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Sam A. Kasimba

Trust Funds as Localized Strategies for Sharing Mining Benefits in Ghana

Experiences with Transparency, Participation, and Community Development Practices

NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Thesis for the Degree of
Philosophiae Doctor
Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Geography



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Abstract

This thesis examines the role of trust funds in the extractive industry in Ghana. Since the 1990s, mining companies have increasingly adopted trust funds as approaches to enhance the flow of mineral wealth to host communities, especially in resource-rich developing countries. Drawing on a qualitative case study of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) in Ghana, the thesis examined the two trust funds with a focus on transparency and participation as key components of good governance, and their potential as corporate approaches to community development.

Trust funds have often been established when there has been a pressing need for enhanced transparency and stakeholder participation in the management and use of resource revenues targeting host communities. In Ghana, for example, large scale gold mining has had diverse negative consequences and despite the large revenues generated over several decades, the mining communities are among the poorest in Ghana. Conclusions drawn by a number of researchers suggest that in Ghana, and elsewhere, lack of accountability, patronage, local power dynamics, corruption, and local elite capture in the responsible institutions have contributed to misappropriation of funds, which has left host communities with no significant benefits while at the same time they bear the environmental and social costs of large-scale mining.

Against this background, the thesis addresses five key questions: (1) How is the practice of transparency embedded in the management of the trust funds, (2) How are participatory practices embedded in the management of the trust funds, (3) How are the trust funds' transparency and participatory practices perceived by the various stakeholder groups, (4) How are the shared benefits perceived by the host communities, (5) What is the potential of using trust funds as a corporate-led strategy for community development and what are the main challenges of this approach?

This thesis shows that the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF have mechanisms for disseminating information that should enhance transparency and ensuring the representation of all stakeholders. They both also have participatory governance platforms that seek to foster participation in decision making processes in their governance structures. However, a number of challenges and limitations remain for the trust funds to meet their objectives efficiently. Based on three articles, the thesis finds that the trust funds lack expedient ways to disseminate sufficient and relevant information to the beneficiaries, ensure suitable conditions for participation practices that would foster equal opportunities for all stakeholders to influence decision-making, and include community members in assessing their needs and wishes with regards to the trust fund funded projects and programs.

The thesis contributes to the academic scholarship of natural resource revenue governance in general, and particularly to the literature on transparency and corporate-led community development in two key ways. First, it improves our understanding of transparency with respect to how representation and participation should be integrated into its operationalization in order to elevate transparency's effectiveness. Second, the thesis enhances our knowledge of revenue distribution at local community level and the dynamics of localizing global corporate-led community development strategies in the context of resource-rich developing countries.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that mining companies should place emphasis on improving the local institutional quality and capacity. This is important because the trust funds operate in a context in which the outcomes of benefit sharing, and the redistribution of mineral wealth, are characterized by numerous compromises and challenges.

Dedication

To my mother's mother, **Precilla Nyagowa Dwalo** (born c.1913), who passed away on the night of 8 May 2018 while I was in the middle of writing this thesis.

To my son **Odin Agina Øiaas Kasimba**, who many times has been denied much attention during the process of finalizing this work.

To **Rita Hokseggen** in the Department of Geography and Social Anthropology, for all the good work she does in her office.

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I wish to express my appreciation of my main supervisor, Professor Päivi Lujala, whose passion and dedication has been of tremendous help during the writing and progress of this thesis, and a co-author in two of the three papers. In her own words, ‘Less is more’; she is a good teacher! I thank my second supervisor, former Associate Professor Winfried Ellingsen at NTNU’s Department of Geography, for his support and constant reminder that there is life outside doctoral research. Former Associate Professor Sarah Khasalamwa-Mwandha at NTNU’s Department of Geography was my opponent during my final seminar at the department and has since been involved in my progress. She has been a source of great inspiration and helped me develop my ideas in ways that could be made understandable to others – *asante sana!*

My sincere gratitude is also owed to all my colleagues at the Department of Geography, NTNU for every single chat that took place in the kitchen and in the corridors; they were important chats. Particularly, I express my sincere gratitude to Professor Ståle Angen Rye, doctoral candidate Sabrina Scherzer, Associate Professor Hilde Refstie, and Postdoctoral Fellow Thomas Sætre Jakobsen for reading and commenting on my work whenever I asked for help. Fellow colleagues, Levon, Tekle, Michael Ogbé, Alex, Henrik, Silje A, Silje, and others are thanked for sharing their knowledge and experiences during the exciting CAKE seminars. Professor Emeritus Mike Jones is thanked for the useful Monday seminars and the chats we occasionally had when we met in the photocopy room. I would also like to thank the TrAcRevenues project members and the project gatherings for giving me opportunities to present my work and the unique possibility to place my work in a wider context and providing me insight into the issues of natural resource governance.

Finally, I thank my family members in Africa and elsewhere in the world for all their encouragement. I cannot thank enough Susanne Hellan Øiaas, my son’s mother, but for now I thank her for being patient and taking good care of Odin so that I could finish this thesis. Ståle Øiaas, my son’s maternal grandfather, is thanked very much for the mental and financial advice, without which this thesis would have never been finished. I also thank my following friends: Sylvia Atieno Obango, for the support and everything she has done to help me get through some of the most difficult moments during my writing; Jørn Lukassen, for always being there; Dephy, for the career advice; and Victoria Uwonkunda, ‘If you know, you know!’ Lastly, I thank anyone who supported me in any way during this journey. I apologize for not mentioning you all by name, but I am sincerely grateful for your input. Finally, I owe gratitude to Catriona Turner who has done a tremendous job in proofreading the thesis superstructure, and all the three articles.

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PART II

The articles

- I. There is no one amongst us with them! Transparency and participation in local natural resource revenue management. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2018). Published in *The Extractive Industries and Society*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 198–205
- II. “Sometimes it feels like everything has been decided!” Challenges faced by participatory governance platforms when sharing mining benefits. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2019). Under review: *Third World Quarterly*
- III. Examining host communities’ perceptions on trust funds as corporate strategies for community development in Ghana. (Kasimba, 2019). Under review: *Journal of Asian and African Studies*

PART I

1.0 Introduction

The view that natural resource abundance should be a blessing and beneficial to a country that is embarking upon economic growth goes far back in time (Higgins 1968). However, studies have shown that many resource-rich developing countries experience slow economic and developmental growth despite having an abundance of natural resources, a phenomenon commonly termed as the resource curse (Arvanitis and Weigert 2017; Ayelazuno 2014; Costa and dos Santos 2013; Phillips, Hailwood, and Brooks 2016).

With regard to mining, while mineral extraction generates profits for shareholders, host countries can directly accumulate the benefits through tax revenues, royalties, and export revenues (IFC 2010, 2015a). Locally, mining ventures can provide direct employment opportunities, and through local content policies (LCPs) companies can be obligated, for example, to employ a certain percentage of local residents (Ovadia 2016). LCPs also in most cases provide local procurement regulations, which encourage the development of local manufacturing and service provision through sector linkages along the natural resource value chain (Ovadia 2016; White 2017). In host communities, benefits from mining can also be realized through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that catalyze improvements in physical infrastructure (e.g., roads, health and educational facilities), funding investments in the capabilities of the poor, and improvements in social services to enhance accessibility (Littlewood 2015; Weber-Fahr 2002).

Studies have also shown that mining activities can result in negative outcomes. For example, mining ventures can produce labor influxes that strain local services such as health and education, and lead to increased consumer prices for land and house rents, and even reductions in the incomes of some local residents (Chuhan-Pole et al. 2017). Studies have also shown that mineral extraction can contribute to armed conflicts and wars (Lujala 2010; Wilson 2013) and human rights violations (McKenna 2015) and have negative impacts on cultural rights (Altman 2009; Awuah-Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah 2012). In sum, the negative outcomes of mining in host communities have led to views that losses caused by mining can outweigh the benefits to an extent that the hosts can be described as “cursed communities” (Borge, Parmer, and Torvik 2015; Bush 2009; Littlewood 2014).

In Ghana, the context of this thesis, mining has had diverse negative consequences in the host communities. It has led to loss of farmlands, leaving many without alternative livelihood sources, a problem that has been exacerbated by increased land infertility (Andrews 2018; Aragón and Rud 2015). Additionally, employment opportunities have declined due to technological advancements in mining, which have forced some people (especially young men) to engage in the practice of illegal mining known as “gather and sell” or *galamsey* (Nyame, Grant, and Yakovleva 2009). The literature on mining in Ghana also indicates that the economic benefits of mining have not been significantly realized in the host communities, due to their inequitable distribution (Chuhan-Pole et al. 2015; Hira and Busumtwi-Sam 2018; Twerefou et al. 2017).

Among the key factors that have contributed to the unequal distribution of mining benefits in Ghana is weak governance in the responsible institutions (Opoku-Ware 2014; Standing 2014; Standing and Hilson 2013; Taabazuing et al. 2012). Conclusions drawn by a number of researchers suggest that institutions responsible for ensuring that host communities accrue significant benefits from mining have failed. These can be attributed to a lack of accountability, patronage, local power dynamics, corruption, and local elite capture that have contributed to misappropriation of funds, leaving host communities no better off than prior to the start of the mining projects (Ayee et al. 2011; Dupuy 2017; Elbra 2017; Kolstad, Søreide, and Williams 2008). Furthermore, studies have shown that the socially and culturally rooted power of the traditional authorities in Ghana has undermined the procedures for equitable distribution and sharing of benefits, which in turn has hindered positive socioeconomic development in host communities (Lawer, Lukas, and Jørgensen 2017; Standing and Hilson 2013).

The persistence negative outcomes of mining in host communities in Ghana and elsewhere in the world have stimulated new approaches to natural resource revenue management. For instance, the concept of benefit sharing¹ has emerged as a policy intervention to help resolve the extant unevenness between benefits and losses resulting from resource extraction, particularly with regard to the host communities (Wall and Pelon 2011). As an approach to

¹ In this thesis, the term benefit sharing is used to describe the distribution of mineral wealth, either in monetary form (cash transfers) or in non-monetary form (construction of water boreholes and public toilets).

enhance the flow of mineral wealth to host communities, since the early 1990s, mining companies have increasingly adopted trusts, funds and foundations,² and 61 such institutions were established in developing countries between 1980 and 2008 (Pacheco 2012; Wall and Pelon 2010, 2011).

In addition to improving the flow of mineral wealth to host communities, trust funds have also been established for other purposes, such as to foster stakeholder participation in decision-making and to develop institutional knowledge in the management and use of revenues. Other purposes of trust funds include enhancing transparency and accountability in cases when public institutions are distrusted, setting up a systematic approach to community development, building informal consensus with host communities, and acquiring the social license to operate (SLO) (Wall and Pelon 2011, 11–12). With such diverse purposes, McElroy (2012) argues that the complex nature of trust funds poses challenges of negotiating what is contextually desirable and feasible, as the trust funds are entangled in a net of objectives, forms and functions, and often closely affiliated to the mining companies, while attempting to address the very problems resulting from the companies' operations.

This thesis is concerned with how the increasing adoption of trust funds in the extractive industry, in particular through enhanced transparency and participation in decision-making, can help to share benefits in the favor of host communities. The objectives of the trust funds to enhance transparency, foster participation, and institutional capacity building should present an opportunity for refined governance in the management and use of resource revenues (Grant, Compaoré, and Mitchell 2014; Hare et al. 2018). However, meeting such objectives would depend on the level of structural and relational dynamics between different stakeholders, which include mining companies, local governments, traditional authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community members (Dashwood and Pupilampu 2015).

² For the sake of simplicity, trust funds or local benefit-sharing trust funds are used in this thesis as generic terms for foundations, trusts, and funds. However, in legal terms, whereas a *foundation* is created with endowments by individuals or companies for philanthropic purposes, a *trust* is an arrangement involving a trustee and a settlor whereby the former administers a property on behalf of the beneficiaries, and a *fund* is a pool of resources from different individuals that a fund manager has invested in various assets (Pacheco 2012; Songi 2015).

It is unclear how equitable distribution of benefits or opportunities for equal decision-making can be achieved, as most trust funds have been established and operate in contexts where weak institutions, poor governance, lack of transparency, and power relations have affected the benefit sharing, as it has in Ghana (Dupuy 2017; Lehmann 2015). Furthermore, the potential role of trust funds as strategic corporate approaches to community development, which relates to improved CSR, is not well-known. Although trust funds seem to provide an opportunity for mining companies to engage with the development agenda, it has been argued that the rhetorical appeal of CSR surpasses its practical value in improving socioeconomic conditions in resource-rich developing countries (Blowfield and Frynas 2005; Frederiksen 2019).

Trust funds as local benefit-sharing strategies provide a good case for exploring the increasingly changing approaches to natural resource revenue management. The trust funds' objectives include establishing a basis for the governance of mining benefits at local community level, attaining socioeconomic goals, and liaising between business and social responsibility. These intricate objectives raise the question of whether and how trust funds can address the common issues plaguing the distribution of benefits and community development, or whether they will remain as corporate rhetoric that only legitimizes mineral extraction.

1.1 Research objective and questions

The research for this thesis was conducted as part of the "Transparency and Accountability in Natural Resource Revenue Management" (TrAcRevenues) project, a collaboration between the Department of Geography, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), the University of East Anglia (UEA), UK, Kumasi Institute of Technology, Energy and Environment (KITE), Ghana, and the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), USA, in the period 2014–2018. The objective of this project was to examine how increased transparency could help to transform natural resource revenues in resource-rich developing countries from a curse to a blessing. A sub-project of TrAcRevenues sought to understand the role of trust funds in sharing benefits in the communities hosting extractive industries. This thesis is part of the sub-project, with a

focus on transparency and participation as key components of trust fund governance, and trust funds' establishment as corporate approaches to community development.

Five key research questions are addressed in this thesis:

1. How is the practice of transparency embedded in the management of the trust funds?
2. How are participatory practices embedded in the management of the trust funds?
3. How are transparency and participatory practices of the trust funds perceived by the various stakeholder groups?
4. How are the shared benefits perceived by the host communities?
5. What is the potential of using trust funds as a corporate-led strategy for community development and what are the main challenges of this approach?

In many resource-rich developing countries, such as Ghana, institutions responsible for the distribution of mineral revenues and other benefits often face challenges with corruption, elite capture, patronage, lack of accountability, and adequate disclosure of information regarding natural resource (revenues) governance, which can all be considered as aspects of resource curse (Dupuy 2017; Elbra 2016, Williams and Le Billon 2017). Such challenges have increased the need for increased transparency in the form of information disclosure relating to transactions, use, and management of revenues so that citizens can have a basis to evaluate the performance of their government, other institutions responsible for resource governance, and extractive industry companies and, when needed, demand accountability and improved natural resource governance and revenue spending (Epreman et al. 2016; Faruque 2006; Lehmann 2015).

Numerous studies have focused on the role of transparency and public participation in the governance of resource revenues within the extractive industry, and especially in the context of resource-rich developing countries (e.g., Epreman and Brun 2018; Villar and Papyrakis 2017; Lujala 2018). Some of the studies have assessed and questioned the potential of transparency, and to whom information should be provided (e.g., Mason 2008, Lujala, Brunnschweiler, and Edjekumhene 2018).

Although transparency and participation have been promoted as key elements of good governance (Klein 2017; Mejía Acosta 2013), it remains inconclusive whether they have led to increased public participation in terms of demands for more accountability or better governance (Epreman and Brun 2018; Rustad, Le Billon, and Lujala 2017). Some scholars, e.g., Ofori and Lujala 2015, have even discussed an illusionary transparency, arguing that information disclosure does not necessarily translate into transparency, especially in the context of a resource-rich developing country such as Ghana.

The increasing adoption of trust funds has not only coincided with the promotion of enhanced transparency, stakeholder participation, but also with the need to ensure that significant benefits accrue to host communities, all of which are also key objectives for the establishment of trust funds (Wall and Pelon 2011). Given the amount of revenues received by the trust funds in Ghana, information disclosure is critical for the beneficiaries and other stakeholders to monitor their operations and activities. For instance, when establishing the Obuasi Community Trust Fund in Ghana, AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) initially set aside 1% of its annual post-tax profits for the trust fund in 2004, and by the time of the official launch of the fund in 2012, ca. USD 2.7 million had accrued to the trust fund (AGA n.d.). The Newmont Ghana Gold's trust fund—the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF)—in Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana, had responsibility for managing and using ca. USD35 million from Newmont Ahafo Mine between 2008 and 2017 (NADeF 2018). Such a large funding, dedicated to the development of mining affected areas and to address the negative consequences of extraction, gives a basis for legitimate expectations that the funds should be able to improve the living conditions and contribute to better socioeconomic development prospects in the host communities. In order to make sure that the local community members benefit from these transfers, they need not only to receive information on the financial flows going into the funds, and how these are managed and spent, but they also need to be able to influence and participate as an equal stakeholder in trust fund processes and decision-making (Songi 2015).

Trust funds as benefit-sharing strategies may provide alternative ways for mining companies to deal with the pressing need to enhance the flow of mineral wealth to local levels and contribute to diverse socioeconomic needs in the host communities. However, both the

empirical understanding of trust funds as localized benefit-sharing strategies in the distribution of resources revenues and their role as systematic approaches to corporate-led community development have remained understudied.

Many of the few scholars who have studied trust funds have relied on summary reports produced by the World Bank and the IFC on various trust funds (e.g., IFC 2015b; Wall and Pelon 2010, 2011). Unfortunately, these sources provide limited empirical insights; Despite the proliferation of benefit sharing in the context of localized natural resource revenue management, as a policy intervention, the application of benefit sharing in the mining industry at local community level has only been researched by a few scholars (Altman 2009; Ray 2014; Songi 2015; Standing 2014; Söderholm and Svahn 2015).

1.2 Two cases, three articles

The aim of the research on which this thesis is based was achieved through a qualitative case study approach, which involved the study of two trust funds in Ghana: the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF). Details of the trust funds are covered in the respective articles in the second part of the thesis and are also summarized in Table 1.

Additionally, eight desk-top reviewed trusts funds were used to capture a broader understanding of the practices of trust funds existing in various parts of the world. Details of the eight are summarized in Table 3 in Chapter 3. The desk-top review was performed as part of the TrAcRevenues project, during which ca. 43 community development trust funds were profiled. Although some of the profiled trust funds are mentioned in the thesis, only eight are listed in Table 3, to highlight the adoption of trusts in different parts of the world, the differences in governance structures, their purposes, and the processes for decision-making.

Table 1. Summary of the studied cases: the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF)

Case study	Purpose, funding, shared benefits	Governance and management
<p>Obuasi Community Trust Fund</p> <p>Office located in Obuasi, Ashanti Region, Ghana</p> <p>AngloGold Ashanti (AGA)</p> <p>Gold mining</p>	<p>Purpose: established in 2004 to enhance socioeconomic development in the local communities in Bekwai Municipality, and Amansie Central, Adansi North, Adansi South districts.</p> <p>Funding: AGA contributes 1% of its annual post-tax profits. Received ca. USD 2.7 million between 2004 and 2012</p> <p>Shared benefits: water and sanitation, educational facilities and scholarships, contributions to health sector, skills training in mechanics and sewing, facilitation of loans to small-scale business start-ups, social and cultural amenities (e.g. sports stadiums), and renovation and construction of chiefs’ palaces.</p>	<p>Multistakeholder governance</p> <p>32-member steering committee; including key stakeholder representatives from AGA, traditional authorities, local government, elected community representatives, and local NGOs</p> <p>7-member board: two paramount chiefs from Amansie and Adansi traditional areas, three district assembly members, one AGA representative (sustainability manager), and one board secretary appointed by AGA, and an administrative secretariat</p>
<p>Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF)</p> <p>Office located in Ntotroso, Brong-Ahafo Region, Ghana</p> <p>Newmont Gold Ghana Limited, subsidiary Newmont Ahafo</p> <p>Gold mining</p>	<p>Purpose: established in 2006, in operation since 2008, to enhance community development in 10 Ahafo communities (Ntotroso, Gyedu, Kenyasi 1 and 2, Afrisipakrom, Adrobaa, Susuanso Wamahinso, Yamfo, and Terchire).</p> <p>Funding: Newmont Ahafo contributes USD 1 per 1 oz of gold produced and 1% of net pre-tax profit. Up to 2016, NADeF had received ca. USD 23 million. In 2016 NADeF spent ca. USD 2 million, and in 2017 it spent 1.1 million out of the available 2.4 million.</p> <p>Shared benefits: construction of classrooms, community libraries, ICT (information and communications technology) centers in some schools, water and sanitation facilities, a nursing school, teachers’ quarters, health clinics, funded skills training in mechanics and sewing, and funded micro-credit schemes</p>	<p>Multistakeholder governance</p> <p>58-member forum, Ahafo Social Responsibility Forum (ASRF) (an independent moderator), Newmont officials, regional and local government, and traditional authorities, representatives of farmers, women, youth, and local NGOs. ASRF appoints its moderator and co-moderator, but both appointments have to be approved by NADeF.</p> <p>9-member board: a chairperson (NADeF appointee, ratified by the ASRF), two traditional leaders, two local government representatives from the two district assemblies, two youth representatives and two NADeF representatives, and an administrative secretariat</p>

The five research questions are addressed in the following three articles (for the summary of the articles, see Table 2):

1. There is no one amongst us with them! Transparency and participation in local natural resource revenue management. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2018). Published in *The Extractive Industries and Society*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 198–205
2. “Sometimes it feels like everything has been decided!” Challenges faced by participatory governance platforms when sharing mining benefits. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2019). Under review: *Third World Quarterly*
3. Examining host communities’ perceptions of trust funds as corporate strategies for community development in Ghana. (Kasimba, 2019). Under review: *Journal of Asian and African Studies*

Article I: For this article, we developed an analytical framework to examine local community members’ space for participation in the management of the Obuasi trust fund and NADeF. The article focuses on transparency as information disclosure, representation of community members in decision-making bodies, and opportunities for community members to influence decisions in the management of the trust funds. Accordingly, we identified the different actors’ perceptions of disclosed information in terms of content, accessibility, and relevance; representation mechanisms; and the extent to which local residents were able to influence decision-making.

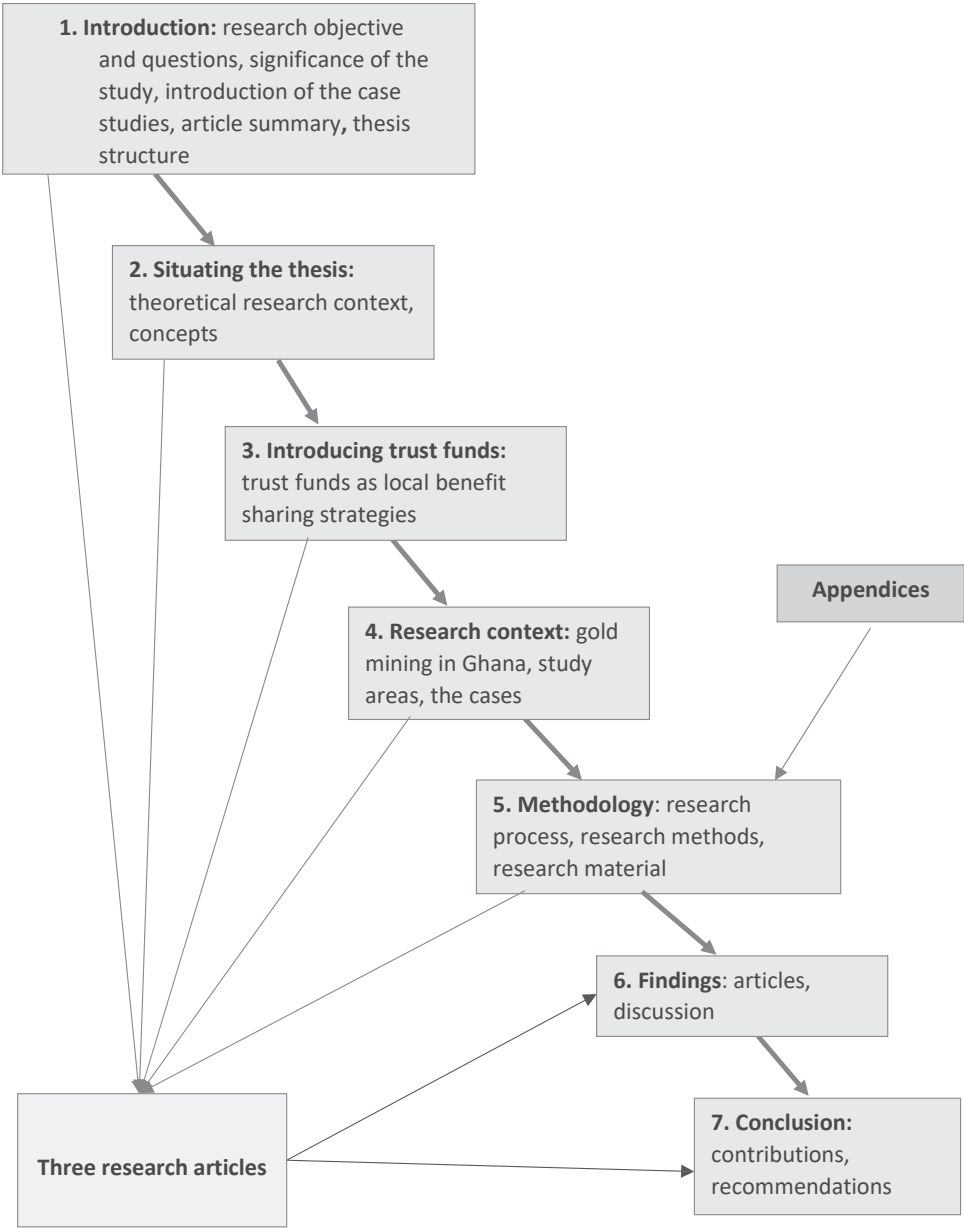
Article II: In this article, we present the participatory governance platforms in the respective trust funds as spaces in which decision-making that engages the key local stakeholders is practiced. We analyzed the circumstances leading to the formation of the participatory governance platforms, how stakeholder participated in the development and design of the platforms and trust funds, how participants are selected and what are the selection criteria, and the type and scope of a stakeholder’s influence on the decisions made by the platforms. In particular, we focused on understanding the role of community members and local NGOs in the formation of the platforms and their perceptions of the overall governance structures of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF.

