee, 2001). Corporate income taxes and royalties are the most important and accounted for about 92% of total receipts in 2019 (MoF, 2021). The mining industry is an important foreign exchange earner to the Ghanaian economy and contributes to the state's long-term capital accumulation and fiscal payments (Lawson and Bentil, 2014), with gross foreign exchange earnings increasing progressively from 15.6% in 1986 to 46% in 1998 (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

Table 1: Key Indicators In Ghana's Mining Sector: 2015-2020

<i>Year</i>	<i>Investment (USD Millions)</i>	<i>Share of total exports (Mineral %)</i>	<i>Total Revenue (Billion Ghana Cedis-USD Million)</i>	<i>Contribution to GDP (Gold %)</i>
<i>2015</i>	<i>645.2</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>1,285,581,291 to 336,539,605</i>	<i>6.6%</i>
<i>2016</i>	<i>971.7</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>1,633,169,817 to 383,373,197</i>	<i>7.2%</i>
<i>2017</i>	<i>1035.96</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>2,160,742,773 to 478,040,437</i>	<i>6.5</i>
<i>2018</i>	<i>953.17</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>1,444,120,099 to 298,989,669</i>	<i>7.3%</i>
<i>2019</i>	<i>961.41</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>1,901,262,480 to 334,729,310</i>	<i>7.1%</i>
<i>2020</i>	<i>1103.4</i>	<i>48.4</i>	<i>3,596,960,368 to 618,034,428</i>	<i>N/A</i>

Source: Statista.com & Minerals Commission of Ghana

Note: Total revenue was arrived at with the exchange rate as of December 31 of each year

Additionally, the mining sector has contributed significantly to generating jobs in both the formal and informal sectors (Patel et al., 2016). The industry accounted for approximately 20% of formal sector employment in Ghana by 1995, with 20,000 people employed by large-scale mining

companies (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Similarly, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) estimated that the small-scale mining sub-sector employs one million people (MoF, 2021). Mining also creates many indirect jobs, including security companies, catering and food vendors (restaurant services), transport operators, and equipment leasing or hiring groups for people living in mining zones (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

Finally, the government of Ghana finances some education, healthcare, roads, electricity and many related infrastructure projects from substantial tax revenues from mining companies to promote community development (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). Also, many mining companies usually embark on infrastructure development in their local communities (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). Mensah and Okyere (2014) noted that many communities had witnessed new infrastructure investments with the revitalization of the mining sector. For instance, between 1996–1998, some surveyed mining companies financed projects worth US\$8 million (Aryee, 2001).

From the brief discussion above, it cannot be lost on anyone that mining activities contribute to the overall development of Ghana. However, despite the benefits of the reforms for scaling down debt and poverty and drawing FDI for resource-rich developing countries, they produced mixed results. Significantly, most local populations have not benefited from mining (see Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018). Moreover, as an activity that creates fewer jobs for locals than it displaces (Lawson and Bentil, 2014), it cannot entirely be labelled as beneficial to the many people who have lost their source of livelihood (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).. Also, the negative impacts of mining activities on the host and surrounding communities sometimes result in conflict, which can escalate into violence if not timely addressed. The next sub-section turns to the main causes of conflict in Ghana's mining areas.

Nature of Mining Conflicts in Ghana

Due to the inbuilt environmental and social impacts associated with mining activities, there is a strong likelihood of conflict to occur. Thus, the potential for conflict should be perceived as an intrinsic part of the relationship between mining companies and stakeholders (Andrews et al., 2017). In their extensive global case study on conflicts associated with mining, Andrews et al. (2017) opined that

Conflict is rarely the result of a single party; more-often-than not it is the result of the interplay of multiple actors including companies, various levels of government, communities, civil society organizations and others, all of whom contribute to conflict situations in different ways. (Andrews et al., 2017, p.5)

According to Johan Galtung (1973, p.23), conflict is the "*pursuit of incompatible goals.*" Conflict, whether violent or non-violent, thus arises when actors seek to achieve some ends at the expense of opposing factions. For the purpose of this research, which focuses on Ghana's mining sector, conflict is defined as disagreements between feuding parties over issues of interest. It takes the form of community complaints, petitions, protests, demonstrations and legal actions (lawsuits). Petitions primarily entail gathering signatories to register a group's displeasure over an issue. For example, a petition submitted by WACAM to the 'Committee of Enquiries' established by the Ministry of Environment to investigate Newmont's cyanide spill in Kenyasi in the Brong Ahafo region led to the imposition of a US\$ 4.9 million fine in 2010 (wacamgh.org). Protests and demonstrations take the form of marches and roadblocks and may, sometimes include physical violence, resulting in injury to people or damage to properties. For instance, a demonstration against a task force of the police and military's arrest of 150 illegal miners in Obuasi turned violent in 2011. Another clash in 1996 caused damages worth over \$10 million to AshantiGold company

property (Hilson, 2002c; Okoh, 2014; Patel et al., 2016). Finally, legal action pertains to the use of court processes by aggrieved parties to seek a resolution to a matter. For example, the Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM), a local organization, has been the mouthpiece of affected communities in highlighting their plights and demanding that communities' rights are respected. While educating natives on how to bargain for compensation, it has also been involved in litigation to seek adequate compensation for affected communities (Mensah and Okyere, 2014; Ofosu-Mensah, 2012).

Major Causes of Conflict in Ghana's Mining Areas

The following paragraphs will discuss some of Ghana's dominant causes of mining-related conflicts. The main sources of conflict in Ghana include the dominance of surface mining, competition over mineral resources, unfulfilled promises (lack of jobs and inadequate compensation), environmental and health concerns, in-migration and human rights abuses. It is important to mention that mining conflicts did not commence with the unregulated expansion of mining activities in the 1980s; however, they exacerbated the conflicts.

Dominance of Large-Scale Surface Mining

An imposing contributory factor to the conflicts in the mining sector is the conundrum of large-scale surface mining. Unlike South Africa, the continent's largest producer of gold, only a few mines, including Newmont's Subika mine and the Obuasi mine of AngloGold Ashanti, are underground are underground mining operations. About 70% of Ghana's operations involve open-pit mining, which displaces large areas of land (Global Business Reports, 2019). Underground mining is more capital-intensive in nature, leading to the preference for surface mining (Global Business Reports, 2019).

Since business entities are driven by profit, only the government, through legislation and incentives, can compel them to resort to underground mining, which comes with fewer environmental concerns. However, with the next elections in sight and the need to raise revenues to finance campaigns, ruling parties are unwilling to compel mining firms to move to underground mining since they can threaten to withdraw their investment in the country (Abdulai, 2017). For example, former president John Dramani Mahama at the World Economic Forum in 2014, said mining companies' threat to cut off jobs and move their investments abroad compelled his government to halt the implementation of some reforms (Abdulai, 2017a).

Even though there are plans for land reclamation after the life of a mine, research has shown that such lands are unproductive for agriculture (Taabazuig et al., 2012). Also, planting new trees as part of reforestation measures can potentially affect the current crop of trees in an area (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). An aggrieved respondent informed Andrews (2019) that mining companies had used CSR as an excuse to destroy their environment. Most have also failed to follow environmental guidelines, including blasting, which significantly impacts air, water and land quality (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011; Armah et al., 2011; Mensah et al., 2015). However, the mining companies have dismissed the overwhelming call to resort to underground mining techniques because it is expensive and unprofitable (Taabazuig et al., 2012).

Competition Over Resources: conflict between small and large-scale miners

A negative impact of the rapid growth in large-scale mining (LSM) has been the rise of mining-related conflicts due to heightened competition over access to mineral-rich land. Although such conflict existed prior to the expansion of commercial mining after the advent of market based reforms, they served to exacerbate conflict between large and small-scale miners (Hilson, 2002c; Patel et al., 2016). The attempts by the government to attract more large-scale mines have

diminished or shrunk the land available for small-scale mining (SSM) operations (Hilson, 2002b, c; Hilson and Potter, 2003). In some cases, lands initially allocated to small-scale miners were rezoned for large-scale mining operations, resulting in confrontations between the two groups (see Hilson 2002b).

In their study assessing the spatial interactions of large and small-scale mining firms in the Southern part of Ghana, Patel et al. (2016) concluded that because both LSM and SSM depend on mineral reserves and water for their operations, both tend to be located within the same area and regularly overlap, leading to conflicts. The results further reveal extensive resource competition between the two parties; over half (i.e., 52%) of the small-scale mining activities identified happen within the boundaries of large-scale concessions (Patel et al., 2016). The reason is simple, both small and large-scale mining firms want to operate in areas with a significant presence of gold deposits and water bodies, which are critical for the successful retrieval of the gold ore. This makes it extremely difficult for small-scale miners to accept being moved to a land they believe cannot produce much gold. To temporarily reduce the tensions, some LSM companies have allowed small-scale miners to mine on parts of their concession. For instance, Abooso Goldfields Limited issued company identification cards and relinquished portions of its concession land to the miners around its Damang mine in the Western region and to buy their gold at near-market prices (Hilson, 2002b). The critical question is, for how long would that be allowed?

The activities of illegal small-scale miners, who do not adhere to the guidelines stipulated in Ghana's mining laws and those for SSM activities further compound the problem. They also prefer surface mining due to its cost-effectiveness, less capital and minimal technical skills requirements. Concerning the mining dispute between illegal small-scale miners and AngloGold Ashanti in Obuasi, Ghana, Okoh (2014) explained that the conflict is purely over the control of

gold resources. It is economically motivated rather than grievances over revenue appropriation, which is a minimal cause. Encroachment of the AngloGold Ashanti concession by the illegal miners, most of whom are non-natives and have no ancestral connection with the land, is a significant cause of the conflict, which comes at a cost to the company, community, miners and government (Okoh, 2014; see Hilson, 2002c). In recent times, the activities of illegal Chinese miners, who have introduced sophisticated equipment, have worsened the conflicts, especially as they compete with both LSM firms and local miners for resources (Botchwey et al., 2019).

In Prestea, illegal small-scale miners said they continue encroaching on portions of concession land of no interest to the company due to unemployment resulting from the lack of alternative sources of livelihood. Also, the land earmarked for them is neither rich in gold nor suitable for productive agricultural activities (Hilson and Yakovleva, 2007). Since the 2000s, the Bogoso Gold Limited (Western region) concession has witnessed several clashes between small-scale miners and security forces of the mine due to illegal SSM (Hilson and Yakovleva, 2007).

Conflicts over land use between local communities and mining companies

Another related issue to land use is the problematic nature of concession regimes, prioritizing multinational companies over locals' concerns (Banchirigah, 2008; Hilson, 2002c; Ofosu-Mensah, 2012). In its bid to lure foreign direct investment under market-based reforms, the government's changes to the mining regime to encourage LSM aggravated conflict over who should own and use the land (Hilson and Potter, 2003; Okoh, 2014). Hilson and Yakovleva (2007) note that the government's mining sector reform program prioritizes the expansion of predominantly foreign-controlled or owned large-scale mining projects to the neglect of indigenous subsistence groups' concerns (see Hilson, 2002c). Under the Minerals and Mining Act 2006, all the people who inhabit a land become tenants once a company acquires a concession; the people can only embark on any

economic activity with permission from the mining company (Ofosu-Mensah, 2012). Specifically, Section 24 of the Concessions Ordinance (1900) bars anybody from surveying for minerals without acquiring a prospecting license. Also, Section 34 (1) limits potential local mining business people to only use local technology (Ofosu-Mensah, 2012).

Therefore, mining activities take away vast fertile lands for agriculture from the indigenes by displacing farmers and depriving them of their primary source of livelihood since most concession lands are located in the densely forested and heavily fertile parts of the communities (Ofosu-Mensah, 2012). For example, about 70% of land in the Western region's Wassa West District is leased for mining-related activities (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Garvin et al., 2009; Ofei-Aboagye, 2004). This leaves just 30% of the total land area for agriculture and other economic activities (Mensah et al., 2015).

Consequently, mining negatively impacts all those who have lost their sources of livelihood. A significant reason for this fate of the people is the capital-intensive nature of large-scale mining, which does not permit it to employ many hands (Taabazuing et al., 2012). Therefore, company jobs cannot serve as the main alternative source of income. As life becomes unbearable for these people with minimal means for survival or integration into the formal economy, some turn to illegal mining, resulting in confrontations. For example, warning shots and tear gas fired by the security men of Bogoso Gold Limited (BGL) in Prestea injured seven demonstrators in June 2005 after some attempted to enter the premises (Ofosu-Mensah, 2012).

Unfulfilled Promises: Lack of Jobs and Inadequate Compensation for Displaced Farmers

The phenomena of unfulfilled promises by the state and mining companies are extensive. Prominently, it includes issues bordering on unemployment, resettlement and compensation. *"They*

promised us jobs, for ourselves and our children. Now they say we are illiterates and have no skills. Did they not know we were farmers when they were making promises to employ us...?" A woman from Kenyase No. 1 (Lawson and Bentil, 2014, p.218).

The above quote exemplified the frosty nature of the relationship between some mining companies and their host communities. Despite the mining industry's commendable contribution to the national economy, its expansion has not produced the needed local development, improved social well-being and secure livelihood, or halted poor communities' vulnerability (Lawson and Bentil, 2014). The establishment of new mines decrease agricultural-related activities and displace villages, which negatively impact the socio-economic condition of the people (Lawson and Bentil, 2014; Hilson, 2004). For example, since subsistence and cash cropping are the primary source of livelihood of 95% of dwellers in the communities of the Ahafo region's Asutifi District (Lawson and Bentil, 2014), any loss of land due to mining threatens their survival.

Usually, promises by mining companies to replace their land with jobs often go unfulfilled as large-scale mining does not provide enough jobs for those laid off from agriculture (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). In the Wassa West District, a respondent intimated about the state of employment by saying, *"If the mines were employing us, we will have something to live on ... but look around, all you see are unemployed young people in the communities. There are no jobs for us."* (Taabazuing et al., 2012, p.42). In some instances, the only few jobs available were short-term and contract-based, meaning they became unemployed again after a short period, as lamented by youth in the Ntotoroso community (Lawson and Bentil, 2014). Due to mining-induced unemployment, people, especially the youth, usually turn to illegal gold mining (galamsey) to augment their income (Andrews, 2019; Banchirigah, 2008; Lawson and Bentil, 2014). Any attempts to ward them off by the company and state security apparatus usually lead to clashes

(Okoh, 2014). To address the struggles, the residents of the Asutifi District admonished mining companies to keep to their promises and invest in social infrastructure for the communities affected by mining activities, including water, roads and toilets facilities (Lawson and Bentil, 2014). The 2008 Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) report found enough evidence of unfulfilled promises of employment made to communities by mining companies.

Related to the menace of unemployment is the lack of adequate compensation for displaced people. Because the president, under Article 257(1) and (6) of the 1992 Constitution has the ultimate freedom and authority to apportion lands for mining activities (ACEP, 2016), lands are often compulsorily acquired from the people for the expansion of large-scale mining activities to start, causing residents or entire villages to be displaced (see Ofosu-Mensah, 2012). The laws (Regulation 1(7)) require that companies negotiate and reach an agreement with the affected communities and individuals in accordance with the necessary regulations (Regulations, 2012; Taabazuing et al., 2012).

In the ensuing debate around compensation and other related matters, companies admit that land disruption is inherent to the industry (Garvin et al., 2009). Displaced communities continue to complain about the unfair compensation schemes and feel short-changed for their taken lands or destroyed farmlands (Ayee et al., 2011; Hira and Busumtwi-Sam 2018; Lawson and Bentil, 2014; Taabazuing et al., 2012). Some communities complain that mining companies appropriated their lands without compensation, depriving community members of their sources of livelihood (Andrews and Essah, 2020; CHRAJ report, 2008). According to the 2008 CHRAJ report, most communities were highly unhappy with the mining companies' compensation packages for their affected property, including destroyed farms and crops. The complaints were predominant throughout LSM areas, especially in regions operated by AngloGold Ashanti, and Newmont (see

Andrews, 2019). For example, at Heman-Prestea, a chief noted that some farmers had not received compensation after their lands were taken by Golden Star Resources. Some were only paid for their crops and were yet to receive land compensation (CHRAJ report, 2008; Segbor, 2015). In Tarkwa, houses with fewer rooms were allocated to people who initially lived in three- or four-bedroom homes (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Thompson, 2015).

Moreover, the exclusion of people who do not own landed property, such as farms, houses etc., due to the nature of the laws from those considered for compensation, is another cause of social tension (Ofosu-Mensah, 2012). Most often, those who receive compensation are men and family or tribal heads to the neglect of others such as non-natives, youth and women. Women who usually engage in petty trading are particularly severely affected by such arrangements (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Finally, Lawson and Bentil (2014) explained that compensation payments, ironically, are perceived to worsen poverty rates in mining communities since some spend their compensation packages on their basic needs or started ill-advised and failed business ventures. Unable to survive current economic hardships, farmers and their families usually turn to illegal mining, fueling conflicts with the large-scale mining companies (Taabazuing et al., 2012).

Overall, while mining communities highly welcome the mining companies during the exploration phase, they tend to be resentful during the active operation of the mine because inadequate compensation and village demolitions critically affect the communities' perceptions about mining activities. Although the government passed a regulation in 2012 to streamline compensation and resettlement, the extant literature reveals that the problems still persist (Andrews, 2019; Andrews and Essah, 2020; Lawson and Bentil, 2014; Mensah et al., 2015; Mensah and Okyere, 2014; Taabazuing et al., 2012).