Table 2. Summary of Articles I–III

	Article I	Article II	Article III
Questions /aim	Examine the scope and challenges regarding availability of information, representation of communities, and opportunities to influence the management and operations of the trust funds	To what degree do the local community members and NGOs perceive the participatory governance platforms as legitimate? What are the implications of stakeholder competence and power relations for the functioning of the platforms?	How are the activities of trust funds perceived by host communities with regard to the implemented programs and projects? What implications do the choices and types of implemented programs and projects have on trust funds as CSR strategies for community development?
Concepts	Transparency, participation representation	Participation, representation governance	Participation, community development, CSR
Analysis	Analytical framework incorporating transparency, representation, and influence	Analysis of key study concepts and identification of emerging/recurrent themes in the data material	Analysis based on the CSR-community development literature, and emerging issues on the shared benefits
Key findings	The forms of representation weaken opportunities for direct participation of local residents Transparency and representation mechanisms restrict the participation of community members	Lack of adequate involvement of community members and NGOs in the process of platform establishment Lack of competence among some participants may have hindered the effective performance of the platforms The autonomy of the platforms is affected by local power dynamics.	Insufficient planning and needs assessment implementation Prioritization of business interests over social responsibility Inflexible corporate development frameworks and standards, which did not fit the operational contexts of the trust funds
Research questions (RQs) addressed	RQ 1, RQ 2, RQ 3 and RQ 4	RQ 1, RQ 2, RQ 3 and RQ 4	RQ 2, RQ 3, RQ 4 and RQ 5

Article III: The aim of this article is to provide insights into the theoretical and practical implications of trust funds as corporate strategies for community development. In the article, I situate trust funds within the CSR-development discourse to highlight their strengths and limitations with regard to adopting global CSR policies at local community level in their efforts to address the socioeconomic impacts of their operations, such as unemployment. I focus on community members’ and other stakeholders’ perceptions of the programs and projects implemented by the Obuasi trust funds and NADeF.

1.3 Structure of the thesis



2.0 Theoretical research context

The significance of natural resources for a country's economy cannot be overemphasized, but the governance, management, and use of the accrued revenues to benefit the society at large and the host communities are equally important. In this chapter, I first present an overview of how the debate on the resource curse has influenced different views on the relationship between resource abundance and economic growth (Section 2.1). To highlight the relevance of the resource curse in this thesis, I discuss the relationship between mining and host communities. The literature on this relationship indicates that whether positive or negative, the impacts of mining cut across diverse aspects of a society. However, according to most studies conducted to date, mineral extractions seem to have resulted in relatively less benefits in comparison with the losses, and this has been experienced particularly in the host communities, which by Littlewood (2014) can be described as 'cursed communities' (Section 2.2). I then discuss the potential and challenges of benefit sharing as a practical policy tool for enhancing the distribution of mineral wealth and sharing of profits between mining companies and the host communities (Section 2.3). The last section of the chapter focuses on governance and the promise of benefit sharing, where I discuss the potential of enhanced transparency and accountability, participation, and their usefulness as key components of governance (Section 2.4).

2.1 From resource curse to benefit sharing

Although natural resource abundance should be advantageous to a country's economic growth (Nurkse 1955; Rostow 1990), studies have shown that many resource-rich countries have experienced slow economic and developmental growth (Arvanitis and Weigert 2017; Ayelazuno 2014; Costa and dos Santos 2013; Phillips, Hailwood, and Brooks 2016). Inspired by pioneering writers on the resource curse (e.g., Auty 1995; Karl 1997; Rosser 2006; Sachs and Warner 1995), economists and political scientists have since conducted several studies examining how a country's natural resource wealth influences its economic and developmental growth (Ross 1999). However, it is not readily apparent from the resource curse literature what factors actually lead to the curse (Borge, Parmer, and Torvik 2015; Suslova and Volchkova 2007; Vahabi 2018).

Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis (2015) posit that the development of research on the resource curse has been fragmented regarding the methods, units, and scales of analysis. While economists and some political scientists have focused on the effects of minerals on long-term growth through regression and panel data analysis, often confined to macro-level, only a few scholars have explored the development impacts of the extractive industries by focusing on the micro-level (Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis 2015; Lederman and Maloney 2007). Notwithstanding, a collective view is that the resource-curse phenomenon is complex and conditional—it is context-specific, depends on the resource type, socio-political institutions, and how it is linked to the rest of a country's economy (Papyrakis 2017).

The emphasis placed on the complexity, conditionality, and context specificity of the resource curse is an entry point for this thesis. In this thesis I enter the resource-curse debate with the aim to enhance the understanding of the extractive industry's implications for the diverse social, political and economic conditions at local level, based on three issues.

First, although there are explanations for the resource curse pointing to how institutional quality can determine whether resources become a curse or a blessing (e.g., Boutilier 2017; Costa and dos Santos 2013; Orihuela 2018; Sarmidi, Hook Law, and Jafari 2014; Torvik 2009; Williams and Le Billon 2017), some scholars argue that the resource-curse literature has neglected the role of local institutions, and thus more research is required on local level natural resource revenue management (e.g., Guo 2019; Lawer, Lukas, and Jørgensen 2017).

Second, it has been argued that explanations for factors found to affect institutional quality, such as corruption and lack of transparency, are difficult to identify because institutional quality, financial development and political environment often affect the outcomes of one another (van der Ploeg and Poelhekke 2017). As a result of the possible difficulties in identifying these explanations, and that the resource curse occurs at different levels and scales, there is a need for more contextualized research on the resource curse (Gilberthorpe and Rajak 2017; Porter and Watts 2017; Voors et al. 2017).

Third, the resource-curse literature seems to offer little on the role of mining companies in solving the problems in the host communities caused by the mining industry. Although companies have increasingly set up initiatives to help to tackle some of the problems related to the resource curse, the nature and effects of these initiatives in the context of host communities³ have not yet been a focus of extensive research when it comes to their relation to the resource curse at the local level (Arellano-Yanguas 2011; Banks et al. 2016; Papyrakis 2017).

The above three arguments serve as a starting point for this thesis to examine potential benefits of mineral extraction, focusing on the distribution of mineral benefits at the local level through trust funds.

2.2 Imagining cursed communities: benefits and losses

Locally, mining ventures can provide employment opportunities. Through local content policies (LCPs), companies are obligated to employ a certain percentage of local residents (Ovadia 2016). LCPs also provide local procurement regulations to encourage the development of local manufacturing and service provision through sector linkages along the natural resource value chain (Ovadia 2016; White 2017). Related to sector linkages and service provision, sharing of knowledge about the needs of a mining industry between companies and the communities has been beneficial to the host communities (Stubrin 2017). Knowledge sharing gives potential local suppliers the chance to learn about the mining industry and provide companies with solutions specifically tailored for local problems (Stubrin 2017). For example, knowledge sharing between mining companies and the communities in Ghana's mining sector has led to an emergence of clusters in areas proximate to industrial mineral extractions, with a rise in engineering, transportation, catering, and mining equipment services (Bloch and Owusu 2012).

Additionally, mining can potentially benefit a society through increase in nominal wages, improved local welfare, and lower poverty levels (Chuhan-Pole et al. 2017; Yankson and

³In this thesis, the terms "host communities," "local communities," and "mining communities" refer to people living close to extraction sites and who are either directly or indirectly affected by the mining operations.

Gough 2019). A study of the city of Cajamarca, Peru, revealed that mining led to better living standards in a region that was viewed as poor prior the start of the Yanacocha mine project (Aragón and Rud 2013). In many places, poor and remote host communities have benefitted from mining companies' investments in road infrastructures and other facilities constructed for mining operations (Newenham-Kahindi 2011; White 2017). Additionally, some studies have found that, through CSR initiatives that targeted health, education, water, and sanitation projects, mining contributed to diverse community development projects,⁴ which enhanced accessibility to public services that were often lacking in many host communities (Danso et al. 2016; Oki Tedi Development Foundation n.d.).

However, apart from the potential benefits of mining for host communities, mining activities can have diverse negative consequences. For example, mining ventures can lead to labor influxes that strain local services such as health and housing, and an increasing consumer prices for land and house rents, and even reduce the incomes of some local residents (Chuhan-Pole, Dabalen, and Land 2017; Chuhan-Pole et al. 2015). Additionally, some studies have shown that mineral extraction can contribute to armed conflicts and wars (Lujala 2010; Wilson 2013), human rights violations (McKenna 2015), and have negative socio-cultural impacts (Altman 2009; Awuah-Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah 2012).⁵

In Ghana, the revenue generation resulting from mining has to be viewed against the impacts of the mining activities on land, livelihoods, and environment. Land is an issue largely covered in literature concerned with the negative impacts of mining in Ghana (Andrews 2018; Hausemann et al. 2018; Imbun 2013; Kidido et al. 2015). The need for large tracts of mining land has meant forced displacement and resettlement of people, which has disrupted the social, cultural, and economic settings in host communities, and affected people's everyday lives, well-being, and access to their livelihood sources (Hilson and Hilson 2017; Lawson and Bentil 2014). Further, land appropriation for extraction also has negative consequences for livelihoods, such as farming and artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) activities, derived

⁴ In this thesis, "community development" refers to the "means of improving the social, economic, and environmental quality of life for residents of a community" (Theodori 2005, 662).

⁵ The relationship between mining and host communities is complex and cannot be fully covered in this chapter. Therefore, I focus on issues closely relevant to the thesis, namely land, livelihoods, and environment, for which most examples are derived from studies focusing on Ghana's gold mining industry.

from the resources available in the local environment as people lose access to them (Mares 2012; Okoh and Hilson 2011; Opoku-Ware 2014).

In Ghana, large-scale mineral extraction has had implications for agricultural activities. For example, it has reduced the amount of land available for those who relied on farming as primary source of livelihood prior to the mining ventures (Lawson and Bentil 2014). Furthermore, inadequate compensations have aggravated the issue. For example, Adonteng-Kissi and Adonteng-Kissi (2017) highlight the livelihood crisis in the context of farmers in the Prestea mining community in the Western Region of Ghana and argue that poor compensation packages have failed to meet the objectives of alleviating poverty because they have been relatively small in proportion to lost assets.

In what he describes as land dispossession, Andrews (2018) argues that land conflicts between mining companies, ASM, and farmers in Ghana's mining sector have undermined the potential contribution of mining to sustainable livelihood outcomes. In Ghana, ASM is one of the most important livelihood activities, as it provides direct employment for almost 1 million people and supports the livelihoods of ca. 4.5 million people (McQuilken and Hilson 2016). According to McQuilken and Hilson, the challenge with ASM is that the activities are often operated informally, without a license, which is commonly referred to in Ghana as *galamsey* (illegal mining).

Furthermore, mining communities have suffered severe environmental impacts due to large-scale mining activities. In Ghana, farmers have not only been affected by insignificant compensations and the loss of land and livelihoods, but also the environmental impacts have led to land degradation (Emmanuel, Jerry, and Dzigbodi 2018). Studies conducted in the country have revealed that cyanide use in the large-scale mining has contaminated land and water sources, and affected fishing, wildlife, and people's health (Akabzaa, Seyire, and Afriyie 2007; Erdiaw-Kwasie, Dinye, and Abunyewah 2014). However, while most studies of the environmental impacts of mining have focused on large-scale mining, also artisanal mining activities have had serious negative impacts on environmental degradation, particularly as a result of uncontrolled and technologically poor activities, and due to the widespread use of mercury (Bansah, Yalley, and Dumakor-Dupey 2016; Owusu, Bansah, and Mensah 2019).

Thus, mineral extraction in Ghana has had diverse social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political consequences, especially in the host communities. While hosting mineral extraction in Ghana has generated revenues to state, the mining industry has led to impoverishment of many host communities (Addison, Boly, and Mveyange 2017; Hilson and Banchirigah 2009).

Hira and Busumtwi-Sam (2018) draw attention to the unrealized potential of mining to benefit the host communities in Ghana. In Ghana and beyond, the limited benefits of mining for host communities and the need to ensure that communities living near mining operations benefit positively from mineral extraction have been recognized by various governments, mining companies, NGOs, civil society, and the host communities themselves (e.g., Dupuy 2017). As a result of this recognition, benefit sharing has emerged as a policy intervention to help resolve the extant unevenness between the benefits and losses resulting from resource extraction, particularly with regard to host communities (Wall and Pelon 2011).

2.3 Potential and challenges of benefit sharing

The concept of benefit sharing first appeared in the 1970s, with relation to the concept of the common heritage of humankind in the United Nations' Agreement Governing Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which was signed in 1979 as a policy to regulate the distribution of resources and the benefits derived from their use (de Jonge and Korthals 2006; Saunders 2019). However, it was not until 1993, when the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, drafted in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, became effective, that access and benefit sharing became legal expressions to ensure sustainable use of biodiversity resources, and that its custodians should adequately benefit from the extracted resources (United Nations 1992). The strength of benefit sharing as a legal expression is based on a principle that benefits derived from natural resources should be equitably and fairly shared between extractors and providers (Cabrera Medaglia and Perron-Welch 2018).

The underlying principle of benefit sharing has stimulated its application in diverse revenue-sharing arrangements, particularly due to the notion that it has the potential to effectuate

equitable outcomes and procedural fairness between those extracting resources and the resource custodians (Lebel et al. 2014). For example, the concept has been applied to shared benefits derived from projects for carbon capture and storages, and in the aquaculture, fisheries, and tourism sectors (Bonham et al. 2014; Khatun et al. 2015; Phomsouvanh, Saphakdy, and De Silva 2015). Furthermore, the practice of benefit sharing is used in efforts to enhance social inclusiveness, improve local livelihoods, reinforce social equity, and address indigenous people's rights in resource projects in the Arctic (Wilson 2019). In hydropower projects, benefit sharing has been applied as a practical policy to share the risks and benefits among different users of water-catchment projects and those affected by dam constructions (Dombrowsky et al. 2014, Wynberg and Hauck 2014).

Benefit sharing has also been appreciated in the extractive industry, where its significance has been well articulated by both the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI). According to the UNDP and NRGI, benefit sharing should be used to mitigate violent conflicts, which often jeopardize the flow of revenues; recognize local claims to natural resources and share the accrued benefits from them with the host communities; compensate for the extraction-related negative impacts; and promote economic development in the resource-rich regions (Natural Resource Governance Institute & UNDP 2016).

The potential of benefit sharing arrangements is evident with their establishment in various resource-rich developing countries to meet diverse objectives. For instance, after the end of civil war in Sierra Leone in 2002, the government established the Diamond Area Community Development Fund (DACDF) in 2007 and used a small portion of the country's diamond exports (3%) to support small-scale community-managed development projects in the diamond-producing regions (Maconachie 2012). It is important to note that the purpose of the DACDF was also to enhance equitable local decision-making, benefits flow to affected communities, and redress unequal power relationship in the diamond industry (Maconachie 2012; S. A. Wilson 2015). In 2016, while the government of Sierra Leone received approximately USD 17 million in revenue from the mining sector, the country's community development fund received ca. USD 113,691 from the government (SLEITI 2016).

Another example of a benefit sharing arrangement is found in diamond-rich Botswana, where the government applies a national development plan (NDP) that was established in the 1980s to stabilize government spending and accrue benefits to citizens (Fischer 2007; Harvey and Lewis Jr 1990). Although the plan has been viewed as a good example of an African resource-rich country that might have managed to escape the resource curse by pursuing judicious fiscal policies (Pegg 2010; Sarraf and Jiwaji 2001), experiences of benefit-sharing mechanisms within the country have varied widely, as has the extent of success in converting resource wealth into permanent wealth (Fischer 2007).

However, as Nkhata et al. (2012) note, implementing benefit-sharing arrangements is not just a matter of setting up a utility function and selecting a mechanism that would effortlessly prompt a preferred set of consequences. As the literature on benefit sharing shows, there are various challenges facing benefit sharing arrangements in many resource-rich countries (Larmer and Laterza 2017; Nwapi 2017). Common in this literature is the argument that benefit sharing in these countries often take place in the context of poor or weak institutions (Elbra 2017). In her study of the DACDF and Ghana's Minerals Development Fund (MDF), Dupuy (2017) shows how lack of accountability and local elite capture resulted in misappropriation and embezzlement of funds in the two institutions. Other studies have also shown that benefit-sharing arrangements established in the context of resource-conflict regions have also faced challenges. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, many local institutions' lack of strong governance capacity has led to illegitimate benefits-sharing arrangements, which only serve the interests of relatively few stakeholders (Atanasijevic 2016).

The challenges and problems identified in the literature on benefit sharing have been known to exacerbate extant inequitable distribution of mineral wealth and insignificant flows of benefits to host communities in many resource-rich developing countries (Izoma and Amadi 2019; Standing and Hilson 2013). With regard to finding solutions to the issues that hamper effective benefit sharing, Dupuy (2017) suggests that in designing and implementing community resource funds, there is need for transparency to mitigate issues of corruption. She argues that transparency can be strengthened through clear rules for the allocation of

funds, public reporting of revenue flows and uses, and meaningful participation mechanisms for the beneficiaries in decision-making.

2.4 Governance and the promise of benefit sharing

Benefit sharing arrangements require good governance practices in order to achieve effective, fair, and equitable allocation of benefits (Nkhata et al. 2011). The UNDP describes governance as an economic, political and administrative authority exercised to manage the affairs of a country at all levels, and that it comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions for citizens and groups to articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences (Weiss 2012). According to the 1992 Commission on Global Governance, governance involves the different ways by which individuals and institutions, both public and private, manage common issues, and is a continuous process that can accommodate conflicting or diverse interests (Weiss 2012). Governance includes formal institutions empowered to enforce compliance and informal arrangements that people and institutions agree to or perceive are in their interests (for more definitions of governance, see Weiss 2012, 797–798).

In this thesis, governance refers to a decision-making process that involves complex relationships between different actors or stakeholders, with different interests, motives and priorities (Bevir 2010). Central to this way of thinking about governance is that enhanced transparency and accountability, as well as significant stakeholder participation in decision-making, can mitigate problems such as corruption, elite capture, and patronage in the use and management of resource revenue (Izoma and Amadi 2019; Magno and Gatmaytan 2017). It follows that governance can play an important role in constructing a good context for effective benefit sharing, which could be helpful for mitigating the challenges faced in various mechanisms for distributing mineral wealth.

The significance of governance is also emphasized by the extractive industry's organizations, such as the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM). The ICMM, for example,

expects its member companies to maintain good governance through enhanced stakeholder participation and transparent reporting (Sethi and Emelianova 2011).

2.4.1 Transparency as governance

Transparency has acquired a dominant position in the governance and management of resource revenues. Its dominance is based on the notion that information can empower citizens to demand accountability (Gupta and Mason 2014). Transparency in the form of information disclosure is a key concern for international organizations such as the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) and Global Reporting Initiative. Both initiatives advocate for disclosure and reporting of transactions between companies and governments as a way of improving governance in the management and use of resource revenue (Klein 2017; Thomas 2019). The EITI Standards have been implemented in various resource-rich developing countries, such as Ghana and Sierra Leone, to enhance transparency and to empower citizens with information to hold their governments accountable in natural resource governance (GHEITI Secretariat & MoF 2016; SLEITI 2016).

Studies on the impact of implementing the EITI Standards have been inconclusive when it comes to its impact on natural resource governance and wider societal development (Rustad, Le Billon, and Lujala 2017). For instance, despite Ghana's compliance with the EITI Standards, the expectations that increased transparency would benefit the host communities have not been met (Andrews 2016). As scholars have observed, the potential of a transparency initiative is related to its implementation (Haufler 2010; Lujala 2018). For instance, a well-implemented transparency initiative should combine top-down and bottom-up governance initiatives and reach to the people affected by the extractive industry projects in order to address the poverty challenges in resource-rich developing countries (Van Alstine 2017; Wilson and Van Alstine 2017).

Further, there is evidence that it is not sufficient to just disseminate information for transparency to be achieved; in addition, people's and civil society's active participation and their capacity to access and interpret the information is equally important (e.g., Gupta 2010;

Epremian et al. 2016). The argument highlights the close relationship between common governance principles, in this case transparency and participation, showing that to achieve effective governance all key components have to operate concurrently.

2.4.2 Participation as governance

The value of beneficiaries' participation in decision-making on various types of resource revenue management at local community level has been increasingly recognized, as social change is no longer viewed as a domain exclusive to experts (Ernst 2019). As core governance principles, participation and inclusion involves empowerment through representation and other mechanisms to facilitate free, active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes (UNDP 2011). Central to the manifestation of participation in governance practices is the assumed potential of participation to subdue the commonly found disconnection between top-down policies and the 'common' people, and to encourage the use of local knowledge in various community-based development initiatives (Macdonald 2017, Ojha et al. 2016).

The concept of participation has been used in various governance practices and initiatives to empower and include marginalized communities, women, and youth in decision-making processes (Mansuri and Rao 2012, Nelson and Agrawal 2008). For instance, target participation measures have been used in the case of Ok Tedi Mine in Papua New Guinea to support increased inclusion of women in decisions regarding benefit sharing from the company's operations (Menzies and Harley 2012). This was after it was found that social inequity intersected previous participatory processes, as the local customs excluded women from diverse benefits sharing decision-making processes (Keenan, Kemp, and Ramsay 2016).

Prominent scholars of participation, such as Cornwall (2002), have suggested that when dealing with community participation it is necessary to understand that it is influenced and shaped by political, social, cultural, and historical factors. For instance, in highlighting the implications of the micro-politics of local governance with regard to the DACDF, Maconachie (2012) revealed that the failure to achieve meaningful participation of the citizens in decision-

making was due to the existing power relations in the diamond mining areas. Therefore, there is a need to consider factors such as the operational context, the involved stakeholders, and power relations when participatory practices are established and evaluated.

2.4.3 Operational context, power and governance

As Wynberg and Hauck (2014) argue, impact and fairness of benefit sharing relies on interrelated factors, including who participates (the stakeholders), policies, and laws as well as power relations that can lead to outcomes favoring certain stakeholders more than others, as was the case with the DACDF and the Democratic Republic of Congo (see Section 2.3).

The implications of context and power relations in benefit sharing are relevant when questioning participatory practices as elements of governance, for three reasons. *First*, governance arrangements have been viewed as providing opportunities for empowering weaker stakeholders, such as host communities, in decision-making aimed at solving problems that affect them (Ernst 2019; Macdonald 2017). Thus, the perspectives of relational and structural dimensions of power (Purdy 2012) can be useful for addressing the perceived unevenness between the benefits and losses regarding hosting mineral extraction. *Second*, accounting for power relations is important as the literature on extractive industry indicates that hierarchical social and political power is a key factor in misappropriation and mismanagement of funds targeting local community development (Hilson and Maconachie 2008). *Third*, considering power relations in benefit-sharing arrangements is useful when governance incorporates existing local institutions and other stakeholders, such as mining companies (a form of ‘hybrid governance’) (Geenen 2016; Meagher 2012). For example, Banerjee (2018) found that CSR and multistakeholder initiatives fail to account for the needs of vulnerable stakeholders, and power asymmetries between the actors diminish the welfare of communities impacted by extractive activities.