Environmental and Health Issues

By its nature of removing large tracks of land and vegetative cover, the expansion in mining activities comes with many environmental, health and social costs that sometimes can offset its benefits (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). For example, Ghana's estimated annual economic cost of environmental and natural resources degradation in 2003 stood at US\$730 million, equivalent to 9.6 % of GDP. This cost also adversely compromises the national efforts toward fighting poverty through sustainable development (Lawson and Bentil, 2014). The negative environmental impact of mining abounds and includes the loss of fertile agricultural lands, water and air pollution, soil contamination, and impact on wildlife (Botchwey et al., 2019; CHRAJ report, 2008; Garvin et al., 2009; Hilson, 2004; Mensah et al., 2015).

As one of the global mining problems, the loss of arable farmlands (see Hilson, 2002a), mainly from land degradation and virgin forest loss, is a major environmental issue in Ghana (Armah et al., 2011; Mensah and Okyere, 2014). Mining contributes to the loss of farmlands through pollutants such as dust, mercury and cyanide leach, tailings dumps, open pits and dewatering (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Mensah et al., 2015; Taabazuing et al., 2012). The destruction of vegetation can negatively affect soil fertility and cause the loss of habitat for soil animals (such as rodents) (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). The operation of heavy machines and the blasting from mineral extraction also kills soil organisms and disrupts soil aggregates, depriving the soil of the needed organic matter (Mensah et al., 2015). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) noted that between 1990 and 2005, mining activities primarily led to land degradation (about 26% forest cover loss) and loss of fertile land (15-20%) at the Tarkwa, Dunkwa, and Bogoso zones of the Western region in Ghana (Mensah et al., 2015).

Water pollution, mainly through soil erosion, cyanide and mercury leach or the misuse, poor storage, and the dumping of sewage and mine waste, may be harmful to human health, given

that water bodies are a source of water for household use and the environment (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Botchwey et al., 2019; Garvin et al., 2009). For example, in the resettled Teberebie village (Western region), samples from the stream revealed higher levels of fecal matter (126 counts/100ml) and low pH (5.11) (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Ghana witnessed five serious spillages and leakages of cyanide between 1994 and 2001, leading to the contamination of some known rivers (Mensah et al., 2015). Water pollution makes water purification expensive, as in the case of Prestea, where residents have had to spend vast sums of cash to access and treat groundwater for domestic activities, notably drinking, cooking and washing (Mensah et al., 2015). The discussion on water pollution also reflects worldwide trends (see ICMM, 2015; Ríos et al., 2015). These adverse effects of mining are at variance with many global initiatives, such as the UN Global Compact initiative, which calls on firms to "*undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility*" (Andrews, 2019).

Consequently, closely-related to the concerns above, the environmental challenges sometimes pose health problems to people and communities, including malaria, diarrhea, and upper respiratory and skin diseases in Ghana (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011; Mensah and Okyere, 2014). As stated earlier, soil erosion, cyanide, and mercury leach usually cause water pollution, affecting the health of the communities relying on water from water bodies for both domestic and agricultural use. Also, fumes from sulphur dioxide released by mining companies can lead to chemical pollution (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). In mining-dominated regions, numerous reports of health complications are attributed to mining activities. For instance, all three communities surveyed by Garvin et al. (2009) in the Wassa West District attributed the increased health complications, including tuberculosis, catarrh, skin irritations, eye problems, and chronic coughs, to mining activities (Garvin et al., 2009).

Also, noise and vibration from blasts by mining firms can result in hearing impairment of people due to the high-pitched noise they create. Thompson (2015) noted that 69% of respondents from the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality said air pollution was a leading cause of conflicts in the community. The emission of airborne particles (dust) of less than 10 microns into the environment could cause respiratory diseases and disorders and aggravate the health status of asthma and arthritis patients. The high levels of silicosis and silico-tuberculosis in the region are caused by the amount of silica present in mine dust. Upper respiratory tract infections are high in the Tarkwa District, averaging 840 cases annually (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Thompson, 2015).

Finally, the cyanide spillage in 1996 into the Angonaben stream in the Western region negatively affected about nine (9) communities after a downpour, exemplified by the skin rashes suffered by many people from the area (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Also, open and unclosed pits and stagnated waters increase malaria cases in most mining communities as they serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes (Botchwey et al., 2019; Garvin et al., 2009; Mensah et al., 2015). Malaria is the primary cause of child mortality in Ghana, with a national average of 80/1000 children. Spurred on by mining activities, the Wassa West District is the worst hit and has an infant mortality ratio of 85/1000 (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

In-migration

Ghana has a long history of internal migration, often closely influenced by the search for improved sources of livelihood, especially from poorer areas in the North of the country, to the affluent South (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011; Gough et al., 2019; see Hilson, 2002b). Mineral wealth forms a key driver of population movements and begins to attract people when news break about the discovery of gold or mineral in a particular location (Gough et al., 2019). It typically attracts both unskilled and skilled miners (Banchirigah, 2008). As Gough et al. (2019) note, the

initial migration of miners into towns such as Obuasi and Prestea were men searching for jobs in large-scale underground mining operations.

Mining towns, including Obuasi, Tarkwa and Prestea have particularly seen a rise in population over the years (Botchwey et al., 2019). Similar to other mining districts, the population growth rate in the Wassa West District is above the national average and is expected to double (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Migration comes with varying impacts. While it can stimulate local demand for goods and services (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001), it can also result in high cost of living (Gough et al., 2019) and negatively impact family values (Garvin et al., 2009).

For instance, in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality, residents complain that workers at foreign-owned mines earn higher salaries (or in dollars) above the average level of many residents (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Thompson, 2015). As a result, traders and other service providers set prices to match the income levels of the mining staff to the detriment of the local people (Thompson, 2015). This makes accessing critical goods, and social amenities such as water, health and accommodation more exorbitant than the average person in the community can afford (see Lawson and Bentil, 2014). Another cause of the high cost of living in mining areas is the removal of many people from farming and other jobs, which previously generated income by disposing them of their farmlands and promising nonexistent jobs (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Thompson, 2015).

Though highly contestable, the erosion of communal and family values has been associated with expanding mining activities and is a source of worry to many communities. Because mining attracts an influx of people from all walks of life, some miners will likely compromise the values that the mine communities hold in high regard. The people believe mining developments have disrupted their social norms in two of the communities (A and B) studied by Garvin et al. (2009)

in the Wassa West District. They noted the decreasing sense of community and family bonds, strict observance of some social norms, and respect for the elderly. Significantly, they pointed to a rise in unacceptable and criminal behaviours, including prostitution and robberies and blamed these on the migrants. Their findings corroborate the earlier findings of Akabzaa and Darimani (2001), especially drug abuses; addictive drugs such as marijuana and cocaine, used as stimulants by the miners to work hard (see ICMM report, 2015; Lawson and Bentil, 2014).

Human Rights Abuses

The expansion of the mining sector contributes its fair share to Ghana's human rights abuses (Andrews, 2019). Many of the issues already discussed above have human rights implications, such as little or no compensation, forceful eviction from land and destruction of property, environmental depletion, reckless arrests, beating and shootings, as in the case of Prestea (Segbor, 2015). For example, the pollution of water bodies conflicts with the rights of people to have clean and safe drinking water as enshrined in the July 2010 United Nations General Assembly *Resolution 64/292*, which encourages *"states and international organizations to provide financial resources, help capacity-building and technology transfer to help countries, in particular developing countries, to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all"* (UNGA, 2010). Also, the forceful eviction of residents from their farmlands hinders their rights to earn a decent living from agriculture.

The 2008 CHRAJ report recognized the prevalence of human rights abuses in the mining environment when it intimated that *"the causes of the violations of human rights appear systemic in nature"* (p.1). The Commission observed further that most of the people in Ghana's mining communities are convinced that the right to development, officially recognized by the UN General Assembly's Declaration (*specifically, Article 8*) more than two decades ago, remains an empty

promise. The Commission found enormous evidence of widespread violations of various individuals' and communities' collective rights in some mining regions, such as pollution of water bodies and loss of livelihood, excesses perpetrated by state security agencies and contracted security companies of mining firms, inadequate compensation, unacceptable alternative sources of livelihood projects, health challenges, and unfulfilled promises of employment (CHRAJ report, 2008).

The abuse of people by state and company security forces is an integral part of the Ghanaian mining industry. It often results from protests by aggrieved community members or sparingly by some of the mine workers and the encroachment on concession land by SSM or illegal miners. For instance, a police shooting incident at Birim North district in the Eastern Region in November 2005, following a protest against Newmont Mining Company's proposed compensation method, reportedly killed a resident. It also injured three more (Thompson, 2015). Okoh (2014, p.55) documents some confrontations between security forces and miners in Obuasi, including brutalities by security forces, and illegal miners setting ablaze the company's poultry farm.