In attempts to understand the role of governance in achieving the promise of benefit sharing, discussions have been founded on the premise that governance provides fair and equal opportunity for all affected key stakeholders to influence the decisions taken (Ernst 2019).

The participation of multiple stakeholders in benefit-sharing arrangements implies that all participants matter, and that it leads to authentic decisions that take into account the opinions of all involved stakeholders (Lockwood et al. 2010). Thus, participatory governance has been packaged with an assumption that stakeholders have an equal amount of power to influence decision-making, which according to Berger (2003), is a model of governance that is dismissive of hierarchy. With regard to hierarchy, Wynberg and Hauck (2014) emphasize power as a central element in benefit-sharing practices because benefit-sharing arrangements rely on relations and structures, which are often susceptible to power asymmetries (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013; Morgera 2016). Thus, the discussion on the role of governance in benefit sharing highlights the point that benefit sharing and the associated arrangements are subject to relations and structure, wherein achieving effective, fair, and equitable allocation of benefits requires good governance (Nkhata et al. 2011).

The persisting challenges facing governance and management of natural resource sector and the revenues it generates in resource-rich developing countries has been a great concern for international organizations working with the extractive industry at a global level. For instance, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) promotes social investment in communities hosting mineral extractions to improve social, economic, and institutional development (IFC 2010). This promotion has spawned diverse approaches that the extractive industry is expected to use in order to secure local benefits and development such as community development agreements, revenue sharing agreements, community benefit agreements, impact and benefit agreements, social investments, and foundations, trusts and funds (Boakye et al. 2018; Bruckner 2015; Dupuy 2014; O’Faircheallaigh 2013; Wall and Pelon 2011).

The discussions in this chapter, particularly on the potential of benefit sharing and the implications of governance for benefit sharing, combine to form the theoretical context of this thesis and the basis for expanding knowledge of the role of local benefit-sharing trust funds in the extractive industry. The thesis especially focuses on transparency and participation as key components of governance, and the establishment of trust funds as approaches to community development. Drawing on examples of some established trust funds from several countries, the next chapter shows how the increasing adoption of trust funds is changing the ways in which companies engage in community relationships,

community development, and both governance and management practices at the level of local communities.

3.0 Trust funds as local benefit-sharing strategies

Since the early 1990s, large transnational mining corporations such as the BHP Billiton, AngloGold Ashanti, and Newmont have increasingly chosen trust funds as strategies for sharing benefits with local communities (Wall and Pelon 2011). In this thesis trust funds are considered as benefit-sharing strategies for distributing mineral wealth, either in monetary form (cash transfers) or non-monetary form (e.g., skills training, scholarships for education, and construction of water and sanitation facilities and other infrastructure), targeting communities hosting large-scale extraction.

The adoption of trust funds has permeated the extractive industry and the funds have been established in all continents of the world. These include the Las Bambas Social Fund in Peru, the Ok Tedi Foundation in Papua New Guinea, the Sepon Development Trust Fund in Laos, the Palabora Foundation in South Africa, Freeport Partnership Fund for Community Development, West Papua, Indonesia, Sadiola Hill & Yatela Gold Mines Community Development Fund, Mali (Republic of), the Mozal Community Development Trust in Mozambique, and the Kupol Foundation in Russia (Table 3). As shown in Table 3, these trust funds have been established for various purposes, but the underlying reason has been to promote community development through community projects and programs for small businesses, education, training, health, environment, sports, and culture.

The trust funds listed in Table 3 do not deal with cash transfers, but some other trust funds share dividends directly with citizens, as in the case of the Alaska Permanent Fund, Alaska (Fischer 2007). Another distinction between trust funds is that in most developed countries, they are mainly established with a particular focus, as the Kupol Foundation in Russia (Kinross 2019) and the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Fund in Australia (Altman 2009), which both target indigenous populations affected by extractions activities to preserve their cultural heritage. In resource-rich developing countries the adoption of trust funds has generally been driven by the need to enhance the flow of benefits from mining ventures to the host communities (Wall and Pelon 2011). As noted by Wall and Pelon (2011), other objectives of establishing trust funds include the following: to build informal consensus with host communities in order to attain social license to operate (SLO), to distinguish between compensations and contributions to development, to develop institutional knowledge in the management of

revenue, to foster stakeholder participation in decision-making, to enhance transparency and accountability, and to set up a systematic approach to community development.

Table 3. Examples of trust funds established in different parts of the world

Trust fund, country, company, resource	Purpose of establishment	Processes for decision-making	Governance structure
<p>Mozal Community Development Trust</p> <p>Mozambique: Mozal Smelter (BHP Billiton)</p> <p>Aluminum</p> <p>(Wall and Pelon 2011)</p>	<p>Facilitate community programs for small businesses, and promote education, training, health, environment, sports, culture, and community infrastructure</p>	<p>Grant applications, for which a consultative committee decides which projects to support, and the trust implements the projects</p>	<p>The Mozal Smelter (BHP Billiton) Board serves as the trust fund board</p>
<p>Las Bambas Social Fund (FOSBAM)</p> <p>Cotabambas Province Grau Province, Peru</p> <p>MMG, Guoxin, and CITIC Metal</p> <p>Copper and zinc</p> <p>(MMG 2016)</p>	<p>Promote of local well-being and development through projects for basic sanitation, education, health, and agricultural and livestock development</p>	<p>Projects carried out by community groups, with assistance and guidance from local governments, and administrative and technical support from FOSBAM</p>	<p>Multistakeholder Board of directors comprises three district mayors, two provincial mayors and two representatives of FOSBAM</p>
<p>Kupol Foundation</p> <p>Russia</p> <p>Chukotka Mining and Geological Company (Kinross Gold Corporation)</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>(IFC 2015b; Kinross 2019)</p>	<p>Promote long-term socioeconomic development in Chukotka Autonomous Okrug region, inhabited by indigenous people.</p>	<p>Works directly with representatives of the Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North and government experts; company participation through a seat on the tender and management committees</p>	<p>Governed by the mining company’s management committee responsible for CSR and a technical committee, each with at least three directors appointed by the company’s board</p>
<p>Palabora Foundation</p> <p>South Africa</p> <p>Palabora Mining Company Limited</p> <p>Copper</p> <p>(McElroy 2012; Wall and Pelon 2011)</p>	<p>Promote sustainable socioeconomic development and empowerment of communities through projects for education, economic development and community health</p>	<p>Potential projects presented at “Community Development Forums” comprising three members from each local tribe and the chief of each tribal group</p>	<p>Multistakeholder Representatives from the local tribes (chiefs) and municipality officials</p>

<p>Freeport Partnership Fund for Community Development</p> <p>West Papua, Indonesia</p> <p>Freeport McMoRan</p> <p>Copper</p> <p>(Wall and Pelon 2011)</p>	<p>Create long-term growth and development through health programs, educational scholarships, water and church facilities in remote Papuan villages.</p>	<p>Community Development Institute Amungme and Kamoro (LPMK) administers and distributes the funds, conducts annual audit, and publishes reports. Expert facilitators and community leaders choose activities to be funded</p>	<p>Multistakeholder</p> <p>Board of commissioners consisting of representatives from local government, Papuan regional leaders, and leaders of the local Amungme and Kamoro communities, and the mining company</p>
<p>Sadiola Hill & Yatela Gold Mines Community Development Fund</p> <p>Mali (Republic of)</p> <p>AngloGold Ashanti</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>(Jul-Larsen et al. 2006; Wall and Pelon 2011)</p>	<p>Community development in the form of agribusiness projects on animal husbandry and a micro-credit scheme</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>Funding companies</p> <p>Administered under the Sadiola-Yatela Integrated Development Action Plan (IDAP)</p> <p>The mining companies exercise control over the fund.</p>
<p>Sepon Development Trust Fund</p> <p>Vilabouly, Laos</p> <p>MMG LXML Sepon (LXML)</p> <p>(Kemp et al. 2012; MMG 2016; Perera 2011)</p>	<p>Promote local development through investment in schools, roads, fishponds and potable water. Benefits more than 14,000 people.</p>	<p>Consultation with community leaders across 46 villages in cooperation with district authorities</p>	<p>Multistakeholder</p> <p>Board of trustees, with representatives from the company (senior managers of Sepon), government, and village chiefs from the two main ethnic groups, and a 17-member management committee</p>
<p>Ok Tedi Development Foundation (OTDF)</p> <p>Papua New Guinea</p> <p>Ok Tedi Mining Limited (OTML)</p> <p>(Wall and Pelon 2011)</p>	<p>Promotes long-term development through skills training and infrastructure projects (schools, footbridges and water)</p>	<p>Proposed projects are reviewed by village or community groups and seek endorsement from the Village Planning Committee (VPC)</p>	<p>Company appointments</p> <p>The company appoints the fund leadership including the Board and the Advisory Committee members, and the CEO</p>

3.1 Company–community relations

An establishment of a trust fund is one way for mining companies to compensate communities, mitigate business risks, and manage various outcomes and impacts, sometimes established after other approaches have failed. For example, a trust fund in Papua New Guinea, the Lihir Sustainable Development Plan (not listed in Table 3), was established in 2007 by Lihir Gold after a previous community development agreement had failed to deliver the promised compensations and community development (Wall and Pelon 2011).

Risk mitigation is evident from the way trust funds are used today to acquire an SLO. An example can be found in one of the main cases studied in this thesis, NADeF. NADeF was formed before Newmont began its production in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana, after a two-year negotiation processes and signing of agreements between the Ahafo communities and Newmont, in which the establishment of a foundation was proposed by the company (Boakye et al. 2018; NADeF 2008). The Sepon Development Trust Fund serves as a good example of a strategically formed trust fund, as its establishment was a way of reducing the risk of MMG LXML Sepon becoming a substitute provider of public services at local community level, which is rather the responsibility of the national government (Wall and Pelon 2011).

With regard to management of negative outcomes of mining, the Ok Tedi Development Foundation (OTDF) is relevant. The OTDF was established in Papua New Guinea after an environmental disaster in 1999, when ca. 1.5 billion metric tons of tailings were spilt during operations run by BHP Billiton, which led to the company closing its operations in 2001 (Fischer 2007; Gilberthorpe 2013; Wall and Pelon 2011). The incident led to community protests against the continuation of mining along Fly River, but after negotiations with the new company (the Ok Tedi Mine) and with the introduction of the Community Mine Continuation Agreement, the communities agreed to allow the mining activities to continue (Adler, Brewer, and McGee 2007).

3.2 Funding and project implementation

The establishment of trust funds has refashioned how mining companies contribute to the various development needs of the host communities. While the traditional method has been direct implementation of CSR initiatives, today companies establish trust funds and pledge certain amount to them, and in turn the trust funds implement community development projects. The pledges are often based on a standard calculation: For example, when BHP Billiton established the Mozal Community Development Trust in Mozambique in 2001, it pledged 1% annual pre-tax profits, which was expected to yield approximately USD 2.5 million per year (Castel-Branco and Goldin 2003; Wall and Pelon 2011).

Some companies contribute to their trust funds by pledging a fixed amount, as in the case of Kinross, which in November 2019 committed USD 750,000 to support the operations of the Kupol Foundation until 2020 (Kinross 2019). According to Wall and Pelon (2011), while such funding structures might facilitate multiyear project commitments, fixed payments can attract misappropriation and corruption.

Although the trust funds' operations vary and depend on their capacity, the needs of communities, and funding, most of them focus on similar community projects. Some trust funds, such as the Mozal Community Development Fund, provide grants to other development organizations to implement projects. Others, such as Las Bambas Social Fund, implement community projects through community groups, with assistance from local government and the mining companies. In most cases, the implemented projects focus on facilitating micro-credit schemes for small-scale enterprises, the construction of health clinics and educational infrastructure such as classrooms and making financial contributions to agricultural projects and cultural activities (Table 3).

3.3 Governance and management

Trust funds are governed and managed differently, as shown by the examples listed in Table 3. In the discourse of resource revenue management, policymaking and decision-making that involves diverse stakeholders has been viewed as a key element in enhancing transparency,

legitimacy, trust, and efficient management of resource revenues (Elbra 2017; Ernst 2019; Magno and Gatmaytan 2017), which are significant for diverse processes in the operations of a trust fund. From the examples listed in Table 3, it can be seen that while four of the trust funds are directly governed by their funding company, the other four rely on multistakeholder governance. For example, the Mozal Community Development Fund and the Kupol Foundation are under the management and control of the respective mining companies.

As part of governance, invitations to beneficiaries to participate in decision-making platforms feature in various benefit-sharing initiatives. For example, in the case of the OTDF, although the company appoints the leadership of the fund, including the management, the decision-making mainly involves the participation of village or community groups, such as a Village Planning Committee (VPC). In the Palabora Foundation, the daily operations are managed by a management team, led by the foundation's director, but the objective to foster stakeholder participation and inclusive governance is evident in the foundation's involvement in the local government development planning forum, which interacts with and reports to communities about the foundation's development plans, and enhances information accessibility (Palabora Foundation n.d.).

The Palabora Foundation's interactions and reports on community development plans are a good example of one of the key objectives of trust funds, namely, to enhance transparency and accountability, especially when public institutions might be corrupt or distrusted (Wall and Pelon 2011). Considering the large amounts that the trust funds receive and manage, transparency and accountability in various decision-making processes should be a key component in their operations. For instance, the Freeport Partnership Fund for Community Development in West Papua, Indonesia, had saved almost USD 45.5 million in a provident fund for future investment by 2011 (Wall and Pelon 2011). According to the desk-top reviews, the Freeport Partnership Fund for Community Development and other trust funds, such as the Palabora Foundation and the OTDF show commitments to ensure information accessibility and availability through online platforms. According to the OTDF, information dissemination has helped to improve efficiency in its operations, especially with the help of feedback from community members and other stakeholders (Oki Tedi Development Foundation n.d.).

Trust funds can potentially represent a game changer in the management of revenue from natural resources, and particularly in the ways in which benefits are shared and community development projects are implemented at local community levels. Interestingly, despite the scale of the extractive industry's adoption of trust funds as local benefit-sharing strategies, empirical evaluations of trust funds concerned with relationships between mining companies and host communities are still scarce in the literature.

The degree of transparency and participatory practices in most trust funds is not known. Although a World Bank report authored by Wall and Pelon (2011) presents an array of case studies and states the degree of participation of beneficiaries in the governance of trust funds, it does not offer much critical assessment of the trust funds with this regard.

Furthermore, although trust funds provide opportunities for mining companies to work in partnership with local communities through shared governance arrangements (Wall and Pelon 2011), such governance practices are often shaped by the actors involved in the benefit-sharing arrangements (Wynberg and Hauck 2014). An understanding of the processes that inform trust funds' decisions is crucial, given that in multistakeholder decision-making mismatches regarding the expectations and interests of different actors can arise, which might compromise both the decision-making and the outcomes of the decisions (Jones and Murphree 2013; Wynberg and Hauck 2014).

4.0 Research context and study areas

This chapter presents an overview of the research context and the study areas (Figure 1). First, it briefly presents the Ghana’s gold mining sector, showing some positive and negative consequences of the country’s gold production (Section 4.1). Section 4.2 presents Ghana’s national strategy for the distribution of revenues from mining operations. This is followed by a description of the case study areas and presentation of the two case trust funds, the Obuasi Community Development Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) (Section 4.3).

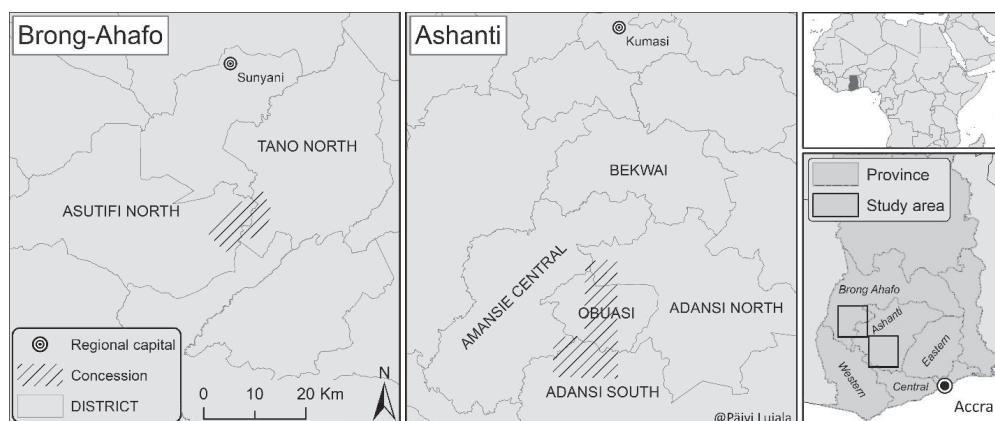


Figure 1. Map of Ghana with the main study districts and mining concessions (Reproduced from Kasimba and Lujala 2018)

4.1 Gold mining in Ghana

Ghana, a country in the West coast of Africa is endowed with significant amount of ferrous and non-ferrous minerals, including manganese, bauxite, iron ore, diamonds, and gold (Aubynn 2017). The country is the tenth largest gold producer in the world and second largest in Africa after South Africa (Bloch and Owusu 2012; Benschaul-Tolonen, Chuhan-Pole, Kostadam and Sanoh 2019).

Gold mining in Ghana has a history of over 1000 years (Hilson 2002b). Gold was already being exported from the country as early as 1471 (Allen 1958), and gold mining companies began operations shortly after the British had established a colonial territory in Ghana, which they

renamed the Gold Coast Colony in 1874 (Hilson 2002a). Today, the five largest mining companies in Ghana produce an average of 200,000 ounces of gold per year, and the government of Ghana’s shares in the mining companies are all under 10% (Table 4).

Table 4. Major gold mining companies in Ghana (Reproduced from ICMM 2015, 18)

Mining company	Government share in %	Location	Country of origin	Annual output in ounces (2013)
AngloGold Ashanti	1.7	Obuasi (Ashanti Region) and Iduapriem (Western Region)	South Africa	239,052
Chirano Gold Mines	10	Chirano (Western Region)	Canada	274,683
Gold Fields Ghana	10	Tarkwa and Damang (Western Region)	South Africa	785,421
Golden Star Resources	10	Prestea and Wassa (Western Region)	Canada	330,807
Newmont Ghana	0	Kenyasi (Brong-Ahafo Region) and New Abirem (Eastern Region)	USA	699,366

The government of Ghana accrues revenue from the mining sector mainly through corporate income taxes and royalties levied on revenue from production (Malden and Osei 2018). According to the Natural Resource Governance briefing by Malden and Osei 2018, the standard corporate income tax rate is 25% and the mining companies pay 5% of their gross revenue from operations as royalty to the state. Excluding oil and gas, gold mining in Ghana contributed 96% of the mineral export revenues, worth over USD 5,700 million in 2017 (Ghana Chamber of Mines 2018). In the same year, the mining sector contributed 43% of the total revenue and earned the country approximately USD 230 million in corporate income taxes and USD 170 million in mineral royalties (Ghana Chamber of Mines 2018).

With regard to employment opportunities, it is estimated that over 250,000 people are regular and casual workers in the mining sector, and the large-scale mining sector provides approximately 15,000 jobs and provides employment for a further 65,000 people (Ghana Statistical Service 2016). Based on a sample of 10 gold mining companies in Ghana, the ICMM (2015) estimated that ca. 7,000 people were employed directly, and ca. 110,000 indirectly. Thus, for each job at a mine site, an additional 15 jobs were supported in the wider economy (ICCM 2015).

Mining has also created employment opportunities through spillovers that have encouraged mining business clusters, supply services based on LCP policies, and linkages through which

other sectors may benefit from the mining economy, at national, regional, and local levels (Ablo 2015; Bloch and Owusu 2012). As mentioned in Section 2.2, the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector in Ghana is one of the country's most important source of livelihood opportunities. It is estimated that almost 1 million people work in the ASM, and ca. 4.4 million depend on the sector (McQuilken and Hilson 2016).

However, gold mining in Ghana has also led to diverse social and environmental problems, most acutely felt in the host communities (Akabzaa 2000). The negative footprints of mining in Ghana, particularly in the host communities, are evident from a number of studies (e.g., Hilson, Hilson, and Pardie 2007; Botchie et al. 2007; Babut et al. 2003). In addition to the negative outcomes of mining as mentioned in Chapter 2, there are issues regarding health, child labor, poor working and mining conditions, conflicts between companies and local communities, contamination of water sources, and general environmental degradation (Asuah and Ankoye 2016; Awuah-Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah 2012; Botchie et al. 2007).

Although there may be lack of clarity about the extent to which the large-scale gold mining industry has been beneficial or detrimental to Ghana's economy, it is known that the industry has not significantly benefited the host communities (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah 2011; Hira and Busumtwi-Sam 2018). The issue of most relevance for this thesis is how the accrued mineral revenues are managed and distributed, to the benefit of the local communities. There has been a growing recognition of the need to ensure that mineral extraction positively benefits the host communities, and this has led Ghana to adopt different laws, policies, and channels for the redistribution of mineral wealth (Dupuy 2014).

4.2 Distribution of mining benefits in Ghana

Part of mining revenues are distributed back to the mining areas through different mechanisms. Therefore, an understanding of the distribution of mining benefits in Ghana requires an understanding of the country's governance and administration system. As the key concern in this thesis is the redistribution of benefits from mining at the local community level, this subsection also presents an overview of Ghana's Minerals Development Fund (MDF) through which a part of the collected mineral royalties are distributed from central government to the communities affected by mining. Subsection 4.2 ends with a discussion of

some of the challenges facing Ghana's mining sector and the redistribution of mineral revenues, focusing on the poor governance in institutions responsible for the redistribution of mineral benefits to the affected communities.

4.2.1 Governance and administration in Ghana

Through the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, power at the national level is divided between an executive, a legislature and a judiciary.⁶ The executive arm is headed by a president, who is elected every four years. The president nominates a council of cabinet ministers, who are then approved by the country's legislative arm, Parliament (Republic of Ghana 1992). Parliament has 275 members, who are elected every four years, and are responsible for passing legislation on taxes, public funds, and debts (Parliament of Ghana 2019).

Ghana's constitution provides for the devolution of authority, responsibility, and resources from the national government level to the regional and district levels (Republic of Ghana 1992). Ghana is divided into 16 administrative regions, each of which has a regional minister appointed by the president, and the regions are subdivided into 260 districts.⁷ Each district is governed by a district assembly led by a chief executive, appointed by the president, and one-third of the assembly members are presidential appointees, with the rest elected democratically (Standing 2014).

At the local level, the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana recognizes the chieftaincy and the traditional council as part of the country's governance and administration system (Republic of Ghana 1992). The autonomy of the chieftaincy and traditional councils based on customary law is guaranteed and protected by Ghana's constitution, and the chiefs can be appointed to public offices, although they are prohibited from engaging in partisan politics (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam 2018). The recognition of the chiefs in Ghana's governance and administration system is historical, particularly as the chieftaincy was a mechanism for the

⁶ Although the judicial system is equally important, as it should ensure that the legislated laws and regulations guiding the distribution of mineral benefits are adhered to, it is not discussed further in this overview.

⁷ The second-level administrative structure comprises 6 metropolitan districts, 109 municipalities, and 106 districts (GhanaDistricts 2019).

British colonial government to enact indirect rule for the purpose of maintaining law and order, tax collection, and settling disputes at local community level (Asamoah 2012).

Despite attempts by successive governments after independence in 1957 to confine the institution of chieftaincy, the chiefs have gained more ground as important actors in the decentralized political authority. For instance, Kwame Nkrumah's government wanted the government to take over the chiefs' power to administer the stool lands⁸ and circumscribe their participation in local government (Boafo-Arthur 2003; Dapilah, Bonye, and Dawda 2013). In the distribution of mining benefits in Ghana, the chieftaincy is a significant institution, especially as the chiefs have the key role of administering land in most parts of the country, including in Ashanti Region, which has some of the most gold-rich areas in Ghana (Chieftaincy 2018; Standing 2014).

Both the chieftaincy and the traditional councils play a major role in the redistribution of benefits from mining at local community level in Ghana. In this thesis, the role of the chiefs is deemed important, considering that the unmet expectations of mining induced socioeconomic improvements have not been fully realized in the host communities partially as a result of inefficient distribution and management of mineral wealth (Hira and Busumtwi-Sam 2018; Nest 2017).

4.2.2 Minerals Development Fund

The Minerals Development Fund (MDF) was established in Ghana in 1993 through an executive fiat to support the development of the mining sector and mining communities, and to redistribute mineral royalties from central government to local institutions through the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL)⁹ (Adimazoya 2013; Lujala and Narh 2019). As a result of the establishment of the MDF through an administrative fiat, the fund

⁸ Stool and skin lands are lands that are owned by chiefdoms and such lands are commonly referred to as "stool lands." Stool lands are vested in the stool and are held in trust by the collective authority, usually a chief, on behalf of a community of ancestrally related people (Adimazoya 2013, 158).

⁹ The OASL is a constitutional body charged with the establishment of stool land accounts for stools in Ghana, the collection of rents and royalties due to those stools and the disbursement of such revenues (Adimazoya 2013).

functioned with no procedures in place, which, among other things, led to misappropriation of royalties by traditional authorities (Nsoe Adimazoya 2013).

As an institution, the MDF has been in the limelight for its lack of effectiveness. Although the MDF has financed projects at local levels, facilitated loans for small-scale miners, and funded geological assessments, its expenditure on economic development and compensating communities has been insignificant (Standing 2014). Standing (2014) gives an example from 2007, when the ICMM reported that no payments had been made to Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), despite its role in addressing the physical damage resulting from mining. Moreover, it is not clear how decisions concerning the allocation of funds were made, and there were no budget and auditing procedures (Standing 2014).

Due to challenges related to the MDF, Ghana's Parliament enacted the Minerals Development Fund Act in 2016 (Act 912) (Republic of Ghana 2016). The MDF Act 912 provides a legal basis for the disbursement and management of the royalties transferred to the MDF and to redress the negative impacts of mining in the host communities (CEDA 2018; Lujala and Narh 2019). The Act also provides stipulations for royalty transfers to the institutions responsible for the development of mining in Ghana and set up a development scheme that channels royalties directly to mining communities.

The Mineral Development Fund Act of 2016 stipulates that the Ghana Revenue Authority, as the receiver of the 5% mineral royalty payments from the mining companies, dispenses the money to the nation's Consolidated Fund, where 80% is retained to support the national budget (Table 5) and 20% is transferred to the MDF. The MDF keeps 50% of what it receives to support the development of domestic capacities in the mining industry and fund the development scheme and transfers 50% to the OASL (Lujala and Narh 2019; Malden and Osei 2018).

Table 5. Disbursement of mineral royalties in Ghana (Source: Malden and Osei 2018)

Recipients	Share of total royalty
Consolidated Fund	80%
Minerals Development Fund (MDF)	10%
Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL)	10%

OASL disbursements (after keeping 10% to cover administrative costs)	Share of OASL's royalty share
Traditional authority (i.e., paramount chiefs) of the mining area	20%
Traditional council of the mining area	25%
District assembly of the mining area	55%

OASL received the 10% share also prior to the Act was enacted, through the MDF, as this share is anchored in Ghana's constitution. In Article 267, Section 6 (a) of Ghana's constitution it is stipulated that the OASL retains 10% of its share to cover administrative expenses. The OASL then disburses the remaining royalties in the following proportion; 20% goes to the traditional authority (the paramount chief) in the area from the revenue originates, 25% is received by the paramount chief on behalf of the traditional council for the maintenance of the stool/skin in keeping with its status, and the 55% is assigned to the district assembly in which the mining area is located (Republic of Ghana 1992, 148).

Despite the well-organized distribution arrangement, now anchored in the MDF Act, that should provide for funds targeting communities affected by mining, the general perception in Ghana is that that gold mining has provided far fewer socioeconomic benefits to the mining communities than it should have (Abraham et al. 2018; Benschaul-Tolonen et al. 2019; Bloch and Owusu 2012). In fact, many of the gold mining communities in Ghana are among the poorest in the country.

4.2.3 Weaknesses of Ghana's mining sector governance

In the literature citing poor performance of Ghana's mining sector and its contribution to local development, most explanations relate to different aspects of institutional weaknesses. The

often-cited key weaknesses include the political environment and institutional quality and capacity (both national and local), lack of effective policies that can neutralize local power dynamics and mitigate local elite capture, and the inability hold mining companies accountable for the negative impacts of their operations.

Ghana's political environment and institutional quality have been held accountable for lack of development in the mining communities and country's economy despite the large-scale extraction of country's abundant natural resources (e.g., Aubynn 2015; Ayee et al. 2011; Cobbinah and Amoako 2018; Nyame and Grant 2014; Tuokuu et al. 2018). Ayee et al. (2011) shows that the lack of implementation of policies targeting improved social welfare in Ghana is related to incentive problems in the institutions involved in the governance of mining. According to Ayee et al. (2011), there is a strongly centralized policymaking process that involves the executive power of the president, party loyalty and political patronage, absence of transparency, and weak institutional capacity both at political and regulatory levels that limit the state's ability to address the issues regarding the extractive sector and resource revenue management.

A common issue regarding institutions in Ghana is the role of the chieftaincy. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana has failed to clarify the institutional role of the chiefs in diverse political processes, and that while their legal powers are mostly limited to land administration, the constitution legitimizes the pre-colonial forms of governance that positioned the chiefs as the rulers of their subjects (Fox et al. 2011; Standing 2014). Furthermore, the Constitution does not specify how the customary lands should be managed by the chiefs, and the increasing value of land has led to conflicts about the power to allocate rights over customary land and the entitlements to the benefits from these lands (Amanor, Ubink, and Berry 2008). The chiefs have often been accused of irregular handling of funds meant for communities, and lacking interest in investing the monies to support development projects within their jurisdictions (Standing 2014).

The concern about institutional quality has further implications for the role of the district assemblies in ensuring development and distribution of benefits in local communities. District assemblies are central to institutional concerns, as they have the responsibility to

manage funds targeting development in the local communities. According to Standing (2014), the assemblies have been accused of mismanaging funds, and as one-third of the assembly members are political appointees, they are also vulnerable to political patronage. Additionally, lack of institutional capacity of the district assemblies is perceived to have contributed to ineffective disbursement and utilization of community development funds dispensed to them through Parliament and OASL (Appiah-Agyekum, Boachie Danquah, and Sakyi 2013).

However, mining is a complex industry, and whether the outcomes become positive or negative, they involve the responsibility of all stakeholders, including the government, traditional authorities, the district assemblies, NGOs, the civil society, and the mining companies. This complexity is reflected in the attention given to the role of mining companies in Ghana. For example, some scholars have argued that collaboration between the chiefs and the mining companies has worked to the disadvantage of host communities, especially due to Ghana's decentralized model for the distribution of mineral wealth, where both formal and informal governance systems run parallel at local community levels (Standing 2014a).

Another major weakness of the Ghana's mining sector management has been that the mining companies have not been held accountable for the negative impacts of their operations in the host communities (Amponsah-Tawiah and Mensah 2016; Taabazuing et al. 2012; Tuokuu et al. 2018). Recently, the government, pushed by the civil society and local communities, has been putting pressure on companies to take more responsibility and contribute to the socioeconomic needs of the host communities. For example, Ghana's Minerals Commission provides guidelines for mining companies to engage with corporate governance and ethics, human rights, workplace and labor standards, health and safety, environmental stewardship, risk assessment and management, material and supply chain stewardship, community and social development, stakeholder engagement, compliance, and reporting (Geenen 2016). Some mining companies have responded to the pressure and requirements by funding diverse projects and programs on water and sanitation, alternative livelihoods, health, and education, and have enhanced their environmental procedures (Danso et al. 2016; Patnaik et al. 2018).

The final key weakness of the extractive sector management is that projects and programs initiated in mining communities under the umbrella of sustainable development and CSR in Ghana are often short-term in nature and generally do not align with neither national nor local needs (Essah and Andrews 2016; Tuokuu et al. 2018).

4.3 Study areas and the cases

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based took place in the Ashanti Region and Brong-Ahafo Regions in Ghana, which respectively contain the AngloGold Ashanti and Newmont Ahafo mining concessions (Figure 1). Accordingly, I studied two trust funds: the Obuasi Community Development Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF). In this subsection, I present the contexts in which the mining companies and the trust funds operate, and a general description of the trust funds. Other specific background descriptions of the trust funds are presented in Articles I, II and III, in relation to the particular research aims of the articles.

4.3.1 AngloGold Ashanti and Obuasi

Obuasi is the capital town of Obuasi Municipality. Due to the Obuasi's rich gold deposits, it is a household name in Ghana, and hence the nickname *sikakrom* (rich city). According to the 2010 Population & Housing Census records, Obuasi Municipality had a population of 168,641 (Ghana Statistical Service 2014). The town is a historic gold mining center in the country, where large-scale gold mining has for decades been dominated by the foreign-owned Ashanti Goldfields Company. The first concession was awarded in 1875, and mining was done underground mine before the introduction of surface mining in 1985, which is currently operated by AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) (Botchie et al. 2007). According to a local journalist in Obuasi who I interviewed in 2015, AGA's domination in Obuasi has influenced a common expression in the town: "Obuasi is AGA, and AGA is Obuasi."

Obuasi Municipality's terrain consists of hills rising to 500 m a.s.l., drained by streams and the rivers Pompo, Nyame, Akapori, Wheaseammo and Kunka, almost all of which are argued to have been polluted by large-scale mining, ASM and *galamsey* activities (Yeboah 2008). Soils in the municipality are predominantly under forest vegetation, fed by 90–165 cm of rainfall per year, rich in humus, and suitable for growing both cash and food crops, including citrus fruits, oil palm, cocoa, plantain, maize, cassava, and other vegetables (ibid).

Large-scale mining in Obuasi has resulted in some benefits. Although the operations of AGA in the Obuasi mine was placed on limited operation towards the end of 2014 for restructuring and maintenance, in June 2019 the company announced they have plans to recruit about 2,500 workers when it resumes full-scale operations (Ghanaweb 2020). Besides the possibilities of employment opportunities, AGA has also contributed to the provision of health services in Obuasi. In 2012, a total of 167 children, women and men benefitted from a surgery, which costed a total of USD 18,000 (AngloGold Ashanti 2012). In 2016 AGA contributed to the Obuasi government hospital's medical equipment and supplies to the value of more than USD 100,000 (Abraham et al. 2018, Asuah and Ankoye 2016).

Other positive impacts of mining are visible in Obuasi, especially in the parts of the town where AGA has its facilities and operates. The company provides residential and educational facilities for its staff and children, and the roads around these areas are well-paved and maintained, and an airport has been constructed (mainly used by AGA executives) (Figure 2, upper part). Contrasting images of Obuasi Municipality, based on the observations I made in most of the other areas Obuasi I visited, are shown in Figure 2 (lower part).



Areas in Obuasi where AGA has interests and facilities

OBUASI, A CITY OF TWO TALES

Most common scenes in other parts of Obuasi Municipality and surrounding communities



Figure 2. Contrasting images of Obuasi Municipality (Photos: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

Whether the places shown in the photos in Figure 2 are direct or indirectly related to AGA's mining, is not considered in this thesis. However, even though the Obuasi mines have been considered as having the richest gold reserves in Africa and the world, studies have shown that the long history of extractions has not had substantial positive socioeconomic impacts in the area (Ofosu-Mensah 2011; Okoh 2014).

Besides the poor living conditions of communities in Obuasi Municipality, also the physical and chemical degradation of natural environment has caused challenges for diverse agricultural activities (Angyobore 2017; Mensah and Okyere 2014). Botchie et al. (2007) use the proverb "All that glitters is not gold" to describe how beyond the golden glitter in Obuasi there is a sea of environmental mess, which has resulted from over a century of mining and has been accentuated by surface and open-pit mining activities. For example, I was told by some residents that the long-known production of oranges and other citrus fruits in Obuasi had declined tremendously as a result of contamination from mining activities; the outcome is well-documented in a report by Graham (2005) titled "Obuasi's poisoned fruit."¹⁰

¹⁰ According to the report, zinc was found in the oranges, and was five times the level permitted by Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and eight times higher than the stricter level imposed by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Graham 2005).

4.3.2 Obuasi Community Trust Fund

In 2004, AGA established the Obuasi Community Trust Fund as a strategy to enhance socioeconomic development in its host communities. The company pledged 1% of its annual post-tax profits to the fund, and by 2012 the trust fund had accrued USD 2.7 million, which was subsequently spent on implementing diverse projects (Figure 3). The trust fund secretariat was not able to provide information about the flow of funds after 2012, as there had been temporary closures of the mine and uncertainty about the mine’s future.

The Obuasi Community Trust Fund benefits communities living in Obuasi Municipality and in the four surrounding districts (Bekwai Municipality, Amansie Central District, Adansi North District, and Adansi South District). The fund finances various community development programs and projects, the most prominent of which has been the construction of public toilets and water boreholes in different communities (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Some projects implemented by the Obuasi Community Trust Fund (Photos: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

Organizationally, the Obuasi Community Trust Fund comprises a board, a steering committee, and the secretariat.¹¹ The board has seven members: two paramount chiefs, who respectively represent the Amansie and Adansi traditional areas (of which Obuasi is a part of), three district assembly members, one AGA representative (sustainability manager), and the board secretary, who is appointed by AGA. The board is responsible for overseeing the overall operations of the fund, makes decisions concerning how the funds are spent, and forms policies to guide the secretariat. The board also ensures that the fund fulfils its mandate and operates according to guidelines.

According to the interviews I held with a representative of the fund, the steering committee consisted of 32 representatives, including of traditional authorities, municipal planning officers, women's group and youth group members, and representatives from local NGOs and other civil society groups. The committee served as a meeting point for all stakeholders and, according to the secretariat, was the main platform for decision-making on matters ranging from project selection to implementation. It is also the key meeting point between the trust fund and the communities.

The secretariat, employed by the board, is responsible for the running of the fund on a daily basis. It includes a project manager, an administrative officer who is also responsible for contracts, and two project officers. Community members can apply for funds through their district assembly or unit committee members (the latter are representatives for village groups). The secretariat receives the funding applications and forwards them to the steering committee for assessment before sending them to the board for final approval.

4.3.3 Newmont and Ahafo communities

Besides gold, Brong-Ahafo Region is endowed with mineral bearing rocks, which have high potential for containing diamonds, bauxite, and manganese, and diamonds have been discovered in Wamahinso (Hope and Kwarteng 2014). Unlike in Ashanti Region, large-scale

¹¹ The Fund has made little written material available on the fund and its functions and activities. The information provided in this thesis is mainly based on the interviews and some articles in electronic local newspapers as no other sources were available.

gold mining in Brong-Ahafo Region began as late as 2004, dominated by Newmont Ghana Gold Limited's subsidiary Newmont Ahafo, located in twin towns, Kenyasi 1 and 2 (Figure 1). The mine, often referred to as the Newmont Ahafo Mine Project (NAMP) is the largest operation in Brong-Ahafo Region and situated ca. 300 km northwest of Ghana's capital city, Accra (Barclay and Salam 2015, Hope and Kwarteng 2014).

Phase 1 of Ahafo mine, named Ahafo South, covered ca. 2,994 ha. The construction of the Ahafo South project took 25 months from April 2004, and production started in July 2006 (Barclay and Salam 2015). During that period, 1,701 households with ca. 9,575 persons lost homes and agricultural land and had to be resettled (Barclay and Salam 2015) (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Part of a resettlement area in Ntotroso community (Photo: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

The majority of the people depend on subsistence farming as their source of livelihood and have little income due to low output from small family farms. The main crops produced by the farmers include legumes, plantain, yam, cocoyam, vegetables, sorghum, and cassava, produced for local markets and consumption (Bugri and Kumi 2018; Lobnibe 2018).

Newmont's operations in Brong-Ahafo are relatively young compared with the Obuasi mine, and empirical studies of its impacts are not yet common. However, the gold production in the area has had some positive impacts. My conversations with people in the region revealed that

there had been some changes in their communities since Newmont had arrived. Prior to the arrival of Newmont, there were limited formal employment opportunities, inadequate infrastructural facilities and generally low standard in living conditions in the Brong-Ahafo communities that hosted the mining operations. For these reasons, it was to some extent a relief when large-scale mining started in the Newmont Ahafo mines, and local people had expectations of improved socioeconomic conditions in the communities.

By 2009, only a few years after Newmont Ahafo commenced operations, it provided 99 local companies with nearly USD 6 million in contracts to supply building materials, goods and diverse services, providing nearly 400 job opportunities (Kapstein et al. 2011). Newmont Ahafo’s operations have also generated some linkage business and economic opportunities for people living in the vicinity of the mines, including welding, a taxi business, machinery sales and repair, and food kiosks, and in towns such as Kenyasi 1, these businesses are dominated by people who received compensation from the company for loss of land, livelihoods and property (Opoku-Ware 2014) (Figure 5).



The photos above show some of Newmont Ahafo’s information and communication channels, and the last one is a public road passing through their concession

The photos below show the context in which Newmont Ahafo operates in Ntotroso



Figure 5. Context in which Newmont Ahafo operates (Photo: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

Despite a relatively short history, Newmont's operations in Ahafo have had drawbacks. According to the community members I interviewed, they were experiencing extreme dust and noise pollution as a result of frequent blasting, excavations, mining trucks transporting residues in and out, and underground drilling, which has caused damage to houses. In 2009, Newmont had to pay a fine of USD 4.9 million as a penalty for a tailings pool that was overflowing and caused a cyanide spill in the Yaakyi, a tributary of the River Subri (Webster 2013). Similarly, communities alongside Tano River have claimed that due to mining activities one of the main sources of drinking water for most Ahafo communities has been contaminated as result of large mining wastes and tailings, which very often contain chemicals such as sulfur and mercury (Bugri and Kumi 2018).

4.3.4 Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF)

Commonly experienced outcomes of large-scale mining led to the early engagement of Newmont with responsible corporate behavior in Ahafo (Danso et al. 2016). During the company's engagement with Ahafo communities, three separate types of agreements were set up: (1) the Relationship Agreement, which led to a multistakeholder governance structure, Ahafo Social Responsibility Forum (ASRF),¹² for the overall oversight of other agreements and harmonious company-community relations, and "to provide the Community with the opportunity to participate in the Company's decisions and plans that may affect the Community and its environs" (NADeF 2008, 5); (2) the Employment Agreement to establish employment strategies for local communities; and (3) the Development Foundation Agreement, to facilitate local development programs and projects based on a percentage of Newmont's income from the Ahafo mines (Boakye et al. 2018).

Just one year before Newmont started its production in Ahafo in 2006, as part of gaining an SLO the company proposed that a foundation should be established to enhance CSR and sustainable development initiatives (Patnaik et al. 2018). In 2008, the NADeF was established as Newmont Ahafo's vehicle for community development. The foundation caters for ca.

¹² ASRF was originally called the Social Responsibility Forum.

60,000 people in the 10 Ahafo mining communities¹³ that have been directly and indirectly affected by Newmont's mining operations (Danso et al. 2016).

NADeF is a multistakeholder governed foundation, with ASRF as its participatory governance platform. The forum consists of 58 members who represent key stakeholders, which include the following: three Newmont officials (environmental and social responsibility manager, external affairs manager, and superintendent in charge of external affairs); Brong-Ahafo Region's regional minister; two members of the Parliament of Ghana, respectively from Asutifi North District and Tano North District; the two districts' chief executives, and two district assembly members representing different levels of government, as well as representatives of traditional authorities, farmers, women, youth, and local NGOs. The forum also appoints a moderator and co-moderator, whose appointments must be approved by Newmont (Boakye et al. 2018; NADeF 2008).

NADeF has a nine-member board of trustees, comprising six community representatives, two Newmont officials, and the chairman of the board, who is appointed by Newmont but requires the ratification of ASRF. The board has the final decision-making authority with regard to the management and use of funds received from Newmont. The daily administrative work of NADeF is run by a secretariat headed by a chief executive, and is concerned with the design, and monitoring of the implemented programs and projects.

Additionally, each of the ten Ahafo communities has a seven-member Sustainable Development Committee, to facilitate the participation of the community members in making decisions on various development projects and programs. The committees comprise two traditional leaders, one representative from Asutifi North District Assembly and one from Tano North District Assembly, and a youth representative, a women's representative, and one community member nominated by the traditional leaders (Danso et al. 2016).

Newmont Ahafo contributes USD 1 per ounce of gold produced and 1% of the net pre-tax profit to the fund. Between the time of its establishment in 2008 and 2016, NADeF received a total of USD 23 million and accrued USD 9 million in endowment funds (Danso et al. 2016).

¹³ Kenyasi 1, Kenyasi 2, Yamfo, Ntotroso, Wamahinso, Gyedu, Terchire, Adrobaa, Susuanso, and Afrisipakrom, resident in two districts, Tano North and Asutifi North.

In 2016, NADeF spent approximately USD 2 million on funding various development projects in the local communities, which were subdivided into four related development segments: social amenities, human resource development, infrastructural development, and cultural activities (NADeF 2017). For example, the projects included educational scholarships, construction of classrooms, donations for school buses, provision of vocational training, construction of public toilets and boreholes, sponsorship of cultural activities, and community health programs (Figure 6).

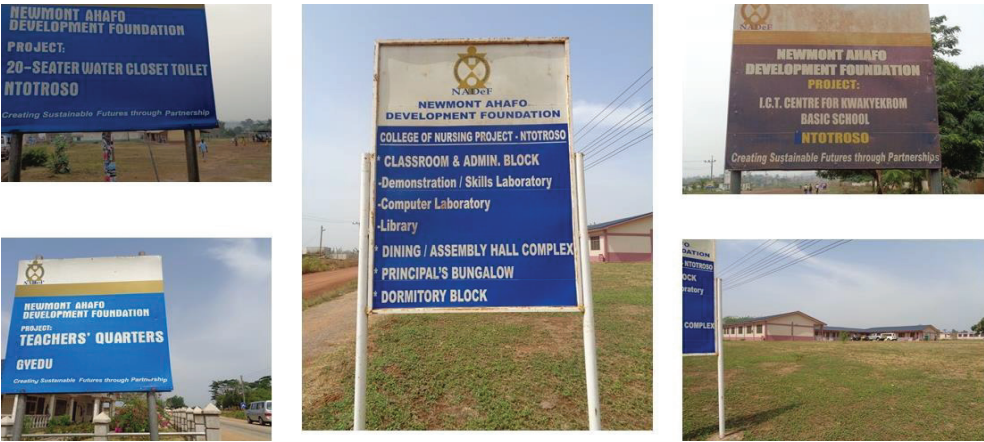


Figure 6. Signposts at the site where NADeF’s projects are implemented (Photos: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

5.0 Methodology

A study methodology is crucial for any research, especially for study material collection, analysis and evaluation of the findings, and it forms the foundation for reflecting upon theory and methods in general. In this Chapter, I describe my research process, which followed traditional qualitative case study approach. The chapter provides descriptions of the selection of study participants for interviews, the interview process, my observations in the field, and sampling. I also present my justification for my choice of case study approach, the selection of the cases, the selected material, and the strategy for the analysis. The choices and the research process underlay my overall approach towards knowledge production.

I first give a brief account of how I ended up where I am today, with regard to the PhD project and my relationship with both the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF). Thereafter, I present the following: the rationale for the case study approach to the chosen trust funds (Section 5.1), process and strategies for data collection (Section 5.2), data analysis (Section 5.3), methodological reflections (Section 5.4), and some study limitations (Section 5.5).

The research for this thesis formed part of the TrAcRevenues project (2014–2018), which examined how increased transparency could help to transform natural resource revenues in developing countries into a blessing rather than into a curse (for more details, see Section 1.1). My position as a doctoral candidate was in the work package concerned with transparent revenue sharing through trust funds designed to share benefits with communities affected by resource extraction. Through qualitative methods, the purpose of the work package was to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of benefit-sharing trust funds in the redistribution the extractive sector revenues, how the trust funds function, and extent to which they could promote transparency, participation, and accountability. The focus was on local people's perceptions of whether trust funds served their interests, and their opportunities to participate in decision-making on the use and management of the funds.

The research on trust funds was to be conducted in the context of a resource-rich developing country, and Ghana was one of the countries on the TrAcRevenues project's radar. However, the decision on the country and the particular trust funds to be studied had not been fully

agreed upon. Since my project proposal and application to study for a doctoral degree stated Ghana as my study country, Ghana was selected as the sub-project's study context. Thus, at the start of my research, three elements were clear: (1) method of inquiry—qualitative, (2) the study country—Ghana, and (3) the case—trust funds. My next task was to choose the specific trust funds.