Finally, the lack of community consent and participation in decision-making help spark or fuel conflicts. As the customary owners of the land on which mining activities occur, one would naturally expect communities to be involved in the decision-making process at all phases of a mining project. The UN General Assembly declaration regarding the *Right to Development* identifies the need for meaningful participation of individuals in development and the fair distribution of the benefits (CHRAJ report, 2008). Sadly, evidence abounds of the sidelining of community members by the state and mining firms as the state continues to award concessions without adequately informing the people. At the mining town of Damang (Western region), a female respondent told Andrews and Essah (2020) that mining companies did not engage the

community on how activities should be conducted; they saw machines clearing their farmlands one day, and they lost everything. A resident of Subri community lamented that the mine converted their river into a dam for its activities without informing them (Andrews and Essah, 2020).

In the Tarkwa municipality, Western Region of Ghana, Armah et al. (2011) found that community members were deprived of participation in mineral resource governance, which tends to influence and fuel conflict between communities and civil society vis-à-vis the corporations and government. Concerning compensation, an old man at Koduakrom township, lamented; *"They gave me compensation based on what they classify as stipulated by law. I expected them to consult me to deliberate on that they can do to sustain me in the long term"* (Andrews and Essah, 2020, p.5). Similarly, at Damang (Western region), a woman said the mining companies have been unfair to them since most agreements are concealed from them (Andrews and Essah, 2020).

In this section, I focused on the primary sources of conflicts in Ghana's mining sectors, which have worsened following the unregulated expansion of mining activities. Critically, the liberalization agenda of the 1980s heightened competition over land use (Abdulai, 2017a) and aggravated mining conflicts in Ghana and many other resource-rich nations. The dominant sources of conflicts in Ghana discussed include competition over resources, unfulfilled promises (lack of jobs and inadequate compensation), environmental and health concerns, in-migration, and human rights abuses. Inadvertently, these manifestations subtly reveal the presence of a 'supposed resource curse' in Ghana that needs to be tackled urgently. However, unlike countries such as Nigeria and Liberia, Ghana is yet to experience a civil war. Amidst occasional violence, its mining-related conflicts have primarily been protests, demonstrations, petitions and legal actions. Therefore, it would be a stretch to refer to Ghana as a 'failed state.' Given the preceding, the next section seeks to explore some of the policies and measures designed by the government of Ghana,

seen here through the lens of the 'developmental state', to mitigate conflicts in the sector and the reasons accounting for their ineffectiveness or failures.

STATE ACTIONS

The primary purpose of this section is to identify some of the policy interventions implemented by the state (government) to mitigate the prevalence of conflicts in the sector. From the developmental state perspective, these initiatives demonstrate the ability of the state to use its capacity and resources to address citizens' concerns. In the latter part, I discuss the reasons for the policies' failure to help mitigate conflict from a competitive clientelism perspective. The initiatives form part of the efforts of the Ghanaian government to reduce friction by providing benefits to local communities.

Regulatory Framework of Ghana's Mining Sector

This sub-section provides a brief overview of the regulatory and policy framework governing the mining industry in Ghana. Since a return to democratic governance, the 1992 Constitution has been the primary source of regulations as it confers powers on different state institutions (Government of Ghana, 1992). The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources has oversight responsibility over mining in Ghana (Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009). This was preceded by the promulgation of the Minerals and Mining Law in 1986 (PNDCL 153), as amended by Act 703 of the 2006 Minerals and Mining Law (Abdulai, 2017a; Armah et al., 2011), and the establishment of the Minerals Commission in 1986 (PNDCL 154). The Minerals Commission is tasked with formulating the necessary regulations to ensure a sound regulatory framework is available for the sector. It also recommends and advises the state on mineral policies and promotes and develops the industry (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Its Geological Survey Department is responsible for

prospecting suitable lands for small-scale mining activities. The Mines Department is tasked with enforcing laws, regulations and standards (see Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009; Hilson and Potter, 2003).

Some other necessary regulations include the Mercury Law (PNDCL 217), permitting the purchase and use of mercury for mining purposes; the Precious Minerals Marketing Corporation Law (PNDCL 219), empowering the Precious Minerals Marketing Corporation (PMMC) to purchase and deal in gold (its role was changed to assaying in 2016), and the Small-Scale Gold Mining Law (PNDCL 218) (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Mensah et al., 2015). Other important institutions include the Lands Commission, which keeps legal records of mining exploration licences and leases and liaises with other bodies in reviewing new licence applications, and the Land Valuation Board (LVB), which provides property valuation rates to be negotiated by companies and those affected by mining operations. The Forestry Commission plays a critical role in managing the country's forests and also partners with the Minerals Commission to grant companies exploration licences and mining leases (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001).

The Environmental Protection Agency (Act 490), set up in 1994, is mandated to promote environmentally friendly resource extraction through investigations, surveys, research and analysis of environmental concerns (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). It is also responsible for overseeing mining companies' environmental practices, as part of the effort to combat the adverse effects of environmental degradation, which is a major source of grievance in mining communities. Ghana's 'preventive approach' to environmental governance is premised on the need to ensure sustainable economic activities and requires the design and execution of policies or programs to prevent causing any destruction to the ecology (Tuokuu et al., 2018). Under the EPA's oversight, any activity with enormous social and environmental impact, including mining, must

undergo an *environmental impact assessment (EIA)* prior to the commencement of mining (Lawson and Bentil, 2014; Mensah et al., 2015). Therefore, mining companies or miners must acquire an environmental permit from the EPA to commence operations, which is granted following a review of the environmental impact assessment (Tuokuu et al., 2018). Public participation also forms an integral component of the environmental assessment process as, the *Environmental Assessment Regulations of 1999 (LI 1652)* make consultations with members of the public who potentially will be affected by mining activities compulsory (Lawson and Bentil., 2014; Tuokuu et al., 2018).

Over the years, however, the *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)* process has failed to deliver the intended results, as mining continues to adversely affect many mining communities (Lawson and Bentil, 2014). The absence of meaningful consultation between mining companies and communities about environmental harms means that anger builds up (Andrews and Essah, 2020; Mensah et al., 2015; Tuokuu et al., 2018). In other words, community participation in the environmental consultation process has been minimal, if not nonexistent. Defects in the law also spur companies to flout and exploit the process. For example, some companies prefer to pay nonpunitive fines rather than implementing the laws thoroughly as it costs more to comply with the laws than to pay for sanctions (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Again, due to the confidentiality clause, *Environmental Audit Reports* are perceived as confidential and, therefore, not accessible to the public (Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Andrews and Essah, 2020).

Government Initiatives Consistent with the Developmental State Approach

Having set out the main features of the regulatory regime with respect to mining, the proceeding paragraphs will examine some of the deliberate state interventions to address the needs and concerns of mining communities consistent with the developmental state. These include: the

distribution of mineral royalties, the legalization of small-scale mining, promoting local content and procurement, and alternative livelihood policies (programs). The expectation is that they will mitigate or lessen conflict by addressing community complaints, needs and demands.

The Distribution of Mineral Royalties to Fund Development

The cries of mining communities about not reaping the benefits of mining are a constant source of conflict. Consequently, over the decades, the state has sought to tackle this challenge through what it calls a 'fair distribution of the revenues' emanating from mining to compensate communities negatively affected by mining (Armah et al., 2011; MoF, 2021). The Minerals Development Fund (MDF) was set up in 1993 which directed a portion of the royalties to the districts where mining takes place. There have been a number of problems associated with the disbursement process, including corruption allegations against district officials regarding the use of royalties (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018; Taabazuing et al., 2012), and the constant delay in releasing royalties by the Finance Ministry (see Lujala and Narh, 2020).

As a result, the *Minerals Development Fund Act* (Act 912) was passed in 2016 to provide legal backing to the Fund (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018) and address some of the past failures. Significantly, a well-defined formula for disbursing mineral revenues to the Minerals Development Fund (MDF) and mining communities is enshrined in the law. Accordingly, the MDF receives 20% of total royalties paid to the central government by mining entities. The formula as set out in the *MDF Act (Act 912)* specifies that 50% of the portion of royalties allocated to the MDF is allocated as follows: 4% goes to the sector ministry for the promotion of the sector's research and development; 13% goes to the Minerals Commission, 8% goes to the Geological Survey Department, and 5% to the MDF for research and training and programs targeted at sustainable development (Act 902; Lujala and Narh, 2020). A new and significant provision

introduced with the MDF Act is that *20% goes to the Mining Community Development Scheme (MCDS) for mining community development*. The other 50% of the MDF's share goes to the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL), to be distributed to district assemblies in mining areas, chiefs of mining towns and traditional councils of the area.

As Lujala and Narh (2020) intimated, establishing the Mining Community Development Scheme (MCDS) in each mining community to ensure and promote the socio-economic development of the communities and those impacted by mining activities is the MDF Act's (912) most remarkable feature (Act 912, s17). The MCDS is seen as a policy innovation to address the challenges; the lack of benefit to mining communities and ongoing poverty in mining areas (Lujala and Narh, 2020). According to section 19(2) of the Act, the MCDS is managed by a Local Management Committee (LMC) in each community, consisting of at least six members, including the mining area's district chief executive (DCE) or his representative, traditional rulers of the mining community, a single representative of the District Minerals Commission, who would be the LMC's secretary, one representative from each of the district's mining companies, one representative each for a women's and youth groups (the Act is silent on which type of women and youth groups to include).