In the beginning of my work in the TrAcRevenues project, together with the Environmental Law Institute in Washington DC and the Department of Geography at NTNU, I was involved in desk-top research that aimed to profile some trust funds that had been established around the world. Together with the project members, we focused on components such as the date of the establishment, objectives, resources that financed the funds, the intended beneficiaries, sources of revenue transfer—whether from the government or the extraction companies, management of the fund, distribution of the funds, disbursement conditions, and estimates of actual performance in meeting the objectives. I had identified a few of the components in my original project proposal. For instance, I had identified the resources that financed the trust funds (in this case gold) and the funding entity: Gold Fields Ghana Limited and AngloGold Ashanti of Ghana had established four trust funds: the Gold Fields Ghana Foundation established in Tarkwa and Damang, both of which are in the South Western Region; and the AngloGold Ashanti Community Trust Funds in Obuasi (Ashanti Region) and Iduapriem (Western Region). However, during the desktop profiling built a database of almost 90 community development trust funds funded by different resource extractions, further two trust funds in the gold mining sector in Ghana caught my attention: the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) and Newmont Akyem Development Foundation (NAKDeF).

While it was possible to gain a considerable amount of information about NAKDeF and NADeF, very limited information was available online about the Gold Fields Ghana Foundation and AngloGold Ghana's trust funds. I disregarded the former, after the foundation failed to respond to a number of emails. After a number of emails to AngloGold Ashanti, I contacted the sustainability manager at the AngloGold Ashanti in Obuasi, who was also the acting manager for the Obuasi Community Trust Fund at that time. Through emails and a contact

person in Accra, I also made better contact with NADeF, which marked the start of my relationship with the second of the two trust funds.

When I arrived in Ghana for a three-week period of preliminary field study in October 2015, my intention was to visit the offices of NADeF, NAKDeF and the Obuasi Community Trust Funds, but it became impossible to contact NADeF's offices, although I had email addresses and phone numbers for some of the staff. My contact in Accra led me to NAKDeF's offices, where I had conversations with the staff. Another advantage of visiting NAKDeF was that I met a staff member who had gone to school with one staff member at NADeF, so he gave me her number. Although I still did not manage to get an audience with the NADeF officials during my preliminary fieldwork, I was able to visit NADeF's office during my three-month stay when I conducted fieldwork in Ghana between February and April 2016.

My visits to NAKDeF's offices helped me understand the context in which trust funds operate in Ghana, and what I could expect or not expect during my fieldwork. It was noteworthy that both NAKDeF and NADeF were funded by Newmont Ghana Gold Limited's subsidiary companies in Akyem and Ahafo, and that their operational frameworks, including governance structure, processes, and the involved stakeholders, were exactly the same. Furthermore, the information on the respective websites for NAKDeF and NADeF was similar except for the names of people, communities, and places. However, while NADeF had been operating for almost 7.5 years at the time of my visit, NAKDeF had barely existed for one year, had not implemented any projects, and even its offices still smelt of fresh paint. I therefore chose NADeF as one of my case studies.

Despite the time it took to meet the people in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund's office, I managed to hold a short interview with one of the project officers during my preliminary fieldwork, and it was agreed that I would visit their office during my longer stay. Thus, I chose the Obuasi Community Trust Fund as my second case study. Although both NADeF and the Obuasi Community Trust Fund have common features, such as the types of projects implemented and their governance structures, which involve various key stakeholders, they are different in many aspects, such as the duration of their operations in their respective locations, the time when they were established, and information accessibility (Table 6).

Table 6. Some differences between the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF

	Obuasi Community Trust Fund	Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation
Company operations	Ashanti Goldfields 1895–2004 AngloGold Ashanti 2004–present	Newmont Ghana Gold Limited subsidiary Newmont Ahafo 2006–present
Establishment	An agreement between AGA and the Government of Ghana in 2004	Three agreements between Ahafo communities and Newmont in 2006
Amount received	Approximately USD 2.7 million between 2004 and 2012	Approximately USD 23 million between 2008 and 2016
Information accessibility	Website—No No financial reports available since 2012. Information about the trust fund made available on different online platforms, most often when projects are commissioned. Some information available on AGA’s website, but not the trust fund’s financial reports on, for example, how and on what the money is used.	Website—Yes Most information about the trust fund is made available on its website: governance structures, annual financial reports since 2008, the secretariat, involved stakeholder groups and representatives’ names, implemented projects and programs, and more.

In focusing on the cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF, my objective has been to study transparency and participation as key components of governance in the trust funds, and key stakeholders’ perceptions of the trust funds’ role as community development actors. My aim was to present an in-depth analysis of how the trust funds enhanced transparency and fostered stakeholder participation, as well as the extractive companies’ role in the operations, functions, and activities of the trust funds. Accordingly, I chose a case study approach based on my understanding that it would allow for a closer interaction with the various stakeholders in my efforts to seek a nuanced understanding of their views and perceptions of the functions, operations, and activities of trust funds in Ghana.

5.1 Case study approach and case selection

As an approach to research, a case study offers a practical strategy for researchers concerned with an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon within its real-world context (Baxter and Jack 2008; Creswell 2013; Lewis 2015). However, despite the practicality of case studies, and the widespread applicability of the approach to study real-world situations and address important questions (Yin 2012), there is also skepticism about its ability to create new knowledge. Generally, at the core of this skepticism are questions about the extent to which a case study can offer a basis for scientific generalization and rigor and validity (Flyvbjerg 2006; Thomas and Magilvy 2011). For example, Gobo (2008) argues that case studies fail to meet the requirements for objective and context-neutral knowledge production, as data are often based on small samples, and even in the cases where large samples are involved, as the quality of the data depends on non-probability sampling techniques.

The meaning of what a case is can vary. A case can be anything from an organization, a community, or an event, to a social phenomenon as a general or a bounded entity, where the boundaries between the case and its contextual conditions are blurred in both spatial and temporal dimensions (Yin 2012). The case for this thesis is mining companies' increasing use of trust funds as benefit-sharing and community development strategies, which have been taking place in the last 20-40 years (Wall and Pelon 2011).

Following Yin (2012) and Crowe et al. (2011), I see a case study approach as a qualitative research strategy appropriate for in-depth studies of complex issues, interventions, policy developments, and program-based service reforms in a real-life context. Of importance in the rendition of this approach is the setting of clear boundaries that determine the key elements of analysis (Baxter and Jack 2008). In my case, the key elements were the governance structures, stakeholder participation, decision-making platforms, the shared benefits, and power relations (Section 2.4 and Chapter 3). With these elements, I sought to examine how transparency and participation are embedded and practiced in trust funds, and their implications as corporate approaches to community development.

However, as my research process developed, my knowledge about trust funds grew; I found that the role of trust funds in the extractive industry was a complex case. The complexity

became apparent in the diverse objectives of the funds, which included building informal consensus with host communities to attain social licenses to operate (SLOs), distinguish between compensations for negative consequences of mining and contributions to development, and develop institutional knowledge in the management of revenues. Additionally, in my case, the trust funds were very closely affiliated to the funding companies, which are engaged in solving problems that partly emanate from their activities and affect the communities in which they operate. Thus, I find the potential of case study as an inquiry method advantageous for capturing the complexity of the object of study (Stake 1995), and suitable for understanding the complex character of trust funds.

During my research for this thesis I focused on the cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF in Ghana at the local community level. This approach offered me the opportunity to gain close insights into how the practices of transparency and participation can facilitate better governance of resource revenues in the context of local communities. As Flyvbjerg (2006) emphasizes, proximity to the researched object is crucial for enhancing a researcher's knowledge of the intricacies of the context of the case under study. The cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF provided a good contextual position, especially given that they operate where mechanisms for sharing benefits have not favored host communities due to lack of transparency, weak governance, which in turn has led to problems such as corruption (Al-Kasim, Søreide, and Williams 2013; Nest 2017).

With the argument that case studies can provide insightful explanations when the researcher addresses "how" and "what" questions (Yin 2012), I saw the cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF as a good starting point to scrutinize my assumption that transparency as information disclosure on the operations of the trust funds would empower the beneficiaries to demand accountability. According to Vennesson (2008), a particular case can be used as a tool to explore the interrelations between theoretical issues and actual experiences, which would be useful for falsification (Flyvbjerg 2006), or to reveal differences in some prevailing assumptions. For example, the aforementioned aspects were useful in my attempt to help validate my assumption that the participation of community members in decision-making platforms gave them equal opportunity to influence made decisions. Validating these assumptions is important, as benefit-sharing arrangements such as trust

funds do not operate merely in a vacuum. As Wynberg and Hauck (2014) note, the arrangements operate in a broader social, political, economic, historical, and cultural framework, bounded by interrelated factors, including policies, laws, and standards, the outcomes of which might grace the interests of some stakeholders more than others (Wynberg and Hauck 2014).

In furthering my exploration of theory and practice, I sought an understanding of how trust funds ensured their role as the extractive industry's intervention towards solving the problems caused by its own activities. As Yin (2013) underlines, a case study approach is useful when studying situations where the boundaries between a phenomenon and the context may not be clearly evident. The Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF exemplify such a situation, where the boundaries between their roles as benefit sharing mechanisms and their function as specific CSR strategies is unclear and cannot easily be delineated.

With regard to generalization, I argue in line with what Flyvbjerg (2006) terms as "strategic case selection," whereby case selection is concerned with generalizing theoretical propositions as opposed to generalizations based on a sampled population. First, it would be erroneous to think of my two cases as an attempt to generalize from them to the operations of other trust funds. My intention is rather to generate knowledge that is relevant for the adoption of trust funds in the context of the extractive industry in a resource-rich developing country, Ghana, and beyond, and the need to find effective mechanisms for enhancing their contribution to local development and relevance for the host communities. I see the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF in Ghana as representing new ways of understanding the practical implications of transparency and participation in their attempts to improve the governance, management, and use of resource revenues. My hope is that the insights from my research - into the practices of transparency and participation of the studied two funds - could be useful for identifying strategies for mitigating the prevailing problems that are hampering the flow of mineral benefits to host communities and, in particular, their effective and fair spending, such as corruption and patronage.

Secondly, as the adoption of trust funds in the mining industry is relatively new phenomenon, rather than providing a generalization based on the number of cases, I argue that the results

from my two cases can be used as a basis to understand the implications of the emergence and adoption of diverse global-level policy interventions at local community levels. For example, by focusing on trust funds' reliance on conventional CSR practices as approaches to community development, the cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF can contribute to nuanced explanations on the often discussed limitations and challenges of corporate engagement in the development agenda at local community level.

5.2 Process and strategies for data collection

When I started my research, it was clear that I would be engaging in in-depth qualitative research. The process and strategies for data collection for this thesis took advantage of the case study approach, which allows for more than a single source of data (Yin 2012). The data material for this thesis were derived from informal conversations, semi-structured interviews, observations, documents, reports, newspapers, audio and visual recordings, and field notes. The collection of these material meant it was necessary to be actively present in the field and to have a gatekeeper in order to enter the field.

While in the process of thinking about how I could access my chosen field of study, I, early into my main fieldwork in Ghana, came across a newspaper article about an incident that had occurred in Obuasi. The article was about an employee at AGA's sustainability department, who had died during a face-off between persons engaged in ASM and AGA's security officers. I became curious, checked the contacts of the journalist who had written the piece, and sent him an email requesting a meeting. Four days later, I met the young journalist, who had been born and raised in Obuasi, and after a two-hour conversation, he took me on a tour around Obuasi Municipality. During the tour, we visited Anwiam, a rural community where artisanal mining was being done side-by-side with AGA's concession and only separated by a 4–5 m high concrete wall, topped with barbed wire (Figure 7).

Anwiam Community



Figure 7. Anwiam community in Obuasi Municipality (Photos: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

5.2.1 Informal conversations

While I was in Anwiam community, I talked to different people, including women selling food to the miners and some individuals from around the community, who in one way or another had relation to the ongoing mining activities there. I spoke to the people about different issues, including from where I came from and my reason for being in Obuasi Municipality.

As Longhurst (2009) notes, talking to people is an excellent way of gathering information. I enjoyed the informal conversations during my entire period of fieldwork and took notes of the relevant and interesting information I gained (Figure 8). I used the conversations and notes as strategies for starting formal interviews and found them helpful for formulating and developing new questions for the interviewees. Although the informal conversations covered different topics, most of the time I tried to engage people in conversations on matters relating to mining and host communities, especially to gain an overview of the issues related to them and the general perceptions on the impacts of large scale mining. For instance, during an informal conversation with a man in Anwiam I was made aware that the mining activities that took place adjacent to AGA's concession were considered *galamsey* activities, which made me curious and I thus decided to talk with the miners.

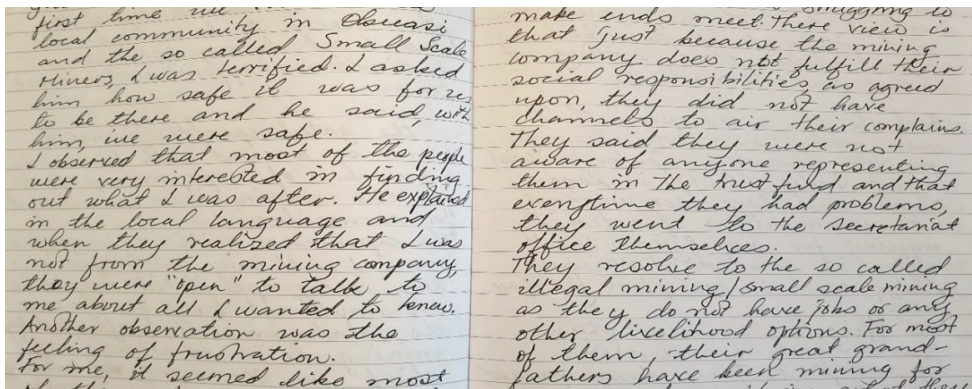


Figure 8. Field notes extract relating to Anwiam community in Obuasi Municipality (Photo: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

My conversations with the artisanal miners revealed different views on how they saw themselves. The second person I talked to did not view himself or the others as illegal miners. He claimed his family had been artisanal miners for a long time, but as most of their land had been given to AGA by the government, they had been left with no space in which to mine, which was why they were being described either as *galamsey* or as encroachers. In that way, the informal conversations also helped me to realize that there would be contradicting views and opinions on the issues I sought to explore.

The artisanal miners aroused my further curiosity about their activities and therefore I requested for a formal interview, which became my first formal interview in Obuasi.¹⁴ As the interview was to be audio-recorded and required personal information about the second artisanal miner I had talked with earlier, I gained his consent to participate by asking him to sign a consent form that I had prepared for all formal interviews (Appendix 1). The consent form also promised anonymity, but for most people I interviewed that was not a matter of great concern. The interview lasted 1.5 hours.

¹⁴ The interview and subsequent interviews were conducted in English but translated into Twi in real time in cases when the participants did not understand or give clear accounts of their experiences in English. The translations were done with the help of a research assistant, a young man whom I met in Kumasi, and had just finished his bachelor's degree in rural development studies at the Department of Geography in 2015 from Kwameh Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, in Kumasi, Ghana. He became my translator throughout the three months when I did my fieldwork.

5.2.2 Finding interview participants

According to Sargeant (2012), research participants are often sought to enhance an understanding of a study phenomenon, and the identification and selection of participants is based on the research questions and theoretical perspectives. In my case, I needed to talk to people who would enable me to capture in-depth experiences of the overall operations, functions, and activities of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF. For the purpose of my study, I needed to talk to two different groups of people, namely community members and other key stakeholders, such as the trust funds officials, representatives of the Centre for Social Impact Studies (CeSIS) (an NGO), company representatives, and local government officials. The process is described in this subsection.

Being a “visitor,” as I was often described, I had to devise a strategy to find more people to interview. At that point, it became natural to rely on the people I had already contacted. The journalist and some people in Anwiam community were able to guide me to the next community. Their directions led me to a community where the Obuasi Community Trust Fund had constructed a 20-seat toilet. Throughout my interviews with communities in Obuasi Municipality, I used the same strategy of asking people I had interviewed whether they were aware of other communities that had experiences of the operations and activities of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund. While that approach was helpful, it was not always the case that the people I interviewed knew about other communities or individuals who had some experiences of the trust funds.

In contrast to Obuasi Municipality in Ashanti Region, I was less well oriented in Brong-Ahafo Region. However, with information about NADeF available on the Internet, it was easier to find a starting point. My contact with local people in Ntotroso community began with an informal conversation with a taxi driver. While talking about mining activities in the area, the taxi driver was quick to applaud the company, emphasizing that Newmont had been good to the communities, due to the compensation payments received during the resettlement process. The taxi driver also talked about his own positive experience and told me that his taxi business was a result of the compensation his family had received, and that prior to that he had not had any source of stable income or livelihood. He used his share of the compensation to invest in the taxi, to meet the increasing need for public transportation in

Ntotroso community, resulting from Newmont's operations and other small mining-related businesses.

During the conversation with the taxi driver, we reached a point when the purpose of my visit to Ntotroso community became of interest. After telling him a little about myself and what I did, I asked if he knew about NADeF and its activities. As he was well aware of NADeF and some the implemented projects, he offered to take me to a nearby community, Kwakyekrom, where NADeF had implemented an ICT project in a local school. To identify further communities and individual interview participants in Brong-Ahafo Region, my strategy was to continue relying on my previous meetings, and the people I had met. Sometimes I also asked for directions to communities, using some pamphlets I obtained from NADeF's secretariat, which showed the names of communities and the projects and programs they had implemented.

Generally, my approach to travelling around communities and finding interview participants among the community members fits best snowball and chain referral sampling. Snowballing often starts with an index individual identified as having the key characteristics required by the study design and asking the person to recommend others with similar characteristics (Curtis et al. 2000). Thus, snowballing is a form of non-probabilistic sampling whereby persons initially chosen for a sample are used to locate others with the necessary characteristics that make them eligible for inclusion in the study sample (Bailey 1994). By contrast, chain referral involves a series of participants referring the researcher to others who have experiences of the study phenomenon, to form a sample that is closely representative of the group under study (Penrod et al. 2003).

The approach I took for selecting community members for interview favored a non-probability strategy. This was based on the view that non-probability is a suitable strategy for studies focusing on a small sample and for qualitative case studies (Taherdoost 2016). This was important, as it was not my intention to achieve a sample proportional to the populations in the study areas or communities, and I did not have a specific system for selecting interviewees, but rather the selection depended on where I went and the circumstances. For instance, in my first interview in the Anwiam community, I was interested in the artisanal mining activities and therefore it was natural to talk to the artisanal miners.

My approach for gathering information was generally based on the argument that qualitative research is useful for enabling researchers to understand human experiences and meanings within a given context using text rather than numbers (Petty, Thomson, and Stew 2012). In my case it was important to identify communities in which the trust funds had implemented some projects. I wanted to talk to people who had been involved in some programs initiated by the trust funds, such as skills training or educational scholarship, and representatives of the stakeholder groups involved in the daily operations of the trust funds. Therefore, I found it important to engage with people living where projects had been implemented and individuals who had benefitted from some of the programs.

However, using the snowball method for referral to community members for interviews can lead to some degree of bias. To lessen the likelihood of bias in my research, I focused on ensuring that I obtained opinions from a diverse sample of participants. The perceptions of the community members I interviewed represented those of various social, political, religious, and economic groups and classes. Additionally, although I was also not consciously set on ensuring a gender balance in my study sample, 59% of the participants were men and 41% were women.

In gaining access to the other key stakeholders in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF, I started the process through email communications prior to the fieldwork. My intention was to find people who could provide expert opinions on the operations of trust funds and the relationship between the stakeholders. The group of experts who participated in my study also provided useful insights into how they interacted and collaborated to ensure that the objectives of the trust funds were met. Using information from the desktop review of the existing trust funds and my preliminary fieldwork, I had identified these stakeholders as representatives of the funding companies, local government traditional authority, NGOs, and community representatives.

My strategy for selecting the experts was closely related to purposive sampling (Sargeant 2012). The rationale for employing a purposive sampling strategy is supported by the argument that it is based on the researcher's a-priori theoretical understanding of the topic or case, and in this regard a certain group of individuals may have a unique, different or important perspective on the phenomenon in question and should therefore be included in

the sample (Robinson 2014). Yin (2011, 311) provides a description of the use of purposeful sampling in a case study as “the selection of participants or sources of data to be used in a study, based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study’s research questions.”

To include representatives from the mining companies was crucial, as they funded the operations of the trust funds. The inclusion of trust funds’ officials was important in order to gain knowledge about the everyday activities of the trust funds, and their relationship with the communities they served. However, although it was important to have a direct audience with the chiefs responsible for the distribution of mineral royalties through Ghana’s redistribution framework, this proved difficult. However, I was able to talk to their representatives. I also found it important to engage with NGOs, namely the Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM), which has an office in Tema (Accra) and in Kenyasi 1, and the Centre for Social Impact Studies (CeSIS) in Obuasi town.

WACAM is a national advocacy group involved in capacity building through community outreach programs, to help people affected by mining to learn how to follow up mining-related complaints and matters concerning compensations. CeSIS was established by local community activist group to respond to the gap between national development and the real social needs of the marginalized mining communities and other social groups in Obuasi Municipality. Both the NGOs were groups of stakeholders that I thought could offer useful information about their experiences of mining companies, host communities, the trust funds, and the mining and host community experiences in general in Ghana.

5.2.3 The interviews

Interviews are generally considered useful for accessing information about the ways in which people describe or interpret their world experiences, which can be in the form of perceptions, narratives and stories (Creswell 2012). In my study, I used semi-structured interviews, also known as open-ended interviews.

When designing the semi-structured interviews, I formulated a set key guideline questions (for an example, see Appendix 2). The key questions depended on who I was talking to, but

focused to the trust funds' functions, accessibility of information and knowledge about the trust funds. When interviewing community members, I asked questions about how they acquired information about trust funds' activities, how they used the information, their views on decision-making processes, and their role or their community's role in those decisions. When interviewing the representatives of the trust funds and other experts, I asked about the key the functions of the trust funds, who were stakeholders, and what were the stakeholders' roles. The structure of the interview guides gave me the flexibility to conduct interviews in such a way that I could also ask clarifying questions whenever I needed detailed explanations. In total, the interviews involved 54 people: 44 were individual interviews, (21 in Ashanti Region and 22 in Brong-Ahafo Region) and 3 were group interviews (1 in Ashanti Region and 2 in Brong-Ahafo Region).¹⁵ While the individual interviews took 1–1.5 hours, the group interviews were longer, up to 2.5 hours. The interviews took place in different contexts, including offices, outside shops and outside completed projects, such as water and sanitation facilities (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Contexts in which the interviews were conducted (Photo: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

¹⁵ For a full list of the interviews, with different categories, dates, places, and interview types, see Appendix 3.

Given that the Obuasi Community Trust Fund operates in an area with population of about 170,000 (Ghana Statistical Service 2014),¹⁶ and NADeF serves 10 Ahafo communities with ca. 34,000 people (NADeF 2008), a sample size of 54 may seem inadequate. However, as Baxter and Eyles (1997) emphasize, in qualitative research the number of participants required is dependent on the purpose, function, and nature of the study. A small sample size does not necessarily compromise a study's credibility, as the outcomes of a study depend on the analysis of the collected information rather than the sample size (Baxter and Eyles 1997). I used information obtained from community members, trust fund officials, and representatives of companies, chiefs' representatives and NGOs, and the transcripts of the interviews indicated that the in-depth material that had been captured could aid a rich analysis with regard to my study objectives.

Sample size has implications for researchers with regard to knowing when enough information has been collected, also known as the point of saturation. Saturation in research is a sequential process whereby interviews are conducted until the information from the interviews begins to become redundant and the same information repeatedly appears in further interviews (Murphy, Myers, and Wolach 2014; Trotter 2012). I saw some general patterns in the responses before I was halfway through the fieldwork. The possibility of seeing these patterns was based on the fact that most of the transcriptions were done while still in the field. According to Sandelowski (2001), recognizing patterns involves seeing something over and over again, during which a researcher finds that certain themes are common or typical in the information gathered from the participants.

Research study designs are not universal, and there is no one-size-fits-all method to reach the saturation point during the collection of information (Fusch and Ness 2015). Hence, as Curtis et al. (2000) suggest, the researcher has to find a balance between criteria and choice. In my case, I found that going through my recorded interviews while still in the process of recording more was helpful in that I had knowledge of what stage I had reached in my research material collection. I often recognized what sort of responses had been repeated, and whether any new issues were emerging. I continued to carry out the fieldwork and conducting interviews

¹⁶ No precise data were available on exactly how many people Obuasi Community Trust Fund served.

until I talked to the 54th person and I did not find it ethical to continue the interviews any longer and to use people's time while I already had enough material.

5.2.4 Reflections on the interview process

In my view, the individual interviews were successful. All of the participants seemed comfortable and on most occasions, I felt I had a good control of the process, to ensure that we maintained focus on the main research problems. The group interviews were challenging, especially because they involved different people with different views, and some individuals considered themselves more informed than the others. For instance, some participants felt slightly insecure after an incident when one person accused another of not understanding my question and that the other person did not know what she was talking about. However, the group interviews were helpful for gaining a better understanding of how people perceived the issues at hand differently.

The outcomes of the group interviews led to important reflections. The possibilities of misunderstanding questions provided me with an opportunity to reflect upon how I asked the questions. My main goal was to secure contextually nuanced responses and probe beyond the surface of the answers, which included how the participants argued, and how they understood my questions. As I was concerned with extracting information about individual experiences of the trust funds, I tried to ask questions using simple language and in a way that it allowed the participants to express their own views. For example, given my understanding of transparency as meaning the availability of and access to information, I asked about the flow of information from the trust funds to the communities, how the trust fund officials talked to the community members about programs and project plans, and how often the officials asked the communities what they needed, instead of asking the participants whether they thought the trust funds were transparent.

Furthermore, during my fieldwork it was important for me to reflect on the issues of power between me and the people I was interviewing with the regard to knowledge production. Dowling (2000) refers to a "speaking position," or the relationship between the researcher and the researched, as a position that can influence how and what knowledge is produced.

While conducting the interviews, I tried to be conscious of how I was talking or asking questions, to ensure that the interviewees understood that I was not there to represent a higher hierarchy, to dictate how knowledge was produced, but rather that the production of knowledge depended on my relationship and interaction with them. For instance, during the interviews, I reminded the interviewees that the reason I was asking questions was for me to understand what was going on, and particularly how they perceived the operations of the trust funds and other issues discussed.

The outcomes of some interviews revealed how my emotions as researcher were important in the research process. Many authors in the social sciences, particularly those concerned with poverty in developing countries, have recognized the significance of emotions (e.g., McQuoid and Dijst 2012). Such a situation manifested while I was interviewing a man who was a caretaker at a toilet facility constructed by the Obuasi Community Trust Fund. I realized that he had difficulties in answering my questions. Given that he was in his late seventies, I did not feel comfortable asking him a lot of questions. According to the man, he was paid around USD 4 a week, according to how many people used the toilet facility. He was given the job because he was one of the oldest members of the community without any form of income, and that he was not physically fit to do any form manual labor. The caretaker job was suitable for him, as most of the time he only had to sit.

In articulating the place of emotions in academic research, Widdowfield states that “not only can emotions affect the research process in terms of what is studied, by whom and in what way, but [they] may also influence researcher’s interpretations and readings of a situation” (Widdowfield 2000, 199). The statement reflects how I understood my reaction to the elderly man. To some extent, I felt that continuing to interview the caretaker at the toilet facility in Obuasi Municipality would be unethical, and even a way of taking advantage of his situation to achieve my goals as researcher. However, in a research process, accounting for the emotions of both the researcher and the study participant can be challenging. For example, detailing the influence of emotions in a research study might also lead to a self-absorbing process, whereby the research is performed through the emotions of the researcher at the expense of the researched (Widdowfield 2000).

From the interview with the elderly caretaker in Obuasi Municipality, it was clear to me that I had to be more observant when choosing interviewees and to consider their personal situations before asking them to participate in my study. In subsequent interviews, I had longer informal conversations before asking people to be participants. At the same time, I had a task to fulfill and I could not let my emotions take over my purpose of doing research. As Widdowfield (2000) notes, the contact between qualitative researchers and research subjects through in-depth interviews requires a deep level of involvement, and in such relations the emotions of the parties involved should not be overlooked.

5.2.5 Observations as research material

It has been argued that the opportunity to make direct observations in a field setting, focusing on, for example, human actions, physical environments or real-time events, is one of the most distinctive features of a case study (Yin 2012). Kearns (2010, 242) explains observation as the outcome of active choice rather than mere exposure, and “our-choice – whether conscious or unconscious – of first what we to see and second how to see it, means that we always have an active role in the observation process.” I was keen to learn about what was going on in Ghana during my stay, during the interviews, and in general how people managed their everyday lives. I therefore took many photos and kept a diary in which I recorded my observations (Figure 10).

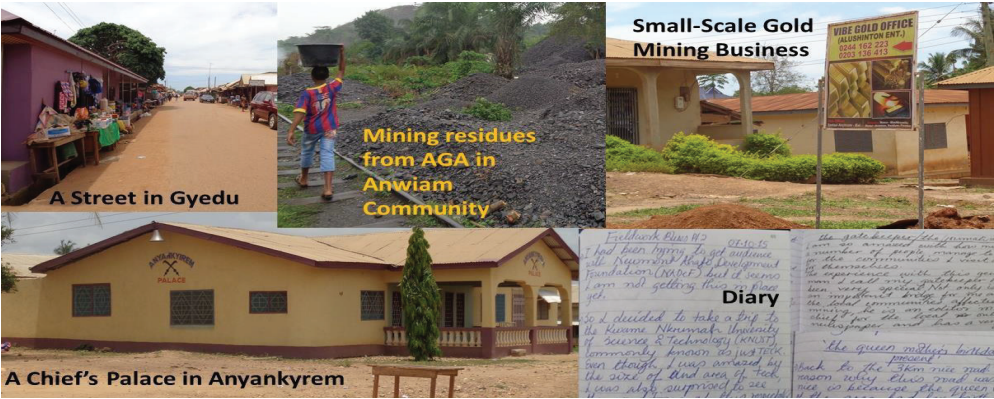


Figure 10. The use of photos and field notes to record observations (Photos: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

In research, the term participant observation has been used to refer to the observatory engagement of a researcher in the social setting or phenomenon they intend to study (Bryman 2012). I do not consider my method was participant observation, whereby a researcher actively observes how particular processes take place, for example by attending a community outreach session to see how meetings with trust funds are organized. However, I wanted to witness some of the activities and processes in decision-making, especially with regard to community outreach processes of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF. I therefore asked to be informed when such meetings would occur, so that I could attend, but did not receive any responses. Hence, my observations were restricted to the overall context of my study and the places to which I had access, and I tried to be engaged in all situations in the field beyond the formalized interviews and interactions.

I not only observed the everyday experiences, but was also concerned with the general environment, and was particularly attentive to signs and symbols that had relations to my study topic. For instance, I came across billboards and signposts that gave an impression that corruption was a problem in Ghana, and people were being encouraged to uphold honesty; even a school in Obuasi had the element “defeat corruption” in its name (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Roadside billboard in Kumasi (left) and a school signpost in Obuasi (right) (Photo: S. A. Kasimba, 2016)

5.2.6 Documents, reports and newspapers

During the fieldwork I was interested in finding as many documents and reports as possible about the two studied trust funds. However, the Obuasi Community Trust Fund did not have any official documents to give me, and it was not possible to find such documents and reports on the Internet, only short reports in newspapers about the commissioning of some projects (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Examples of information on the Internet about the Obuasi Community Trust Fund

Although the provision of information does not necessarily mean transparency, information availability can allow citizens to monitor the use and management of revenue (Augustine 2012). While information about the Obuasi Community Trust Fund was not publicly accessible, information about NADeF was accessible on its website, from which I obtained information about the trust fund, its vision, what NADeF does, and how it operates. Furthermore, some documents and pamphlets could be downloaded from their website (Figure 13).

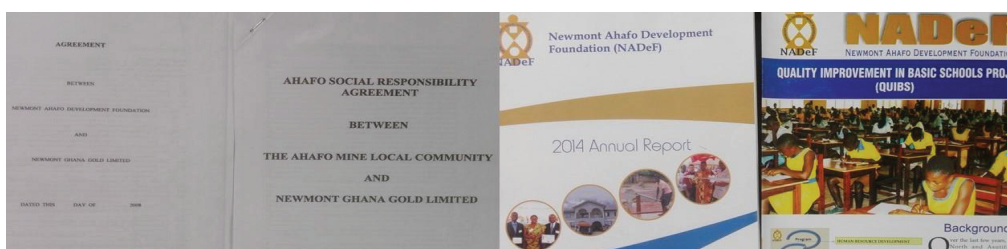


Figure 13. Examples of documents and reports provided by NADeF

Additionally, I purchased newspapers almost every weekday and it is due to this routine that I managed to get a gatekeeper. Reading the news helped me to understand the social, political and economic trends in Ghana. I was observant of any news or report that concerned Ghana’s mining sector, host communities, transparency, and corruption, as they were important for understanding the study context and the level at which the people I talked to viewed my study topic in relation to the current affairs. I noted the crucial role of the media in transparency and corruption issues related to mining and the overall implications for various institutions in Ghana (Figure 14). For instance, I arrived in Ghana just when a local investigative “anonymous” journalist (his name was Anas Aremeyaw Anas or just Anas Anas) had uncovered what seemed to be the biggest corruption scandal in Ghana’s judiciary history: more than 30 judges and ca. 170 judicial officers in Ghana were accused to be involved in systematic bribery (through a secret video recording) (BBC 2015). Although the newspaper either did not or could not report the case in detail, it touched on one of the key concerns of my study, corruption, and enabled me to understand that perhaps the problem was not exclusive to the natural resource sector and distribution of mining benefits in the country.



Figure 14. Extracts from Ghanaian newspapers (Photo by S. A. Kasimba, 2015/2016)

5.3 Material and analysis

An analysis of qualitative interviews concerns obtaining insights into regular or problematic experiences, and the meanings individuals and groups attach to those experiences, which involves examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing the collected material

(Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2007; Strauss and Corbin 1998). While an analysis is often determined by the research questions and steered by a theoretical framework, it is important to find an effective method for organizing the collected material, which can be manual or using software programs such as NVIVO and Atlas.ti (Bryman and Cramer 2012, Jackson and Bazeley 2019). For my analysis, I manually coded all interviews. My aim was to capture patterns emerging from the transcribed interview materials that would give meaning to my study objective.

At its core, qualitative analysis is often supposedly led by an inductive approach, where patterns, themes and categories emerge from the material rather than being established prior to data collection and analysis (Srivastava and Hopwood 2009; Strauss and Corbin 1998). However, as St. Pierre and Jackson (2014, 717) state, “there is no recipe for this kind of analysis – for thinking with theory – because one has to first read, and study theory carefully and then put it to work in a particular project.” In other words, the patterns and themes do not emerge on their own; rather, their emergence is driven by what the researcher wants to know and how the researcher interprets what the material tells him or her (Srivastava and Hopwood 2009).

To start the process of analysis and to refresh my memory, I went through the transcribed interviews several times; most of the material had been transcribed while still in Ghana. I then extracted parts of the interviews that explicit related to my research objectives and those that expressed other issues that I had not explicitly included in the interview guides but were related to the activities of the trust funds. I compiled the interview extracts in a table, including information about the interviewed participants, questions and/or follow-up questions, responses, the initial study themes, and the emerging themes (Table 7).

To give my analysis a label, it generally resembled thematic content analysis, which involves the identification and gathering of themes within the data and from the text (Burnard et al. 2008; Gough and Scott 2000). However, this is not a straightforward process. Coding and analysis of descriptive material is a time-consuming iterative process (Berkowitz 1997; Yin 2017) that requires a lot of back and forth engagement with data material when a new idea occurs to the researcher. In my case, whenever a new theme emerged, I went back to the collected material to check whether and how many participants had opinions on the

identified issue or theme. Although it was impossible to make sense of all of their responses, I found it important to check further the extent to which the emerging issues were expressed in the responses. I considered that the approach allowed me to make the participants' voices heard in the research, rather than relying solely on my preconceived key themes.

Table 7. Examples of interview extracts and material analysis

Interview participant	Question/follow-up question	Response	Initial key themes	Emerging themes
Representative of Obuasi Community Trust Fund Obuasi March 14, 2016	What and how is the relationship between the trust fund and the local community members?	The relationship between us and the community is cordial, and we also have the chiefs, and the local government as part of the governing body. When it comes to participation, before we embark on any project in the community, we involve the community leaders, the community itself particularly the community members.	Governance Participation	Trust fund-community relationships The role of traditional Institutions
Community activist/NGO worker Obuasi March 14, 2016	What is your opinion about the formation of such an institution?	It's a perfect institution that anybody at all can boast of, but the question is whether there is any social or political influence in their activities because the trust fund is supposed to be autonomous. If they are being housed by the mining company, then directly or indirectly, the company might have an influence over them. Another problem is that most community members don't know about how the trust fund works. There is no information.	Governance Information disclosure (transparency)	Trust funds' autonomy The legitimization of the company's role in the trust fund Company influence Operational context (social/political influence)
Local male trader from Gyedu) Gyedu March 16, 2016	What do you think is the problem?	Now, Newmont and the chiefs control everything. They don't come and talk to people about their plans, they just build things. The money they use on teachers' quarters	Ownership Governance Information and communication	Company and traditional institution relationships Priority and needs

		could be used for doing something to benefit the whole community. Sometimes they think we can't do things for ourselves, but that is not true. We know what we need.	Power	Implementation of projects
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Based on the key themes of my research, I was interested in identifying perceptions related to the participation of community members and other stakeholders in the trust funds, information and communication between the trust funds and the key stakeholders, the governance and management structures of the trust funds, expressions of ownership or geographical closeness to the trust funds, and representation of communities in various decision-making mechanisms. Prior to the fieldwork, I had made the interview guide based on the key themes (Appendix 2), but as I increasingly engaged with the material it became clear to me that other important issues needed to be included in the analysis. For instance, I found that issues related to community development projects and CSR practices were elements that informed how the participants, especially the community members and NGOs, perceived the functions, operations, and activities of the trust funds. Additionally, the perceptions that accounted for the emerging themes were important for addressing the relationship between the role of the trust funds with regard to the funding companies' engagement in community development.

My experience of performing the analysis of material confirmed to me that whatever analytical tool or strategy a researcher chooses, "it is still inevitably the case that the researcher arrives on the scene with preconceived ideas" (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña 1994, cited in Gough and Scott 2000, 340). The interviews revealed how the participants understood the pre-field study themes. For instance, according to representatives from NADeF, the fact that the trust fund had a website and some documents available online meant their operations were transparent. For local community members, transparency involved knowing everything, from how much the company made in profit to how contracts were awarded to implement different community projects. Although the participants' perceptions and understanding of the themes varied, they both captured the basic notion or components of transparency as access to and availability of information.

5.4 Methodological reflections

Generally, reflections on a research methodology concerns the researcher's positionality, the implications for choices, research ethics, and any challenges faced during the study. Such reflections often occur at a philosophical level and relate to the basic elements of research paradigms¹⁷ (Lincoln and Guba 2000). However, despite these considerations, it is not my intention to engage in a profound philosophical discussion, or to attempt to disqualify any assumptions guiding different academic philosophies. Philosophical discussions regarding research methodology are often flanked by the choice of methods and research process of a study, particularly concerning how a researcher positions herself, to bridge her conceptions about reality with regard to what we can know and how we can know it.

However, the notion of what we can know and how we can know is contentious in the academic world. There are arguments about what we can know, whether reality is shaped by different social values, constructed by multiple realities, or probabilistically apprehensible (ontology) (Healy and Perry 2000). Other arguments concern how we produce knowledge (epistemology)—the balance between subjectivity, objectivity, whether objectivity exists, the point of verification (often in quantitative research), a researcher's position as a participant within the investigated world, and the interpretation of the collected data (Healy and Perry 2000). I see the underlying philosophical assumptions that keep these debates alive as important aspects that have helped me to reflect my efforts to produce knowledge, and to reflect on the position of the claims I have constructed through the collection and analysis of my material.

In reflecting on my stance as a researcher, I see my research as having been guided by the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. In this paradigm, objective knowledge and truth is viewed as a result of perceptions and are therefore constructed, and not discovered outside the human mind (Baxter and Eyles 1997; Guba and Lincoln 1994; Schwandt 1994). When

¹⁷ A paradigm can be defined as "a loose connection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research" (Bogdan and Biklen 1998, 22). Other scholars describe a paradigm as a philosophical intent or motivation for understanding a study (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 1994), or, through three elements, as a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology, and validity criterion (Mac Naughton, Rolfe, and Siraj-Blatchford 2001).

examining the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF, the perceptions held by community members and other stakeholders were used as a lens to assess the embeddedness of transparency and participatory practices in the trust funds. An assumption was that the interviewed participants had knowledge and experiences of the trust funds that could be interpreted and used to explain the embeddedness of transparency and participatory practices. In the language of the interpretivists/constructivists, the nature and existence of the social world depends on the subjective knowledge and understanding of reality (Chowdhury 2015; Edwards, O'Mahoney, and Vincent 2014).

In thinking within the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher is seen as a co-creator of knowledge, concerned with his or her interaction with the research participants. This is materialized in the interpretivist argument as follows: the process of knowledge construction hinges on the interaction between the interviewer and participants (Guba and Lincoln 1994). By reflecting on my interaction and relationships with my interviewees, and the situational interviews, I found that the interactions had shaped and reshaped my research process in two ways. *First*, on the level of knowledge production, I was able to understand that the participants' subjectivity, their understanding of the trust funds, my theoretical assumptions, and subjectivity were all constitutive in enhancing our knowledge about the trust funds. Also, I was in a position in which I was responsible for deciding and choosing the interview extracts and analytical strategies to interpret the experiences of the research participants in order to make meaning with regard to how we can understand the trust funds. *Second*, I found that my relationship with the research participants had implications for the dynamics of my research process, as exemplified by the occasion when I had to terminate the interview with the elderly caretaker. As I was aware of the risk of such an outcome, I tried to be more conscious about my emotions and those of the participants during the research process.

The above-mentioned reflections were important for me during my research, as I see research interviews as a form of reciprocity, whereby the people I interview and myself are involved in exchange of ideas and experiences, and in these circumstances, ethics is equally important. As Lincoln (1995, 287) emphasizes, "many of the standards for quality in interpretive social sciences are also standards for ethics." With the benefit of hindsight, I found myself becoming more observant about the situations under which the interviews were held. I occasionally

interrupted the interviews to ask whether the participants were comfortable or thirsty, and as a matter of personal ethics, I was careful not to find myself in an exploitative situation merely to advance my research agenda.

However, regardless of their chosen research approach or paradigm, a researcher should be able to provide readers with the opportunity to assess the trustworthiness, dependability, and credibility in their written work. Hence, a researcher should ensure that the research objectives and questions are clearly defined and substantiated, the appropriateness of the choice of case study with regard to the study objective, the suitability of the applied sampling criteria, that data collection is well-systematized, and that the gathered material is thoroughly analyzed (Russell et al. 2005).

In my research, I used more than one strategy. As shown in Chapter 2, I began with a literature review that included the current situation of the distribution of benefits from natural resources, the mechanisms used and their implications for local communities. I reviewed the literature on the key concepts informing my study: transparency and participation in the context of natural resource revenue management. The strategy for data collection process involved a case study of two trust funds, supported by semi-structured interviews. As suggested, social research concerned with experiences should employ qualitative interviews to capture influential factors that participants might be aware of but that might be unknown to the researcher (Guba and Lincoln 1994).

My analyzed material included field observations and other secondary material, such as available annual reports and other documents, which were useful for providing a broader perspective during the process of interpreting the data. The holistic nature of the qualitative approach, with the in-depth semi-structured interviews, was useful when validating the extent to which the study participants' experiences were representative of the studied phenomenon, as well as issues of reliability, or the degree to which the collected data was dependable or even transferable (Creswell and Miller 2000; Long and Johnson 2000).

5.5 Some study limitations

Some of the challenges I faced during the study process might have had implications for the overall limitations of the study. I understand limitations as issues arising during a study, which might be beyond a researcher's control. While some limitations in my study might have been overlooked, in this subsection I examine issues that I consider are important to acknowledge as possible limitations in my study. In my reflections, the possible limitations cut across the strategy for finding interview participants, sample representativeness, interviews and interview guide, and limited empirical literature on trust funds.

5.5.1 Finding interview participants

A common challenge when conducting face-to-face interviews is finding research participants. In Ghana, my perception was that a considerable number of people I talked to, formally or informally, expressed discontent about the extent to which the mining industry had led to significant socioeconomic developments. Combined with strategies resembling the snowballing technique that I applied, their discontent could have posed some limitations for my study in the form of bias concerning to whom and to where I was referred, and why a particular individual or community was mentioned in the interviews. While my research objective was not directly concerned with the negative impacts of mining, I found that people often directed me to communities that they "heard" or thought had had negative experiences with mining activities.

While I was aware of the risk of bias, I could not entirely overcome this potential limitation, especially given that I could not know whether the people who were responsible for directing me were conscious of the implications for my study. For this reason, I had to ensure that my sample was representative and included people with diverse social, political, cultural, and religious backgrounds, as mentioned in Section 5.2.

Furthermore, with regard to the issue of sampling, the representativeness of my interview participants became an important concern to reflect on with respect to the limitations of the study. The lack of a direct audience with the chiefs responsible for the governance of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF might have had implications with respect to bias.

Including the chiefs' personal accounts would have been useful in order to address the common perception that they have been involved in misappropriation and mismanagement of funds when targeting communities affected by mining. Despite the fact that I had planned to talk to some chiefs, my efforts to address some of them were fruitless, and the people I knew in Ghana had no possibilities to help me to gain access to the traditional authorities. This meant that my understanding of the chiefs' role in the trust funds and in the context of distributing benefits from mining relied mainly on people's opinions and the literature I reviewed.

5.5.2 Interview questions

Finding interview participants and ensuring that a sample is representative are significant concerns in research studies. Additionally, the interview in itself and the questions asked play an equally important role in the production of knowledge. Before my fieldwork, I had preplanned the questions I wanted to ask, and when I was going through the transcripts of the interviews, I noted that although pre-planned interview guides were a good strategy for time management, they could have restricted my interviewees from talking about issues that they considered would have been important for me to know. My interview guide might have led the interviews in the direction I wanted to capture the research themes, but at the same time that might have hindered my interviewees from going deeper into their thoughts and experiences.

My interview guide alone could not help me capture the broader implications of the mining industry, as the questions were framed with a specific focus on the trust funds and within the key themes of the study. However, I tried to counter the possible limitations of the interview guide by asking, at the end of every interview, whether the interviewees had anything to add or could think of anything that was important for me to know. In some cases, the closing questions proved useful as they offered me the opportunity to learn more about the mining industry and host communities. For instance, I was informed about the only airport in Obuasi Municipality: the airport had been constructed by the AngloGold Ashanti for its private operations, and therefore to me the airport served as a clear symbol of the presence a large-scale mining industry in Obuasi Municipality. While I was able to gain an overview of the

impacts of mining in Ghana through the literature review, the literature offered few details about the trust funds.

5.5.3 Literature and research

Previous empirical research on a studied phenomenon is significant for establishing a theoretical research foundation for understanding a given research problem. In the case of the increasing establishment of trust funds as local benefit-sharing strategies, I found that the empirical literature had little to offer. My own experience is that the scarcity of empirical studies of local benefit-sharing trust funds afforded me limited opportunities to set up a robust theoretical and analytical framework to examine the implications of transparency and participatory practices in benefit sharing. However, as demonstrated in Article I, the limited literature on the trust funds also motivated the development of an analytical framework that may be a useful steppingstone for further research on trust funds, transparency and participation.

6.0 Articles, key findings and discussion

In this part of the thesis, I present the three articles and discuss the key findings.

6.1 Articles I–III

Article I: There is no one amongst us with them! Transparency and participation in local natural resource revenue management

In this article, we argue that the disclosure of information on several aspects of trust funds, such as revenue spending, should serve as the basis for community members to form or revise their views on the use and management of funds, and if desired, allow them to voice their concerns and request changes in the trust funds' management. In support of the argument, we developed an analytical framework that focused on transparency in the operations of the trust funds, representation of the local residents in decision-making bodies, and their opportunities to exert real influence on the management of the funds as enabling conditions for meaningful participation by local community members in the management of the trust funds.