The LMC can submit a project proposal to the MDF board for review and approval or rejection. If a community's proposal is approved, it is entitled to the funding equivalence of the area's mining company share of contribution to the mineral royalty paid into the MDF's accounts by the central government (Lujala and Narh, 2020). That is to say, if a company in community "A" contributes 3% of total royalties, the community would receive 3% of the amount paid to the MDF (as a percentage of the MDF's 50%). This will ensure fairness in the allocation of funds

since the contribution of mining companies vary. Thus, it will prevent the arbitrary allocation of funds to mining areas, since LMCs with the right data can calculate how much they can earn.

The new Act is thus seen as a significant improvement on the previous one that existed for nearly thirty (30) years without legal backing. The Act's strengths concerning mining community development rest in establishing the MCDS and LMCs, which are required by law to sponsor development projects in only communities impacted by mining (Lujala and Narh, 2020). This may help curb the diversion of funds meant for mining communities to support other activities as happened in the past (see Armah et al., 2011; Taabazuing et al., 2012). The MCDS also explicitly specifies how royalties should be spent (Lujala and Narh, 2020), to ensure that funds are spent appropriately on development-related projects.. This may promote greater investment in communities, especially regarding human development. Moreover, using the LMCs is expected to improve community participation in decision-making as it includes natives who would have a clear and better understanding of mining communities' most important development needs (Lujala and Narh, 2020). This will likely address the challenge of embarking on community projects without the input of community members, resulting in misplaced priorities. Finally, providing clarity on and involving locals would enhance the relationship between communities on the one hand, and the local government and mining companies on the other, since communities always complain about opacity in the use of funds (see Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018). This should, therefore, help promote peaceful co-existence among the three parties.

As with every policy, there may be challenges. Lujala and Narh (2020) note that the Act lacks clarity on how to spend the traditional councils' share of royalties. This, again, leaves the funds susceptible to needless and self-seeking spending by the chiefs who receive the funds to the detriment of the larger communities (Taabazuing et al., 2012). Considering their record, one would

have expected the new act to compel traditional authorities to dedicate a fixed percentage of their share to finance developmental projects within their jurisdictions. Also, the selection criteria of LMCs can potentially breed cronyism and restrict local participation in decision-making about how to utilize communities' share of the mineral royalties, since it does not provide a clear-cut criterion about the composition of the LMC (Lujala and Narh, 2020). Again, it fails to address the delay in royalty disbursement since the Ghana Revenue Authority does not transfer funds to the MDF directly (Lujala and Narh, 2020). Instead, it still has to go through the Ministry of Finance, which has a history of delayed payments, which may affect the planning and implementation of community projects (see Armah et al., 2011). More importantly, the MCDS's share of the royalties looks inadequate to support any meaningful community development (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018) Therefore, the big question remains whether the amounts can bring any sustainable development to the communities essential to mitigating mining conflicts in Ghana.

Liberalization of Small-scale Mining

Legalizing small-scale mining (SSM) reflects a direct state intervention on behalf of Ghanaian miners because illegal small-scale mining was on the ascendency after the liberalization process in the 1980s. This was due to the failure of the country's rural communities to gain adequate livelihoods from agriculture (cyclical poverty), low barriers of entry into large-scale mining, and lack of job opportunities for local communities in large-scale mining (Hirons, 2014). To minimize conflict associated with these problems, the state passed the *Small-scale Mining Law (PDCL 218)* in 1989 to legalize small-scale mining activities, previously banned under the Minerals Control of Smuggling Act of 1965 (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004). Small-scale mining is under the direct supervision of the Minerals Commission. Also, the Small-Scale Mining Project (SSMP) was commissioned to take care of critical policy-related issues right after the formalization of small-

scale gold mining in 1989 to promote a smooth and orderly small-scale mining industry (Hilson, 2002c; Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004).

The Small-Scale Gold Mining Law (PNDCL 218) defines small-scale gold mining as: "*[The] mining of gold by any method not involving substantial expenditure by an individual or group of persons not exceeding nine in number or by a cooperative society made up of ten or more persons*" (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004, p.8). The law also applies to artisanal mining, which unlike small-scale mining, is unorganized and does not use of sophisticated machines. Significantly, the Law restricts SSM activities to Ghanaians only, ensuring that locals have a chance to benefit from Ghana's mineral wealth. SSM should be conducted or undertaken in designated areas authorized by the sector minister. Small-scale mining is subject to the legal acquisition of a license from the Minerals Commission for two to five years and, upon satisfactory performance in the first term, is renewable (Minerals Commission, 2015). Also, the person(s) must be registered by the Commission's office under section 90(1) of Act 703 and at least 18 years (Minerals Commission, 2015).

The Small-Scale Mining Department (SSMD) was set up in 1991 by the Minerals Commission to support and address the industry's needs, including policy-making and regulatory concerns (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004). Subsequently, seven district centers were established in seven localities judged to have the largest hold of mining activities as part of the government's commitment to decentralize the SSM regulatory and licensing process, rendering extension and technical support and providing training services to miners (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004). The Small-Scale Mining Project (SSMP) 1989, had two main objectives: to enhance the sector's institutional capacity to encourage and regulate environmentally sound and friendly investments in the mining sector, and to develop techniques and methods to improve the small-scale mining industry operations (Hilson, 2002c; Hilson and Potter, 2003). The scheme initiated several projects, including US\$1.88 million (part of funding from the World Bank) to improve the quality of geological information so as to

provide information on the location of gold deposits to small-scale miners (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004).

Overall, the initiative was supposed to equip each established centre with the requisite SSM equipment and provide miners with local training facilities. In passing and implementing the SSM law, the state demonstrated its capacity to promote local participation in the mining sector. The government's ability to promote local content and participation in industry is an enduring feature of most developmental states. This resonates with Chang's *Alternative to Economic Neo-liberalism* model of the developmental state. He argued that states play a critical role in market regulation and also the ability to construct and directly influence the market (Musamba and Meyns, 2010).

The Minerals Commission also held nationwide stakeholder consultations with artisanal and small-scale miners, that culminated in publishing the '*Artisanal Small-scale Mining Framework*' in 2015 to help address some concerns facing small-scale miners, demonstrating attempts by the state to initiate developmental state-inspired programs. The policy was intended to improve ASM mining in Ghana (2015-2023) with the promise to, among others, enhance access to funds and use of appropriate technology, fair market pricing, create awareness of health, safety and environmental risks and manage land use conflicts (Minerals Commission, 2015).

Also, limiting small-scale and artisanal mining activities to only Ghanaians is laudable as it creates jobs for the indigenes, directly impacting people's lives. Employment in the mining sector generates income for people and taxes for the state to fund development (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). Furthermore, the jobs created in the SSM sector can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of eradicating poverty and hunger, particularly among rural folk (United Nations, n.d).

However, the SSM project has been riddled with several hindrances, thus making it difficult for small-scale miners to operate legally, which sometimes causes conflict between communities and LSM firms. The laborious and costly bureaucratic process due to poor government coordination is the most significant hindrance to the formalization of SSM (Hilson, 2002b). Furthermore, the approach to legally acquiring a license to engage in small-scale mining is difficult and expensive (Eshun and Okyere, 2017; Hilson, 2002c; Hilson and Potter, 2003; Hirons, 2014; Kumah, 2021; Mensah et al., 2015). For example, most district centres are inaccessible to many miners in remote communities, who have to travel long distances to access services (Hilson, 2002c). These challenges contrast with other mining countries such as Botswana, where application forms can be downloaded online, filled and submitted at the nearest office and a mining license issued in thirty (30) days (Republic of Botswana, n.d).

Also, the promotion of foreign LSM projects makes it tedious to legally secure an SSM licence (Banchirigah, 2008). This encouraged officers to unnecessarily disqualify applicants or fail to renew the permits of small-scale miners. As Hilson (2002c, p.9) reported, the state, in its bid "*to free up additional land*" for foreign and local LSM and prospecting companies, typically refuses to renew the license of small-scale miners, effectively reducing the size of land available to SSM.

Furthermore, the challenges with extracting loans and grants by small-scale miners for their efficient operations tend to drive miners away from the legal process since banks do not have a designated lending policy for small-scale miners (Eshun and Okyere, 2017; Hilson, 2002c; Minerals Commission, 2014). This denies miners, who are already battling cyclical rural poverty, the opportunity to mobilize the needed capital to acquire machinery. As a result, small-scale miners secure funds from informal channels (sponsors), mostly gold buyers, to whom they are demanded to sell the extracted gold at below-market prices (Banchirigah, 2008). Finally, although local chiefs

play an important role in overseeing compensation procedure and leading land transfer negotiations, it appears, however, that illegal mining has their support. They continue to release lands for illegal mining activities, contrary to the fact that Ghana's Constitution vests all mineral rights in the president (Banchirigah, 2008).