The first issue raised in the article is the availability of information on the management and operations of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF. We found that both trust funds disseminated information to the community members through different channels. However, the perceptions of community members indicated an apparent lack of communication, and that the disclosed information tended to be insufficient, irrelevant, and difficult to understand. Consequently, community members had no basis on which to form knowledgeable opinions about the management and use of funds.

The second issue raised in the article is the mechanisms for the representation of the community members in the decision-making bodies. We found that despite representation mechanisms in place, they did not lead to meaningful participation. As the trust funds employed forms of community representation based on the existing social, cultural and political context at the local community level, the positions and power held by the chiefs and the political elite weakened the opportunities for ordinary community members to directly participate in decision-making.

The third issue in the article focuses on community members' influence in the management and operations of the trust funds. To exert this influence, the trust funds' representatives pointed to the various committees as ways for ensuring that community members had influence on various decisions made in the use and management of funds. However, the community members felt that they were not able to influence the trust funds' operations, and therefore considered that the trust funds were neither transparent nor accountable, and that they (the community members) had little ownership of the trust funds.

Article II: "Sometimes it feels like everything has been decided!" Challenges faced by participatory governance platforms when sharing mining benefits

In Article II we examine the experiences of the stakeholders on the steering committee of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the Ahafo Social Responsibility Forum (ASRF) in NADeF, both of which represent participatory platforms that aim to provide opportunities for the stakeholders to engage in the governance of the trust funds. The aim of the article is to address the degree to which key local stakeholders perceive the institutionalization of participatory governance platforms as legitimate, as well as the implications of stakeholder competence and power relations for the functioning of the platforms.

The article focuses on three key aspects that we argue should promote functional, equal, autonomous, and effective participatory governance platforms: legitimacy of the platform in the eyes of the local stakeholders, platform participants' competence, and power relations between the platform stakeholders and those who are subject to decisions made by the governance platform. The findings presented in the article reveal three key challenges facing the respective participatory governance platforms.

The first challenge emanates from the processes leading to the establishment of the platforms and the selection of platform participants. According to the representatives of the trust funds, the legitimacy of the platforms was strong, as independent consultants were hired to facilitate the processes leading to their establishment, and also engaged the chiefs and local leaders. However, the findings revealed that the NGOs and community members were not

satisfied with their own involvement in the process of establishing the platforms and in the procedures for selecting/electing participants to the platforms. For that reason, the NGOs and community members were reluctant to acknowledge the platforms' legitimacy in full.

The second challenge facing the participatory governance platforms related to the lack of competence among the platforms' participants, which affected their ability to contribute to policymaking on various impacts of mining, such as environmental and socioeconomic development in the communities. While the lack of competence in policymaking pointed to the local institutions such as the chiefs, the trust funds' officials expressed their concerns about the community representatives' poor understanding of issues such as compensation guidelines. Together, these limitations affected the quality of decisions and the performance of the steering committee of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the ASRF.

The third challenge was that the platforms' autonomy was affected by power relations. The companies exerted influence on the formation of the platforms, the issues discussed, the rules for participation, and which project proposals were accepted. Further, the social and cultural powers of the chiefs limited the participation of community and NGO representatives, who felt compelled to agree with the traditional authorities' points of view, rather than have their own opinions heard.

Article III: Examining host communities' perceptions of trust funds as corporate strategies for community development in Ghana

In the study on which Article III is based, I adopted a bottom-up approach to contemplate the theoretical and practical boundaries of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF as specific CSR strategies. To address this objective, I examined host communities' perceptions on the activities of trust funds with regard to the implemented programs and projects and assessed the potential and challenges of using trust funds as corporate-led strategies for community development. Although there were some positive perceptions that some implemented projects were beneficial, the overall finding presented in the article suggests

that community members were not persuaded that the implemented outputs could be considered substantial benefits. Specifically, three key findings stood out.

The first finding was that the implementation of the diverse projects was perceived as lacking sufficient planning and needs assessment. For these reasons, community members did not view the implemented projects as providing solutions for local needs and they felt that too often the projects were detached from the local realities. The detachment of the funds and their projects from the local realities was reinforced by the emergence of feelings of marginalization, for instance in the case of the ASM sector, which resulted in claims of wrong prioritization of skills training in mechanics and masonry instead of ASM.

The second finding was that the activities of the trust funds prioritized companies' own business interests over sincere attempt to contribute to local development. Particularly, the perceived value and type of the implemented programs and projects caused a number of participants to question the extent to which the trust funds were motivated by a genuine sense of social responsibility. As a result, the trust funds' implementation of projects was perceived as merely compliance with the investors and requirements for ICMM member organizations to legitimize the mining business, rather than them being implemented for the benefit of the communities.

The third finding relates to the funding companies' need to comply with the extractive industry's global operational standards regarding investment in community development and the conventional CSR practices. The findings reveal that the trust funds have also adopted such standards and practices and that such standards and practices have not been entirely favorable in the trust funds local operational contexts and have posed some limitations for effective engagement in and promotion of community development. For instance, with regard to inflexibility, the trust fund officials found their frameworks to be limiting as found in cases where they were unable to provide support for some community demands and needs.

6.2 Discussion of key findings

The increasing establishment of trust funds coincide with the global promotion of enhanced transparency and the need for effective mechanisms to ensure that resource extraction contribute to the socioeconomic development in the host communities, especially in resource-rich developing countries. Many of the trust funds have been established with objectives to enhance transparency and accountability, foster stakeholder participation in governance of resource revenues, and to set up systematic approaches to community development.¹⁸ In my research I used the cases of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF to enhance the understanding of the role of trust funds in the extractive industry, with a focus on transparency and participation as key components of good governance, and the establishment of the trust funds as corporate approaches to community development.

While the studied trust funds showed commitment towards enhancing transparency, fostering stakeholder participation, and contributing to community development, a number of challenges and limitations remained, as will be shown by the discussion in this section. I address some of the challenges and limitations based on three themes: transparency as information disclosure (6.2.1), conditions for participation practices (6.2.2), and trust funds as CSR strategies for community development (6.2.3).

6.2.1 Transparency as information disclosure

Regarding transparency as information disclosure, i.e. the accessibility and availability of information, the findings from the study of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF indicated that they were to a certain degree transparent. The trust funds disseminated information to their stakeholders through a variety of channels, which included but were not limited to the respective participatory governance platforms, community meetings, radio, newspaper, and website in the case of NADeF (Articles I and II).

¹⁸ For details on the purposes of trust funds, see Wall and Pelon 2011, 20–21.

However, despite the information dissemination mechanisms in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF, the findings indicate that the scope of transparency in the trust funds was limited as the community members felt that they did not receive enough information on the funds. For example, although meetings were held with the community members, many of community members felt that they were excluded from the key meetings, in which the important decisions were made (Article I). For example, in the annual general meetings that should involve a good representation of all key stakeholders, only a few common community members were often present, resulting in less information reaching the local residents. Also, the interviews indicated that most of the community representatives rarely shared information from the meetings with the people they represented.

Sufficient information about the operations of the trust funds should be available and accessible to all key stakeholders, if they are to have an opinion on the operations of the trust funds. As Florini (2007) emphasizes, it is the degree of information made available to the outsiders that enables an informed voice in decisions or assessment of the decision made. However, as argued in Article I, the degree to which transparency can be beneficial also depends on whether the content of information is relevant for the recipient. Relevant information is important if transparency is viewed as a condition necessary for accountability that will lead to transformations by ensuring that those who are negatively affected have the capability to make meaningful demands for mining companies' answerability and redress (Gonçalves 2017).

Gonçalves' argument (2017) is useful for understanding why the information provided by the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF was apparently viewed as irrelevant and difficult to understand (Article I). Although the studied trust funds shared information, it was often about the projects that the trust funds wanted to implement or had completed, and less about the processes and decisions leading to project proposals, selection, and implementation (Articles I, II and III). Furthermore, often the information provided was in English, for example in most of NADeF's documents, and the language was too technical and thus perhaps only understood by people who were not directly affected by the operations of the trust funds (Article I).

The inability of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF to provide substantial and relevant information in a comprehensible way aggravated by the fact that the information tended to be relatively outdated. While NADeF has a website, providing access to documents such as annual financial reports for previous years, the Obuasi Community Trust Fund lacked even that (Article I). For transparency to become embedded in an organization, the disseminated information should provide details, but equally importantly the information should be accessible and available in real time (Fung, Graham, and Weil 2007). The lack of real-time and continuous access to information, not only limits the possibilities for beneficiaries to participate meaningfully in decision-making, but also obstructs monitoring of the trust funds' operations (Articles I and II).

The above findings show that transparency as information disclosure is a necessary component of good governance as it lays basis for meaningful participation of informed stakeholders who are focused to achieving a common goal (Hare et al. 2018; Swapan 2016).

6.2.2 Conditions for participation practices

My findings indicate that at least some of the required conditions for participation practices were present in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF. This is evident in their inclusion of the key stakeholders in their governance structures, such as the representation of the mining companies, local governments, traditional authorities, NGOs, civil society groups, and the communities in various decision-making bodies such as the participatory governance platforms (i.e., the steering committee of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the ASRF). These participatory governance platforms should have created spaces and opportunities for all participating stakeholders to influence decision-making.

As a governance practice, stakeholders' participation should lead to an equal level of decision-making and empower the weaker stakeholders such as community members to influence decisions (Boakye et al. 2018; Eversole 2011). Furthermore, participation, particularly by community members in the activities of trust funds is important because it should increase the likelihood of positive transformations regarding the implementation of the shared

benefits in communities that host resource extractions, as they are best situated in assessing the community's most pressing needs (Article III). However, including representatives for local institutions such as traditional authorities and local governments, on the governance platforms seem to have had hindered effective decision-making, benefit sharing, and the implementation of projects and outputs (Articles I, II and III).

While documents showing the representation mechanisms in the case of the Obuasi Community trust Fund were not available, in the case of NADeF they were found in the agreements between Newmont and Ahafo communities that were and still are available on NADeF's website (NADeF 2008). The agreements state that community members are represented in the ASRF through the chiefs, local assembly officials, and some ordinary individuals from the Ahafo communities. However, for both of the studied trust funds, some community members were not sure about who represented them in the various trust fund decision-making bodies (Article I). The obscurity regarding the community representatives renders the interviewees' views of weak legitimacy of the participatory governance platforms understandable (Article II). Further, the community members and the NGOs felt that they were not significantly involved in the processes that led to the establishment of the steering committee of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and the ASRF, or in the frameworks for selecting/electing the platform participants.

In taking the participatory governance platforms as a lens through which to examine participation practices in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF yet further, I find that power asymmetries, engendered by social, cultural and political status, restrict the empowerment and direct participation of community members (Article II). In that, the chiefs' powers stand out as an impediment to meaningful participation by community members and NGOs, who often felt obliged to agree with the traditional authorities' views as a result of their powerful position in the local communities (Articles I and II).

Possibly, as Geenen (2016) notes, in communities that historically have depended on the chiefs as key mediators in the redistribution of mineral benefits, such as in Ghana, achieving community members' direct influence in making decisions might prove difficult. In Ghana, the role of the chieftaincy in various social and political issues such as land administration is legitimized and acknowledged in the country's constitution (Republic of Ghana 1992), which

gives them an advantage to assume the role of representatives in the redistribution of benefits from mining in the host communities, and consequently also in the trust funds (Article I).

However, the inclusion of local institutions such as the traditional authority was found to cast doubt on the quality of the participatory governance platforms. Despite the lack of any evidence of corruption or misappropriation of funds that directly implicated the chiefs, some community members expressed skepticism towards the chiefs' role in the trust funds (Articles I and II). In the views of some community members, the chiefs as their representatives in the trust funds did not necessarily mean that they sought to advance the community interests, but instead the chiefs only exploited their opportunities to gain supply contracts with the mining companies (Article I). The doubts about the chiefs have created a wave of mistrust about the involvement of the local institutions, such as the chiefs and other local political elite, in the governance of trust funds (Articles I and II). This skepticism and lack of trust have been stimulated by previous experiences that have shown an association between some chiefs and politicians on the one hand, and the misappropriation of community development funds on the other hand, in mining communities in Ghana (Dupuy 2017; Lawer, Lukas, and Jørgensen 2017).

From the findings presented in this thesis, it can be argued that the participatory governance platforms in the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF have the potential to foster stakeholder participation. At the same time, the thesis also highlights how some problems and dilemmas can emerge from the outset, already in the design and establishment of the participatory arrangements and can affect the potential promised by inclusive participation (Article II).

The limited participation and opportunities for community members and NGO representatives in the governance of the trust funds to influence decisions also draw attention to the operational contexts of the trust funds. The importance of operational contexts has been highlighted by some analysts of the resource curse, such as Kolstad and Wiig (2009), who argue that mitigating problems such as lack of accountability and corruption, which have hindered effective distribution of benefits from resource extractions in many

resource-rich developing countries such as Ghana, can only be achieved through high-quality institutions.

6.2.3 Trust funds as CSR strategies for community development

I find that the reliance of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF on conventional CSR practices to facilitate community development might be contextually disconnected from local realities and cannot easily be integrated into the local community setting (Article III). However, this argument does not preclude the potential of the trust funds to contribute to community development. Instead, the aim of my research is to increase understanding and encourage discussion on the implications of applying community development strategies framed at the global level, such as trust funds and other CSR practices, as apt solutions to problems at local level.

The conventional CSR practices in the extractive industry call for companies to engage in social and environmental problems related to their operations, and to generate benefits to the affected communities in terms of development (Fordham, Robinson, and Blackwell 2017; Yap 2017). As Reich (1998, 9) claims, the issue is not “whether companies should be responsible in some way to society, but rather how they should be responsible.”

To achieve a good foundation for contributing to community development the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF should engage the beneficiaries in the identification and assessment of their needs. In the absence of community engagement, the trust funds are likely to miss opportunities to identify useful projects and programs that could lead to significant self-reliance and contributions to substantial economic empowerment and development (Article III). As illustrated by one participant, the provision of micro-credit without integrated training in business skills can limit the prospects of the micro-credit scheme’s impact on economic empowerment (Article III). The thesis findings resonate with findings of another study of the link between CSR and development in Ghana: Osei-Kojo and Andrews (2018) found that inadequate involvement of beneficiaries in implementing corporate development initiatives weakened the potential of CSR to improve people’s livelihoods.

I also find that the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF as community development agents lacked operational, and perhaps also financial capacity to meet some of the community members' demands and expectations and in some cases it was unclear for the community members what benefits could be claimed by community members. The latter resulted in inability of the trust funds' officials to support some of the demands put forward by community members, for instance, for covering hospital bills and school fees, as they were beyond the trust funds' operations and responsibility (Article III).

It is possible to argue that the trust funds' inability to settle all the requests they received was at least partially related to the rigid nature of funds' operational frameworks when it comes to selecting projects to be funded. As some scholars have suggested, corporate-led community initiatives are often constructed by the corporations themselves, and therefore varying perceptions of CSR outcomes transpire as different stakeholders have different expectations of what should or can be achieved (Maconachie and Hilson 2013).

Furthermore, this thesis highlights how the involvement of mining companies in the trust funds activities and operations can affect the choices and types of projects and programs to be prioritized and implemented (Article III). This finding echoes the finding by Guo (2019), namely that the participation of Newmont in Ghana's Birim North District as a stakeholder in community development efforts challenged the local government's role in implementing development initiatives. Guo's study also revealed that as Newmont's community development plan was restricted to communities affected by its operations, Newmont's collaboration with the local government was difficult as the latter wanted to pursue a more holistic development while the company was only interested in development covering communities that were directly affected by its mining operations (Guo 2019).

Additionally, in this thesis I have highlighted how some programs implemented by the trust funds may have inadvertently marginalized some population segments, such as those who practice ASM (Article III). This finding relates to the prioritization of skills training programs in mechanics and masonry over skills or other inputs needed in ASM. This marginalization of the ASM may be understood as a disregard of the fact that the most people resorting to ASM are doing so due to the rise in unemployment caused by hosting large-scale mining in their

community. Additionally, it can be argued that the perceived marginalization of ASM is a result of insufficient engagement of community members in needs assessment.

Furthermore, the prioritization of skills training in masonry over ASM may be a result of a lack of an in-depth knowledge of the intricate causes of problems such as unemployment and poverty in the context of large-scale mining. In noting a lack of in-depth knowledge in most CSR practices with regard to the development agenda, scholars such as Blowfield and Frynas (2005) have argued that one of the key weakness of CSR is that in most cases the causal factors underlying issues such as poverty and unemployment are neglected by the companies on the basis that they are outside corporate control.

7.0 Contributions and conclusions

This chapter focuses on the key contributions of this thesis (Section 7.1), conclusions, some recommendations, and suggestions for future research (Section 7.2).

At the present, there is a pressing need to make substantial inroads to enhance transparency and stakeholder participation in the management and use of resource revenue in communities hosting extractive industries in developing countries and the extractive industry's contribution to local development. This thesis has addressed these issues through examining trust funds established by extractive industry to share benefits from the mining, with particular focus on their functions, operations and activities with respect to transparency and participation, which are regarded as two key components of good governance. Further, the role of the trust funds corporate approaches to community development was studied.

Using a qualitative case study of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) in Ghana, I have scrutinized how transparency and participation practices are embedded in the management of the two trust funds, how these practices are perceived by various stakeholders, how host communities perceive the shared benefits, and what the potential of using trust funds as a corporate-led strategy for community development is and what the main challenges of this approach are.

7.1 Thesis contributions

This thesis contributes to our knowledge of natural resource revenue governance, and particularly to the literatures on transparency, citizen participation and engagement, natural resource revenue management, and corporate-led community development, in two key ways. *First*, it enhances our understanding of transparency by showing that the mechanisms for representation and participation need to be integrated into its operationalization in order to elevate the effectiveness of transparency. *Second*, the thesis enhances knowledge of the decentralization of revenue distribution and management at local community level, and the dynamics of localizing global corporate-led community development strategies, specifically in the context of resource-rich developing countries.

7.1.1 Transparency, participation and local-level governance

From the study of locally established benefit-sharing trust funds, this thesis lays the foundation for understanding the implications of transparency and participatory practices in the governance of resource revenue at local community level.

In focusing on transparency and participation as key elements for enhancing institutional quality at the local level, the empirical insights provided in this thesis add to the literature citing the importance of institutions as determinants of whether resources become a curse or a blessing (Sarmidi, Hook Law, and Jafari 2014; Torvik 2009). In particular, these insights contribute to the limited but growing body of literature on the implications of local institutions in the broader debate on the resource curse (Knutsen et al. 2017; Lawer, Lukas, and Jørgensen 2017; Loayza, Teran, and Rigolini 2013; Poncian 2018), as well as the micro-level resource curse literature that focuses on the impacts of the extractive industry on individual agency and community relationships, and the literature concerned with contextual explanations of the resource curse (Arellano-Yanguas 2011; Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis 2015; Orihuela 2018; Papyrakis 2017).

This thesis offers an analytical approach that shows some of the possible conditions under which citizens can meaningfully participate, have access to information, and have opportunities to exert real influence in decision-making in local natural resource revenue management, for instance, through representation in decision-making bodies (Article I). The outcome of this approach improves upon the understanding of transparency, by highlighting how other mechanisms such as representation and participation can or should be integrated into its operationalization in order to elevate the effectiveness of transparency. With this understanding, the findings of this thesis support the argument that transparency may only be effective under certain circumstances, and its operationalization should provide incentives and conditions that are favorable for the less powerful stakeholders to demand accountability, and opportunities for them to influence decisions in the governance of resource revenues (Kolstad and Wiig 2009).

7.1.2 Trust funds as localized benefit-sharing strategies

Through the study of local benefit-sharing trust funds in Ghana, this thesis expands current knowledge of the decentralization of revenue distribution and the dynamics of localizing global corporate-led community development strategies in the context of resource-rich developing countries. In considering the nature of the relationship between participation and governance, with a focus on multistakeholder decision-making, the thesis highlights some consequences of including local social and political institutions in newly established participatory governance platforms. In particular, the findings show how power relations challenge the intentions of inclusive governance as a way of ensuring empowerment of the weaker stakeholders, and equal opportunities to influence decisions. In capturing the issue of power, the findings from the analysis not only enhance understanding of the performance of different stakeholders in the participatory governance platforms, but also highlight how the broader social and political hegemonic factors can shape the processes and outcomes of stakeholder participation.

The focus on the role of trust funds as corporate strategies for community development adds to discussions on the application of conventional CSR practices at the local level, to understand the implications of the increasing global policy interventions such as trust funds as remedies for local problems relating to the outcomes of mineral extraction. By capturing the contextual dynamics that challenge corporate-led community development, this thesis contributes to the literature on contextualized explanations of shortcomings of CSR practices (Andrews 2016; Gilberthorpe and Banks 2012).

In contemplating the boundaries between theory and practice with regard to CSR as a strategy for development, this thesis should serve to stimulate a discussion that can help us in understanding whether the benefits shared by trust funds are motivated by the need to address the socioeconomic needs of host communities, often at least partially due to the negative impacts of the mining, or are they acts of benevolence, or used strategically to promote the company's strategy, for example, to receive SLO or to satisfy local content requirements. Most important in this regard is the focus of this thesis on the beneficiaries' perceptions, rather than focusing on the mining companies. With this approach, my analysis of the trust funds expands on bottom-up approaches to understand the implications of CSR

practices in contributing to local socioeconomic development, through the eyes of the supposed beneficiaries.

7.2 Conclusions and recommendations

The Obuasi Community Trust Fund and Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) exemplify the extractive industries' global response towards the demands for improving the socioeconomic well-being of their host communities. The empirical analyses in Articles I, II and III provided some evidence that seem to justify optimism regarding the trust funds' objectives to enhance transparency, foster stakeholder participation, and provide channels for mining companies to engage in community development. At the same time, the findings highlight a number of challenges and limitations that might diminish the effectiveness of transparency and participatory practices in the trust funds, and thus the anticipated improvement in their governance. For instance, information scarcity, especially in the case of the Obuasi Community Trust Fund and insufficient information access in terms of both receiving it and understanding it, are obstructive to the formation of qualified opinions about their management.

This thesis demonstrates that in the desire to achieve good governance that involves the agency of diverse stakeholders, challenges are inevitable. In going beyond the theoretical potential of transparency and participation, the thesis highlights challenges in institutional quality and contexts in which the trust funds operate. The factors that emphasize these challenges suggest that the composition of representatives from local institutions, such as the traditional authorities, local politicians, and mining companies, in the governance structures provides unsuitable conditions for significant participation regarding community members' role on the governance platforms. Such outcomes might not only engender distrust and lack of confidence, but also hinder high-quality governance practices.

In order to gain insights into the purpose of trust funds as strategies for mining companies to implement development projects, I have contemplated the implications of conventional CSR practices vis-à-vis community development. The Obuasi Community Trust Fund and NADeF's role in community development cannot be compared with the roles of organizations, such as

the United Nations Development Program, which have larger amounts of funding and resources. However, the trust funds' objectives and visions, such as creating and sharing opportunities for communities to benefit from mining, lead to high expectations of significant socioeconomic transformations among the community members. Therefore, it is not surprising that some community members are rather skeptical about what the trust funds can achieve.

I have three key recommendations:¹⁹

1. Mining companies should place emphasis on improving the local institutional quality and capacity. This is important because the trust funds operate in a context in which the outcomes of benefit sharing, and the redistribution of mineral wealth exhibit many compromises.
2. The strategies for information dissemination should be based both on the local language (a practice in the Ok Tedi Foundation), presented in understandable format, and through platforms that allow for easy access.
3. Full management responsibilities for the trust funds should be left in the hands of local communities. As ambitious as this may be, it could have an impact on the level of confidence that communities have in the trust funds, which in turn could motivate their participation if they have a stronger sense of "ownership."

Future studies of trust funds could make good use of comparative studies between countries. This particular suggestion points to a possible limitation of this thesis, in which empirical focus is limited to two cases in two regions of Ghana. Additionally, future studies could focus on comparisons between other existing corporate-led benefit-sharing strategies and the trust fund model, which might serve to highlight possibilities and challenges, and provide some valuable lessons for future benefit-sharing strategies. Finally, studies of corporate-led benefit-sharing strategies, such as the trust funds, stimulate a quest for a deeper examination of extractive industry's motives. Are the trust funds based on a sincere need to address the negative impacts of extractive activities, or are they purely acts of benevolence, or perhaps strategic means to attain rights to mine or expand mining?