As Kumah (2021) notes, the present formalization blueprints have failed to adapt to the local conditions of most miners. Conclusively, the fact that about 85% or more than a million small-scale miners in the sector still operate illegally after more than 30 years of the legalization of small-scale mining is enough to prove that the policy have failed to yield the needed outcomes. A more recent problem has been the influx of about 50,000 Chinese small-scale miners, with border officials seemingly turning a blind eye (Botchwey et al., 2019). The government has been ineffective in curtailing illegal mining activities on the part of non-Ghanaians. Consequently, the mining industry continues to witness conflicts, both between SSM and large-scale firms and amongst small-scale miners themselves.

Promoting Local Content and Procurement

Consistent with developmental state initiatives, the Government of Ghana in 2016, through the Minerals Commission, launched the national mining policy, originally drafted in 1994 (Abdulai, 2017a; Minerals Commission, 2014). It is titled "*Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana: ensuring mining contributes to sustainable development*". The policy was thoroughly developed in accordance with provisions in the 1992 Constitution and to supplement the Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) to promote economic growth and improve the standard of living and quality of life of citizens (Minerals Commission, 2014).

Two factors in the *Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana* important to this discussion are the need to generate opportunities for local entrepreneurship and to foster the procurement of local goods and services. Local procurement involves identifying locally sourced inputs for the mining

industry and encouraging local entrepreneurs to produce and provide the right inputs and add value to the minerals produced, which the government, in collaboration with the industry, is committed to supporting (Minerals Commission, 2014, p.44-47). Both are expected to contribute to economic growth and development. The available opportunities will help mitigate conflicts in mining communities since they will increase the demand for local goods and services and create job opportunities, a ubiquitous cry of most mining communities and a source of conflicts.

Regarding local procurement, the laws demand mining firms give preference or priority to qualified Ghanaian suppliers of local goods and services (Minerals Commission, 2014). The Minerals Commission to that effect, requires companies to submit a plan to achieve these targets. Therefore, companies within one year of operations are commanded to provide an initial Five-year procurement plan covering specific items in regulation seven (7) as published in the Gazette. Failure to comply attracts the Cedi equivalent of US\$ 10 000 for the initial six months and the same amount each subsequent day. This may explain why Newmont's Ahafo mine claims to source most of the local goods and services for its community development activities (see Andrews, 2019). Mining companies need to localize their procurement of goods and services, particularly when it is possible in their regions of operation or host country (Andrews, 2019). As has been demonstrated by Ovadia in his 2016 study of Angola, Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea. local content policy promotion can create a new form of capital accumulation that can develop linkages for the different sectors of the economy and create job opportunities (Ovadia, 2016).

Additionally, the 2020 *Local Content and Local Participation Act (LI 2431)* provides specific guidelines and requirements to promote local participation in the industry. It sets out to create jobs, using local expertise, goods and services and job retention in the country. It also targets the need to achieve and maintain some level of involvement by Ghanaian or mining firms

incorporated in Ghana. Section 3 (1) requires the possessor of a reconnaissance or prospecting license to submit to the Minerals Commission for approval a plan for the local recruitment and training of Ghanaians.

Further, Section 3 (2a) demands details of ongoing and planned recruitment and training of locals to replace expatriates. Coincidentally, the Ghana Chamber of Mines reported that more than 98 percent of its employees were Ghanaians in 2020 (Statista.com). The Newmont Ahafo mine reported similar claims (see Andrews, 2019). Since large-scale mining requires highly skilled workers, this requirement is laudable, as one of the reasons companies give for not recruiting Ghanaians or locals is their lack of skills and expertise due to the lack of educational opportunities. To help train skilled labour, AngloGold Ashanti liaised to set up a satellite campus of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Obuasi, to make education more accessible to the people, a very sustainable form of investing in the community (AGA report, 2021). As a new policy, it is anticipated that the promotion of local content and procurement will play a positive role in addressing some grievances of mining communities, especially in the Obuasi, Prestea and Tarkwa areas. However, given Ghana's history with law enforcement troubles, one cannot be overly excited yet.

Alternative/ Sustainable Livelihood Programs

Sustainable livelihoods (SL) have emerged as a mechanism for addressing the developmental needs of communities to supplement the progress made in eliminating poverty and revolve around the core principles of people-centred, responsive, and multi-level approaches to development (Ashley and Carney, 1999). Chambers and Conway first introduced the concept of sustainable livelihoods in the development literature (Hilson and Yakovleva, 2007). Aware of the ability of industrial mining to disrupt the livelihood means of mining communities, the government has

embarked on alternative livelihood projects in Ghana over the years. These policies have primarily been implemented by the government or in partnership with international organizations such as the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development (DfID) or mining companies. However, the viability of such programs is contested as they have encountered many challenges.

A number of direct initiatives have also been designed to address the developmental needs of mining and surrounding zones. The Minerals Commission of Ghana in 2019 launched its oil palm production project in the Eastern Region to provide livelihoods to mining communities. The project will equip residents of mining communities with skills to improve their income and prevent mining communities from becoming ghost towns after the cessation of mining activities (Modern Ghana, 2019). Since Ghana is an exporter of palm oil, this can provide sustainable livelihoods to residents, if the right start-up capital and training are provided to the beneficiaries.

Also, the current government of Ghana in 2017 launched the famous flagship '*one district, one factory*' project to establish a factory in all districts across the country in order to transform the nature of the economy from the export of primary products and import-reliant to manufacturing and industrialized-base (GoG, 2017). Importantly, the initiative is private sector led, as the government only creates an enabling and conducive environment for the companies to access the needed funding from financial institutions (banks) and other supplementary services from state agencies to set up the factories. Crucially, the companies would be owned by Ghanaian businesses, manage them and bear all the associated risks and rewards (GoG, 2017). About 232 projects have been initiated thus far, with some completed and others at various stages (GoG, 2017). It is anticipated that these factories will create sustainable jobs, especially for people in mining communities, which may go a long way to help check mining conflicts.

In the Prestea/Bogoso mining enclave, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), with support from the United Nations, funded a US\$400,000 sericulture initiative to create alternative jobs for the people. As Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) note, Ghana is neither a net exporter of silk nor a significant consumer. The verdict is that such a project cannot achieve the set goals as producers of the silkworm will be faced with market inaccessibility. Greater cane rat rodents (commonly called grass-cutter in Ghana) and snail rearing were also nonviable projects implemented in the area by the government in collaboration with the mining company. Because grass-cutters largely feed on agricultural crops including maize, sugar-cane and cassava, they are common in farming and mining communities, thus, attracts less market. Also, residents told Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) that the area is endowed with snails, which they did not even eat. If the people in the vicinity do not patronize silkworms and snails, how will they make any meaningful income from rearing the same?

A number of reasons account for the challenges of sustainable livelihood projects. First is the 'top-down' approach of policymakers. Usually, rather than consulting with the people the projects seek to benefit, the government and partners have always made decisions unilaterally (see Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009). The impact is that projects implemented are either not viable in the area or not the career choice of the beneficiaries. For example, some illegal miners in the Bogoso/Prestea community preferred carpentry and machine driving, which could have been better alternatives than what was initiated (Hilson and Yakovleva, 2007).

Another challenge is the target group. These projects usually target semi-permanent communities. However, evidence suggests that a substantial number of people from 'outside' communities are engaged in illegal mining. The sustainable livelihood discourse has sought to marginalize illegal miners, a scenario Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) attributes to the lack of

understanding of the dynamics of rural communities in Ghana. There is a need to distinguish between so-called 'catchment' settlements and galamsey communities. Authorities claim they do not deal with galamseyers (illegal operators) because their activities are illegal. This situation produces the parallel process of continuous alternative livelihood programs and illegal mining.

Moreover, Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) identify poor policy reforms to the challenges of alternative livelihood programs. Although implemented policies are expected to face challenges, a swift response can correct the wrongs. Both government and partners have always been slow in implementing and responding to challenges. The situation can be attributed to a delay in releasing funds, as in the case of the Minerals Commission (Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009) or a complete lack of government commitment (Andrews, 2019). Studies have shown that the government of Ghana has a history of abandoning mining communities and thus shifting the provision of development to mining firms (see Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Lawson and Bentil, 2014). Often, because the government, through the district assembly, cannot provide the needed development, the mining and surrounding communities tend to rely on and gold mining firms responsible for development (Garvin et al., 2009; Lawson and Bentil, 2014). Such dynamics exacerbate conflict between communities in mining companies' catchment areas, and those outside the immediate area of the mining operation, because companies focus their community development initiatives on communities in their catchment areas.

The preceding discussion shows that the Ghanaian government has instituted policies consistent with the expectations of the developmental state. These initiatives seek to mitigate the prevalence of conflicts in the mining sector, including: the distribution of a portion of mineral royalties to the MDF, legalization of small-scale mining, the promotion of local content and

procurement and the enactment of alternative livelihood programs. However, these initiatives have encountered varying challenges.

EXPLAINING THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES TO MITIGATE MINING CONFLICTS IN GHANA

In this final sub-section, I discuss the reason(s) accounting for the failure of the Ghanaian government's policies aimed at addressing mining conflicts from a competitive clientelist perspective. Competitive clientelism forms part of the political dimension of the resource curse debate and has snowballed to affect other factors and policies that address conflicts in the sector. Comprehensively tackling those issues has both a direct and an indirect effect on the prevalence of conflicts in the ever-expanding large scale mining sector.

Competitive clientelism

Having conducted eight successful general elections since 1992, it sounds unreal for one to seem to accuse the competitive nature of Ghana's elections (presidential and parliamentary) of preventing the government from effectively mitigating mining-related conflicts. Yet, that is precisely the main argument here. Ghana's competitive elections are a '*winner takes all*' process that produces a zero-sum game in which the winner of the polls takes charge of all government machinery and the allocation of resources (Abdulai, 2017a). Power has alternated between a de facto two-party system of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) since the return to multiparty democracy in 1993 (Abdulai, 2017a). The 1992 Constitution, vesting all mineral rights in the president (ACEP, 2016; Lawson and Benti, 2014) creates room for mineral rights (concessions) to be unduly awarded to people with political ties to the government at the expense of more beneficial alternatives. For instance, the African Centre for

Energy Policy (ACEP), a local energy think tank that has been vocal about the opacity in the award of oil exploration contracts, recently revealed that there is a lack of information on contractual terms compliance and unfulfilled obligations and tax evasions, causing revenue loss to the state (ACEP, 2020).

One argument that is confirmed by a recent study is the claim that Ghanaian politicians have sought to use mineral revenue to strengthen their base and capture or maintain political power. Abdulai (2017a), in his study, argued that Ghana's highly competitive electoral process induces political elites to divert revenues to attain the immediate or short-term desire for political stability in ruling coalitions. Notably, chiefs who continue to command relevance in Ghana's democratic scene (see Banchirigah, 2009), are appeased with vast shares of mineral rents for their personal gains to avoid opposition from groups in society that mobilize votes in the hinterlands (Abdulai, 2017a). The findings also back the long-held belief that local chiefs continue to use their share of the mineral royalties for their gains (living lavishly) instead of investing in projects that can help alleviate the suffering of their 'subjects' or residents (Lujala and Narh, 2020).

Additionally, some state policies have been used explicitly for political purposes. That is to say, the ruling elites often prioritize policies that produce immediate visible 'goods' to win the next election. This helps explain why Ghana continues to run huge budget deficits in election years, which generally serve to undo previous achievements and efforts at addressing the socio-economic and developmental needs of mining communities. One such program is the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), which was initiated in 2008 to give nationwide bi-monthly monetary transfers to the country's poorest and vulnerable (GoG, 2007; cited in Abdulai, 2021). As Abdulai (2021) argued, expansions in the number of beneficiaries have not only

happened during election years to garner electoral capital, but it has also come at the expense of quality as no significant increment both in the value of the grants, and working staff has occurred.

It is thus legitimate to claim that, despite its deficiencies, the LEAP has been maintained by the state because it benefits both the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) (Abdulai, 2017a). State interventions in mining areas are similarly susceptible to corrupt and clientelist practices on the part of local politicians and chiefs (see Effah, 2014). For example, at the end of 2020, the Auditor General reported that 2.1 billion Ghana Cedis was misappropriated by Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) who are expected to implement government policies at the district, local and community levels (Corruption Watch-Ghana, 2021). Therefore, those who benefited are not likely to be those targeted for conflict mitigation efforts.

Therefore, competitive clientelism has resulted in political survival mechanisms that are consumption-motivated to deliver wealth and opportunities to all levels of ruling coalitions and the masses in order to gain their votes, causing a depletion in resource wealth. The outcome is the lack of sustained political will to grow the economy's productive sectors, which is required for structural transformation and nationwide development (Whitfield, 2011; Abdulai, 2017a). This lack of political will thus have a negative impact on the state's capacity to address the concerns of local communities, which drives conflicts. Overall, there is no national policy regarding the allocation of resources generated from the mining sector (Abdulai, 2017a; Ayee et al., 2011), and with corruption ravaging the embers of the state, it is difficult for mining communities to adequately benefit directly from projects funded from mineral rents by the central government. The country currently loses about US\$ 4 billion annually to corruption (Asomah, 2022) which is

more than the combined annual receipts from corporate income tax and mineral royalties of US\$ 493165189 million received in 2019 (MoF, 2021).

The problem travels to the District Assembly level, in which political actors attempt to gain economic and political rents from small-scale artisanal mining (Hirons, 2014), making it difficult to fight the challenge of illegal mining, an essential source of conflict in the sector. The problem involves other law enforcement officers, including immigration officials, who issue fake identification cards to foreigners, especially Chinese illegal miners, whose operations have exacerbated rifts with large-scale miners (Botchwey et al., 2019). Illegal mining has thus persisted because of its numerous beneficiaries, including politicians, chiefs, businessmen and local elites (Abdulai, 2017b). It is, therefore, fair to say that mining communities would have benefited more if the meagre amounts of resources allocated to the district assemblies and traditional authorities were judiciously expended.

Impact of competitive clientelism on institutional capacity

A small, merit-based, and efficient bureaucratic structure is the hallmark of developmental states, and they ensure the effective functioning of state machinery to achieve the desired goals. However, like many other African states, Ghana continues to suffer from a lack of capacity and weak governance at various levels of government in effectively managing and running the mining industry (Andrews, 2016a; Ayee et al., 2011). Contrary to the need for state bureaucracy to be autonomous from economic and political control (Hillbom, 2012), Ghana's bureaucracy has been dominated by politicians and political appointees, undermining institutional independence. For example, under the 1992 Constitution, the president has sweeping authority over appointments to crucial institutions, such as the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the Minerals Commission and Civil Service, which help to compromise their independence. The President also

appoints the DCE in the districts, further entrenching politics into the system of local governance (Ayee, 2011).

As a result, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the institution mandated to guide the country's political, cultural and socio-economic development in line with the "*Directive Principles of State Policy*" enshrined in *chapter six of the 1992 Constitution*, has not lived up to its expectations. Aside from the problem with political appointments, it has not been empowered to compel governments to initiate programs in accordance with the Constitution. The situation has allowed various governments to implement short-term and unsustainable policies to win the next elections, a manifestation of competitive clientelism. For example, when the current government assumed office in 2017, it altered the Commission's forty-year development plan into a ten-year plan (Citifmonline.com). Even so, most of its flagship programs have been described as politically motivated to win votes, rather than bringing meaningful sustainable development. This might help explain its re-election by a landslide in 2020, especially when the government provided free water, hot meals and electricity to citizens (Agbele and Saibu, 2021). In effect, such initiatives do not help alleviate the developmental challenges of mining communities.

According to a 2015 UNDP report, at the national level, capacity challenges include the absence of collaboration among ministries and the lack of a competitive bidding procedure for mining concessions (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018). In the latter, contracts can be awarded to people with '*political connections*.' Also, district assemblies, chiefs, and traditional councils were cited in the report (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018). Notably, the District Chief Executives, who are appointed by the president, tend to dominate in the district assemblies and have been accused of receiving financial resources from mining firms to influence decisions in their favour (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam, 2018), all of which works to the disadvantage of mining communities.

Furthermore, some top posts are primarily reserved for people with '*political connections*' or those who have served their parties rather than on merit (Abdulai, 2017a). The impact is that even correctly designed policies and programs cannot produce the desired results. Such appointees are found in the various institutions that manage Ghana's mining industry, including the Minerals Commission, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Geological Survey Department, Mines and Health Department, and Lands Commission. Over the years, these institutions have also lacked the suitable capacity in finance and personnel to conduct their mandates effectively and efficiently (see Hilson, 2002b, c), which would have contributed to mitigating conflicts, especially over land use and environment degradation.

Related to the above, an issue that has undermined the capacity of state institutions to discharge their duties efficiently is the problem of duplication of institutions. Appiah and Abdulai (2017) contended that public sector reforms have typically been driven by the desire to maintain power by ruling governments due to fear of losing power. As a result, governments engage in needless and costly duplication of institutions, bureaucratic politicization and the removal of public officials deemed to be linked with the past government (Appiah and Abdulai, 2017). Duplication thus deprives the state of financial resources that could have been invested elsewhere to address the needs of citizens, including those from mining communities. For instance, despite establishing two more anti-corruption agencies (Office of the Special Prosecutor and the Economic and Organized Crimes Office) in the last decade, which duplicate personnel and administrative costs, the country has witnessed a consistent increase in monies lost to corruption annually (see Asomah, 2022; Corruption Watch-Ghana, 2021). Again, resources from such establishments could have been saved and well invested to meet the developmental needs of mining areas.

Finally, the inability of the Geological Survey Department to prospect lands suitable for small-scale mining activities due to the lack of capacity in term of finance and personnel, has allowed such lands to be included in concessions awarded to large-scale firms, thus denying ore-bearing land for small-scale mining (Hilson 2002b), a situation that exacerbates conflict. The Minerals Commission is also impeded by similar challenges and misplaced policies (Hilson, 2002b). These challenges may have informed the decision to mandatorily allocate funds to these institutions in the new *Minerals Development Fund Act, 2016* (MDF Act 912). However, it is yet to be seen if the funds are adequate. The same arguments can be made for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the institution tasked with environmental concerns discussed earlier. Mining companies have exploited its weaknesses, especially regarding compliance with environmental regulations (see; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001; Andrews and Essah, 2020; Armah et al., 2011). By circumventing the laws, their activities continue to pose severe environmental and health problems for mining communities and worsening tensions. My argument is that the proper functioning of these institutions would have gone a long way to reducing the interface between mining companies and communities and drastically reduce the number of conflicts.

Consequently, Abdulai (2017a) opined that the Ghanaian society's power distribution and its resulting competitive clientelism have largely stampeded the sufficient utilization of revenues for promoting greater inclusion and programs in the national interest. This is despite the promise in the new *Minerals and Mining Policy (2016)* to channel payments from mining into crucial projects to provide forward-backward and side-stream linkages necessary for the local economy's expansion (see Minerals Commission, 2014). As a results, citizens, especially those residing in mining communities, are yet to realize the promises of mining-inspired socio-economic development, which means that the conflicts have persisted.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

The research set out to answer two critical questions related to ongoing conflict in Ghana's mining areas. The first question is, what has been the Ghana government's role in minimizing or resolving conflicts and disputes in the gold mining sector? The second question related to the first is why the Ghanaian government's policy initiatives have failed to adequately address the underlying problems facing mining communities? The study found that the state has initiated various policies to mitigate the prevalence of conflict in the sector. At the same time, however, and arising out of clientelist politics, some factors negatively impacted the effectiveness of those policies.

In tracking backward, the research findings have implications for the earlier debates. First, previous research extensively discussed the sources of the resource curse thesis, including volatilities (Blattman et al., 2007; Davis and Tilton, 2005) and the Dutch disease (Cordon and Neary, 1982; Humphreys et al., 2007; Iimi, 2007). In Ghana's situation, price volatilities, especially of gold, cocoa and oil have negatively impacted the ability of the state to finance development as the state continues to fail to judiciously utilize and save the income from the resources. At the same time, the state has relied on its natural resources to contract loans, thereby worsening the debt situation. As Siakwah (2017) explained, resource or oil-induced borrowing is influenced by countries' *'false sense of perpetual wealth.'* Also, in the recent mad-rush for gold in the country, spearheaded by illegal mining activities, the Dutch disease phenomena could be creeping in as farmers, especially cocoa farmers are beginning to self-off their farms to the miners. Low cocoa yields could negatively impact local companies that export or process cocoa beans.

However, it emerged also that some economic benefits from natural resources have accrued to the Ghanaian economy. Particularly, the state has been able to raise taxes and foreign exchange

to fund developmental projects, and a number of citizens have been able to secure direct and indirect jobs in the sector. Therefore, natural resources are not necessarily a bad thing for resource-endowed developing countries, as prudent management and use can result in significant development and improve the welfare of citizens. This is where the developmental state concept becomes important as it guides the state to design, create the enabling environment and partner the private sector to stimulate production and development. From the same lens, the Ghanaian government over the years has instituted both regulatory and policy reforms, some aimed explicitly at addressing the causes of conflict in mining areas as explained earlier.

I introduced the dimension of competitive clientelism to explain the failures of the Ghanaian state to address conflicts in the mining industry adequately. Competitive clientelism differs from the typical corruption in using mineral wealth because it results in the distribution of benefits at all levels of coalitions in competitive democratic settings. In Ghana's case, however, the problem is that such benefits are not worthy enough to bring meaningful development, although it might serve the purpose of maintaining or capturing political power by the country's political elites. Therefore, in resource-endowed democracies, new research needs to target other unique means of resource dissipation and proffer appropriate solutions.

Also, regarding the debate on the role of institutions previewed earlier, the findings allude that the impact of competitive clientelism on institutions can be detrimental to the state's development. This is because clientelism produces a *'square pegs in round holes'* situation in which those in authority lack the requisite skills and capacity to initiate and implement transformational policies. Some will choose to abuse their positions even where they are capable and qualified. In the case of Ghana, clientelism has badly affected and undermined the ability of crucial institutions, especially in the mining industry, to perform their duties to the maximum. It

is, therefore, not surprising that some institutions established to implement policies that can mitigate mining conflicts and develop the country have failed to live up to their expectations. In the case of Ghana, the argument thus supports the school of thought that believes that quality institutions positively impact the judicious use of resource wealth (see Boschini et al., 2005; Mehlum et al., 2006), as those institutions know what policies are appropriate to promote development. Invariably, it rejects the earlier assertion of Sachs and Warner (1995), who argued that institutions play a less causal role in the resource curse's outcome, although the claims may hold for other jurisdictions. Consequently, mineral-rich economies ought to focus on building stronger institutions of trust and high performance if they are to reap the dividends of their natural wealth, similar to the economies of Norway, Mauritius and Botswana.

Furthermore, concerning Ghana, the research partly rejects the perception that resource wealth drives violent conflicts between feuding parties (Berman et al., 2017; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004), as happened in other jurisdictions such as Nigeria and Liberia. Albeit the occasional violent confrontations between communities and mining firms, there is no evidence of violent or civil conflicts between feuding parties over the control of resource wealth in Ghana. One can therefore assert that the ability of resources to fuel conflicts is 'country-relative' and may depend on a multiplicity of factors, including weak governance, multidimensional poverty, the effectiveness of state policies, human rights abuses and youth unemployment (Church and Minerals, 2018). Consequently, efforts should be directed toward the unique causes of conflicts across different areas, rather than generalizations or one-size-fits-all solutions. The former gives room for the ability of policymakers to design specific, effective and efficient mechanisms and programs targeted at mitigating mining conflicts, especially investment in human development.

Moreover, the Ghanaian government's difficulties in effectively addressing mining conflict suggests that the underlying conditions that enabled the successes of the Asian tigers have been difficult to replicate in Ghana and Africa more broadly (Bishop et al., 2018; Musamba and Meyns, 2010). Thus, the achievements of those countries were aided by some unique conditions that allowed them to thrive. This may be true because contemporary globalization has made it difficult for governments, especially developing countries, to make unilateral decisions regarding trade and finance issues. In this regard, Hillbom's (2012) attribution of the development of Botswana to the 'gate-keeping' state and rejection of the concept of the developmental state may partly be true. However, a vast majority of studies (Iimi, 2007; Kieh, 2015; Musamba and Meyns, 2010) have attributed the developmental success of Botswana to the developmental state. Furthermore, in his important study of the developmental state, Ovadia (2016) argues that local content may be the best innovation in energy policy in recent times by states in the developing world. His research found that policies such as local procurement can have a positive impact in the African setting.

Finally, the failures of Ghana, a democracy, may also give some level of support to the claim identified earlier that most successful developmental states in the past have had some traces of authoritarianism that allowed the state to thrive (Musamba and Meyns, 2010). Critically, with elections in mind, developing democratic governments may find it challenging, if not impossible, to implement some harsh policies, even though they may have long-term benefits. However, I believe it is a question of the quality of democracy and the institutions built thereof. Therefore, the failures of Ghana should be blamed on its inability to build robust democratic institutions in the last 30 years of uninterrupted democracy. As Edigehji (2005) aptly observed, if it was about authoritarianism, most countries on the continent, including Ghana, would have been developed given their history with dictatorship since independence from the 1950s.

This research contributes to the theoretical literature by interrogating, through the case study of Ghana, the applicability of some of the major debates on resource-based development and its role in fueling conflict. First, this study shows that, contrary to the expectations of the resource curse thesis, natural resources have not resulted in any violent conflicts or civil wars as happened in many resource-rich developing countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Nigeria. The achievements of Botswana (Iimi, 2007) and Mauritius (Bishop et al., 2018) in Africa also buttress my argument since both countries have thrived on the back of resource wealth without any violent confrontations. Second, the research demonstrates that Ghana has instituted policies consistent with the developmental state approach to address mining-related conflicts and to ensure that local communities benefit from mining, thereby reducing mining community-company conflicts in the country. As Ovadia (2016) demonstrated, even countries with a history of mining-induced violent conflict, such as Nigeria and Angola, are resorting to developmental state policies to ensure mining communities benefit from mineral wealth. This new trend may be replicated in many developing countries in the near future. Third, Ghana presents some useful lessons for mineral-rich countries in Africa and the developing world as it seeks to maximize resource income and consolidate its democracy. Importantly, it shows the need for the state to be conscious about implementing policies that bring development to the citizens.

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