¹⁹ Additionally, the individual articles provide further recommendations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview consent form

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by **Mr. Sam Akol Kasimba, a PhD Candidate, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU –Trondheim Norway.** Date _____

I understand that the project is designed to gather information about local benefit-sharing trust funds established in the local mining communities in the Ahafo, Kumasi and Eastern Regions of Ghana. These include, Newmont Ahafo Development Fund (NADeF), and Anglo Gold Ghana's Obuasi Community Trust Fund and others.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If I decline, accept to participate or withdraw from the project, it will not be made known to any one or any authorities. This is strictly **ANONYMOUS**. The researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies that protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
2. I understand that some questions during the interview might be sensitive and provoking but if I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
3. The interviews will be led by **Mr. S. A. Kasimba** and expected to last approximately _____ hours/minutes, or as agreed. Notes will be taken; an audio tape of the interview and the dialogue will be recorded. If I disagree, I will not be able to take part of the study unless other arrangements are agreed.
6. I understand that this research has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Geography, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU.
7. I have read or been read to, and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature

Date

Place

Mr. Sam Akol Kasimba _____

For further information: Ghana +233 0240262459 Norway +47 91245487

Appendix 2. Extract from the general interview guide.

Theme	Main question	Additional question	Clarifying question	Other remarks
Legal and institutional framework	Can you tell me about the trust fund?	How was it formed? How does it function?	Can you explain more in detail?	History Purpose Funding
	What led to the formation of the trust fund?	If so, from where?	Why was this important for that person/institution?	Voluntary or obligatory Laws and regulations
	What are the main objectives of the fund?	Why was it necessary to establish the fund?	Whose interests?	Aim and function
	Can you tell me about the trust fund?	What is your opinion about the formation of such an institution?	Why is this so? What do you think would have happened if this fund never existed? Could this have been done in any other way?	Alternatives for trust funds/foundation Other possible revenue distribution channels

Theme	Main question	Additional question	Clarifying question	Other remarks
Governance & management	What are the major or important units in the trust fund?	How are these formed? How do these work with each other?	What other units are there? Why are they not as important as the other ones you mentioned?	Governance structure Procedures for choosing office bearers and representatives
	From which units do final decisions come from?	Is this a standard procedure or do things sometimes work differently?	In cases when things work differently and do not follow the standard rules, is it possible to question such actions? What happens then?	Responsibility Power Answerability
	–	How does the management outline of the fund affect the distribution of funds?	How are the funds spent, and on what?	Distribution of funds
	–	What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of how the management of the fund is designed?	Are there any units you think should not exist or should be included? If so, why and how could this be done?	Performance Effectiveness Efficiency

Theme	Main question	Additional question	Clarifying question	Other remarks
Participation, partnership, & ownership	What and how is the relationship between the trust fund and the local communities?	To what extent are the communities involved in the fund's operations?	How is this made possible?	Community participation Nature of the partnership
	How does the involvement with the local community members affect how decisions are made?	How do the community members present their needs to the trust fund?	Are there rules for such procedures?	Participation procedures Representation
	Does the trust fund at any point consider the communities as partners?	If so, how do the community members react to this?	If there are any partnerships, how are they agreed upon? Are there official documents on any of such agreements?	Partnership
	What about ownership of the trust fund?	How is this understood by the community members?	Are these officially documented, or they assumptions?	Ownership

Theme	Main question	Additional question	Clarifying question	Other remarks
Information & communication	Can you tell me how the trust fund deals with information about its operations?	Is there any information that the community members can freely access? Is there some information that they cannot access?	If so, why and how?	Information disclosure
	How does the fund communicate with the community members and other actors?	Are there meetings? How often are these held?	Are these meetings public or closed? Who arranges the meetings?	Communication
	–	How are the meetings structured?	Are there discussions or are the meetings only informative meetings?	Meeting procedures Purpose of the meetings
	–	How effective are the meetings?	How do you know whether community members understand	Understanding the information

			<p>the information provided?</p> <p>How do you know whether the community members use the information provided to voice their needs?</p>	<p>Value of the information</p> <p>Performance evaluation based on the information provided</p>
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Theme	Main question	Additional question	Clarifying question	Other remarks
Transparency & accountability (T&A)	How do you see and understand openness in the governance of the trust fund?	Can you explain whether and how these are reflected in the trust fund?	Are these standard requirements or expectations?	T&A strategies T&A practices
	Are there laws that govern openness in the trust fund?	<p>If yes, how are these communicated to the employees in the different units of the fund, the community members and other stakeholders?</p> <p>If no, why is that?</p>	<p>What happens if an official in the trust fund does not follow such rules?</p> <p>Who decides the actions to be taken, if any?</p>	<p>Answerability</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Sanctions</p>
	How does the trust fund make sure that openness is maintained?	How is this done?	Are there agreements or rules for such procedures?	<p>Supervision</p> <p>Direction and forms of T&A</p>
	What is your general thought about the ideas or transparency and accountability?	<p>How useful do you think these could be for the trust fund?</p> <p>Do you perceive them as part of the fund's everyday operations?</p>	<p>Can you think of anything that can be improved or included in the trust fund to promote such ideas?</p> <p>How do you see the trust fund as an institution that can be used to promote transparency and accountability?</p>	<p>Perceptions of T&A</p> <p>Need for T&A</p> <p>Usefulness of T&A</p>

Appendix 3. List of interviewed participants

No.	Participants	Gender	Date	Place	Interview type
1	Local journalist	Male	17.02.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
2	Artisanal miners' spokesman	Male	17.02.16	Anwiam (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
3	Teacher	Female	17.02.16	Anwiam (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
4	Officials at NADeF	Female Male	11.03.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured interview and PowerPoint presentation by NADeF
5	Techno savvy man	Male	11.03.16	Kwakyekrom (Ntotroso)	Semi-structured
6	Taxi driver	Male	11.03.16	Nyamekrom (Ntotroso)	Informal conversation
7	Obuasi Community Trust Fund representative	Male	14.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
8	Company representative AGA	Male	14.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
9	Community activist/NGO worker	Male	14.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
10	Community activist	Male	15.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
11	Planning officer/ local government representative	Male	15.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured
12	Retired teacher	Male	15.03.16	Obuasi	Semi-structured Interview/Informal conversation
13	Teacher	Female	16.03.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured Interview/Informal conversation
14	Local NGO worker	Female	16.03.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured
15	Local trader (shop owner)	Male	16.03.16	Gyedu	Semi-structured
16	A local resident (a lady from Kenyasi)	Female	16.03.16	Gyedu	Semi-structured
17	Local resident (a public health officer)	Male	16.03.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured
18	Local resident	Male	17.03.16	Bekwai (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
19	Hairdresser	Female	17.03.16	Kokoteasua (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
20	Video game shop owner	Male	17.03.16	Kokoteasua (Obuasi)	Semi-structured

21	Seamstress	Female	17.03.16	Kokoteasua (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
22	Local resident	Female	17.03.16	Kokoteasua (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
23	Local resident/retired civil servant	Male	18.03.16	Gyedu	Semi-structured
24	Local resident/truck driver at Newmont	Male	18.03.16	Gyedu	Semi-structured
25	Clothes' seller	Female	18.03.16	Gyedu	Semi-structured
26	Toilet facility caretaker	Female	21.03.16	Abompekrom (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
27	Food vender	Female	21.03.16	Abompekrom (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
28	Artisanal miner	Male	21.03.16	Abompekrom (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
29	Local businessman	Male	24.03.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured
30	Local community leader	Male	24.03.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured
31	Local resident (teacher)	Female	24.03.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured
32	Local resident (youth leader)	Male	24.03.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured
33	A farmer, a woman (unemployed), local trader, and women's leader	Male Female Male Female	30.03.16	Oseikrom Amamom Anyankyriem Akatachieso (Obuasi)	Group Interview 1 Semi-structured
34	NGO official	Male	30.03.14	Obuasi	Semi-structured
35	Prominent NGO executive	Female	04.04.16	Greater Accra	Semi-structured
36	A farmer, a teacher, and a former women's representative	Male Male Female	08.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Group Interview 2 Semi-structured
37	Chief's representative	Male	08.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Informal conversation
38	Local resident (mason)	Male	08.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured

39	Local resident (food vender)	Female	08.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured
40	Local businesswoman	Female	11.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Semi-structured
41	Local resident (taxi owner)	Male	11.04.16	Kenyasi 1	Informal conversation
42	Local residents (resettled) Trader, former farmer, teacher respectively	Female Male 1 Male 2	11.04.16	Ntotroso	Group Interview 3 Semi-structured
43	Grocery store owner	Female	11.04.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured
44	Former artisanal miner	Male	11.04.16	Ntotroso	Semi-structured
45	Toilet facility maintenance man NOTE: The man was over 70 years old, and I could see that he was struggling so I stopped the interview.	Male	13.04.16	Akatchieso (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
46	Local resident	Female	13.04.16	Akatchieso (Obuasi)	Semi-structured
47	Local resident	Male	13.04.16	Akatchieso (Obuasi)	Semi-structured

PART II

THE ARTICLES

The articles

I. There is no one amongst us with them! Transparency and participation in local natural resource revenue management. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2018). Published in *The Extractive Industries and Society*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 198–205

II. “Sometimes it feels like everything has been decided!” Challenges faced by participatory governance platforms when sharing mining benefits. (Kasimba and Lujala, 2019). Under review: *Third World Quarterly*

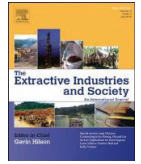
III. Examining host communities’ perceptions on trust funds as corporate strategies for community development in Ghana. (Kasimba, 2019). Under review: *Journal of Asian and African Studies*

ARTICLE I



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Original article

There is no one amongst us with them! Transparency and participation in local natural resource revenue management

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ABSTRACT

To redistribute natural resource revenues back to local communities and to promote equitable benefit-sharing and inclusive decision-making, companies and governments increasingly use local benefit-sharing trust funds (LBSTFs) in resource-rich developing countries. Many LBSTFs manage substantial amounts of money, often in regions far from the central government and amongst politically and economically marginalized groups. Focusing on two LBSTFs in Ghana, this article examines the challenges for meaningful participation by local residents. The findings indicate that local residents lack access to relevant information, that the representation mechanisms in place restrict their opportunities to voice their opinions, and that they have no real influence on decision-making. In general, local residents feel a low sense of ownership towards the funds and the funded projects. The results suggest that to enhance meaningful participation, an LBSTF should be independent from the mining company and the intended beneficiaries themselves should be able to choose their representatives for the fund.

1. Introduction

For host communities, the extraction of valuable natural resources poses a wide range of challenges related to environmental, social, and economic issues. To redistribute revenues back to these areas, to target revenues to the local communities most affected by extraction activities, and to target local needs, companies and governments increasingly use local benefit-sharing trust funds (LBSTFs) as the means to manage natural resource revenues and, in some cases, to circumvent different governmental levels and agencies (Dupuy, 2017; Maconachie, 2012; Songi, 2015; Wall and Pelon, 2010, 2011).²³ Many LBSTFs manage substantial amounts of money. For example, the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) in Ghana received approximately US\$ 35

million between 2008 and 2017 from Newmont Ahafo Mines, and the Ok Tedi Development Foundation in Papua New Guinea, funded by Rio Tinto, had an annual expenditure of US\$ 6.7 million in 2017 (NADeF, 2016, 2018; OTDF, 2018).²

One of the key arguments for LBSTFs is that they can better ensure local community members' participation in local natural resource revenue management (IFC, 2015). Participation is seen as key to equitable benefit-sharing and inclusive decision-making, which in turn are likely to lead to activities that better address the needs of the community and promote sustainable development, and greater sense of ownership (Fabricius, 2013; Gebara, 2013).

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² These types of institutions are commonly referred to as funds, foundations, trusts, or community development funds. They are most prevalent in the extractive sector, and rapidly increased in number during the 1990s and 2000s (Wall and Pelon, 2010). LBSTFs are established for different reasons and by different actors, and have different structures and legal forms, but they commonly seek to promote long-term development, improved living conditions, or/and equitable revenue sharing in the communities affected by extraction through development projects that promote education, health, infrastructure, job creation, and small-scale businesses and that are initiated and implemented in cooperation with local community members (Wall and Pelon, 2010). In this article, we refer to these institutions as local benefit-sharing trust funds (LBSTFs) or just "funds" or "trust funds". ² LBSTFs are part of the process of decentralizing natural resource revenue management from the central government to subnational governmental and other local actors. The most common forms through which revenues are returned to extraction areas are the different fiscal decentralization mechanisms. These mechanisms, however, are commonly criticized as being beyond the local government's capacity to manage the (often volatile) revenue flows and to adequately plan for spending, and can potentially feed into corruption and patronage networks when the accountability mechanisms in place are weak or lacking (IFC, 2015; Ross et al., 2012).

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In this article, we develop an analytical framework to examine the local community members' space for participation in LBSTF management. The framework incorporates (i) transparency in the trust fund's operations, (ii) representation of local residents in the trust fund's decision-making bodies, and (iii) local residents' opportunity to exert real influence on the management of the fund as enabling conditions for meaningful participation by local community members in trust fund management. By focusing on two LBSTFs in Ghana – the Obuasi Community Trust Fund (Obuasi Fund) and the NADeF – we use the framework to examine the scope and challenges the local community members have in engaging in LBSTF management and revenue use. In particular, we focus on whether relevant information on the trust fund management and operations is available to the community members, whether community members are genuinely represented in the decision-making bodies, and whether they have a real opportunity to influence the trust fund management and operations.

The analysis of the two case LBSTFs provides four key findings. First, despite the efforts by the studied trust funds to make information on trust funds and their operations available, the local residents unequivocally stated that communication from the trust funds was scarce and the disclosed information tended to be insufficient, irrelevant, and difficult to understand. The lack of (relevant) information limited the residents' basis to voice concerns about fund management, as they had an insufficient knowledge base to form qualified opinions about the funds and their management. The lack of information also evoked general distrust towards the funds. Second, the trust funds employ forms of community representation that overwhelmingly include persons already holding a position of power or influence in the community, such as chiefs or politicians. This practice seriously weakens the opportunities for direct participation in decision-making by ordinary community members. Third, due to the lack of relevant information and opportunities to voice concerns, the community members were extremely dissatisfied with their opportunities to influence fund management, which, in turn, demotivated them to search for more information about the trust funds and their operations. Consequently, the community members deemed the funds to be neither transparent nor accountable and felt little ownership towards the funds. Fourth, the transparency and representation mechanisms in place not only have restricted community members' space for participation in trust fund management but also to an extent seem to have strengthened the existing power relations and social and political patronage networks in the study areas.

This article makes five contributions to the existing literature. First, it adds to the limited academic research conducted on LBSTFs. To our knowledge, the only exceptions are the Diamond Community Area Development Fund (DACDF) in Sierra Leone (Maconachie, 2012) and the Ok Tedi Development Foundation in Papua New Guinea (Campbell, 2011; Gilberthorpe, 2013). There thus exists surprisingly little research on such funds especially when taking into account their potential to promote local development and their increasing popularity as tools to distribute benefits to mining communities (Songi, 2015; Wall and Pelon, 2011). Second, by focusing on LBSTFs, this article expands our knowledge on the redistribution and sharing of benefits from the extractive industry at the local level that so far has mostly focused on company-community relations, corporate social responsibility, and local content policies (Andrews, 2016; Hilson, 2012; Kolk, 2016; Ovadia, 2016). Third, this article offers an analytical approach for studying meaningful participation through three enabling conditions: access to relevant information, representation in decision-making bodies, and having real opportunity to influence the decisions made. It thus provides a complementary approach to study and understand how citizens' space for participation can be enlarged and restricted (Eversole, 2010; Gebara, 2013; O'Faircheallaigh, 2010; O'Faircheallaigh and Corbett, 2005; Perreault, 2015). Fourth, this study contributes to the emerging literature on the decentralization of revenue

distribution and how sub-national structures and institutions can contribute to natural resource curse (Arellano-Yanguas, 2011; Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis, 2015; Lawer et al., 2017). Finally, this article underlines the need to clearly differentiate between information disclosure (i.e., nominal transparency) and substantive transparency (Heald et al., 2006; Ofori and Lujala, 2015).

The rest of the article proceeds as follows. Section 2 presents the analytical framework and Section 3 the research context and the analysis material. The results are presented in Section 4 and Section 5 concludes with a discussion and some policy implications.

2. Participation in local benefit-sharing trust fund management

Ideally, decisions on the use of local revenues from natural resource extraction should reflect the will of the majority, not only those of the elite, professionals, or the company. In that regard, participation is often mentioned as a key ingredient in creating spaces for citizen influence, empowering the marginalized and amplifying their voices, and enhancing inclusive decision-making (Cornwall, 2006; Speer, 2012).

Several conditions must be in place if an LBSTF is to ensure local residents' meaningful participation⁴ in the management of LBSTFs. First, local residents must receive comprehensible, relevant, and timely information on the trust fund and its functions. Second, there must be spaces for local residents to voice their concerns and demands. Finally, there must be an opportunity for such actions to affect the decisions made in the trust funds. In other words, transparency, the representation of local voices, and accountability (that is, the citizens' voices having an impact on the decisions made) form the necessary conditions for a space of meaningful participation to emerge (see Fig. 1). These three aspects form the backbone of our analytical framework for studying transparency and participation in trust funds.

2.1. Transparency

Local residents need information on several aspects of the trust funds to enable them to observe what happens in the trust fund, to influence the revenue spending, and to evaluate the fund's performance. This information needs to not only be publicly available but also needs to be understandable, relevant, and accessible, enabling substantive adjustments in information asymmetry between the trust fund and local community members. This provides the potential for information to act as a basis to form or amend views on fund management by the community members, and, when desirable, to voice concerns and request changes in how the fund is being managed (Epreman et al., 2016; Heald, 2006).

In terms of public service production, information disclosure needs to encompass the fund's inputs, outputs, and the processes linking these two aspects (Heald, 2006). In other words, local residents need information on the inputs that the trust fund receives: the amount of funding and, when relevant, the received assets (for example, cars or other equipment). These inputs form the basis for the expectations of what the fund can possibly achieve. Residents also need information on the outputs, for instance, the number of boreholes constructed or scholarships awarded, to judge the meaningfulness of revenue spending. Moreover, by matching the inputs and outputs, local community members can form opinions about whether the results are reasonable with regard to the allocations that the fund receives.

Further, local people need information about the processes that link the inputs to the outputs. What are the criteria used in the selection of the funded projects? Who proposed the specific project, what is the project design, and how is the implementation to proceed? Local people may also need information about specific aspects of the funded projects such as who owns the construction firm and what was the basis for its selection.

⁴ Meaningful participation enables not only people to voice their opinions and concerns but also, importantly, enables them to exercise power.

In many cases, the outputs are easily observable (e.g., a constructed health clinic or drilled boreholes), and the information on inputs should be relatively easy for the trust fund to disclose. A more demanding task

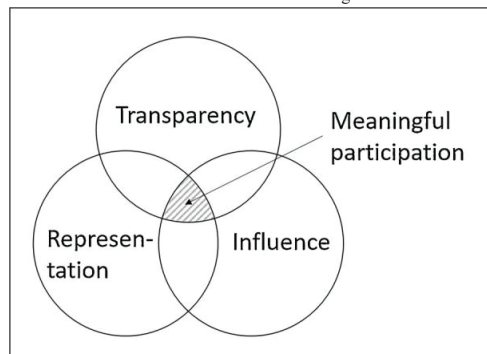


Fig. 1. The conditions for meaningful participation.

for LBSTFs is to disclose information on the processes linking the inputs and outputs because providing information on the more day-to-day operations can be costly, especially on a continuous basis. However, within the trust fund context, achieving genuine participation requires openness about the processes that link the financial contributions that the fund receives to the concrete results to which it contributes, and that information should be available in (nearly) real time rather than retrospectively.

For transparency to be transformative, that is, for it to have an effect on peoples' attitudes, beliefs, or actions, the disclosed information must be accessible and timely. For example, annual reports on funded projects and records for projects implemented several years ago are most likely to be of limited value for local residents, as these types of documentation do not provide a basis for present-day opinion making and handling. A further aspect is the physical accessibility of the information – the information must be available such that local residents can easily access it. The information must also be comprehensible so that residents can understand the content and utilize it appropriately.

2.2. Representation

As local residents are key stakeholders in LBSTFs, being the intended beneficiaries, their voices need representation in trust fund management. An underlying condition for this is the willingness of local community members to become involved in fund management, making local community members' sense of ownership an import aspect of representation.

The legitimacy of representatives and their capacity to articulate and promote the interests of the people whom they represent is crucial, as processes and procedures to select or appoint representatives may favour some individuals over others; the challenge is to ensure a legitimate voice for the affected communities (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013). In the context of LBSTFs, obscure representation can unfold when representation ensues from the existing social, political, or economic settings (Maconachie, 2012).

Furthermore, the control of trust funds may rest firmly in the hands of the mining company and existing elites if local residents' participation is constrained by the underlying power structures or if community leaders assume the representation of local residents. In these cases, the representation may lead to a situation where individuals represent the communities in the fund but lack a mandate from them. Such situations can lead to non-representative representation and can considerably limit the space and scope for participation in trust fund management by local residents.

2.3. Influence

The idea behind community participation is that local residents have better knowledge of their needs than do outsiders and are thus better placed to identify local problems (Bebbington et al., 2006). Therefore, within the LBSTF context, it must be acknowledged that local residents possess knowledge and expertise about a community's existing resources, needs, and potentials that can be drawn on to influence and improve the management of the trust funds. For the trust funds, the implication is that the knowledge possessed by community members and their opinions, concerns, and demands should influence favourable management of the trust funds.

However, for real influence to take place, the trust fund must not only hear the voices of local residents but also be willing to act on them. Thus, the trust fund must be accountable to local residents in the sense that it modifies its functions according to the feedback and demands that it receives. The underlying argument here is that community members possess knowledge that is useful for the management of the fund and are in a better position to identify the most pressing needs in the community.

3. Research context and material

Together with petroleum, gold production comprises a lion's share of Ghana's merchandized exports; whilst approximately 12% comes from offshore petroleum exploitation, 40% comes from gold mining, which also places the country amongst the ten largest gold producers in the world (Ayensu, 2013; Bloch and Owusu, 2012). Gold mining is prominent in the Western, Central, Eastern, Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo regions (see Fig. 2). However, there is little evidence that the communities hosting industrial gold mining companies have benefited from it in socio-economic terms (Akabzaa, 2009; Elbra, 2017). Recent research points to corruption, elite capture, and the inadequate distribution of benefits as the main causes for the limited welfare increase in these communities (Dupuy, 2017; Standing, 2014).

The fieldwork was conducted in Ghana between October 2015 and April 2016 in the Adansi North District and the Obuasi Municipality in the Ashanti Region and in the Asofiti North and Tano North Districts in the Brong-Ahafo Region (see Fig. 2). In total, 43 individual interviews (21 in Ashanti and 22 in Brong-Ahafo) and three group interviews (1 in Ashanti and 2 in Brong-Ahafo) were conducted.

A local journalist facilitated access to the first field contacts in both study areas (i.e., local NGOs), after which the snowballing technique led to interviews with local community members. Any adult (age 18+) member of the community was considered a potential informant, and the interviews targeted community members with diverse social, political, religious, and economic backgrounds. Half of the community respondents were females. Interviews were also conducted with representatives from civil society organizations working in mining communities. These included the Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM) in Tema (Greater Accra Region) and its sub-branch in Kenyasi 1 (Brong-Ahafo), and the Center for Social Impact Studies (CeSIS) in Obuasi. Purposive sampling was used to select trust fund representatives, a representative for the sustainability department of Anglo Gold Ashanti (AGA) in Obuasi, and local government officials with expertise in the trust funds' operations for interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured and held in English but facilitated by a translator (Twi) to ensure better comprehension of the questions and answers. The main themes covered in the interviews included the respondent's views and perceptions about information disclosure, representation, and influence with regard to the studied trust fund. The community member interviews also sought to understand the respondent's perceptions about the fund's governance structures, the extent to which the respondent felt ownership towards the trust fund, and his/her views on the implemented projects. The interviews were voice recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were coded manually to

traditional areas (of which Obuasi is part), three district assembly members, one AGA representative (sustainability manager), and the board secretary, who is appointed by AGA. The board is responsible for overseeing the overall operations of the fund,

4 makes decisions concerning how the funds are spent, and form policies guiding the secretariat. The board also ensures that the fund fulfils its mandate and operates according to guidelines.

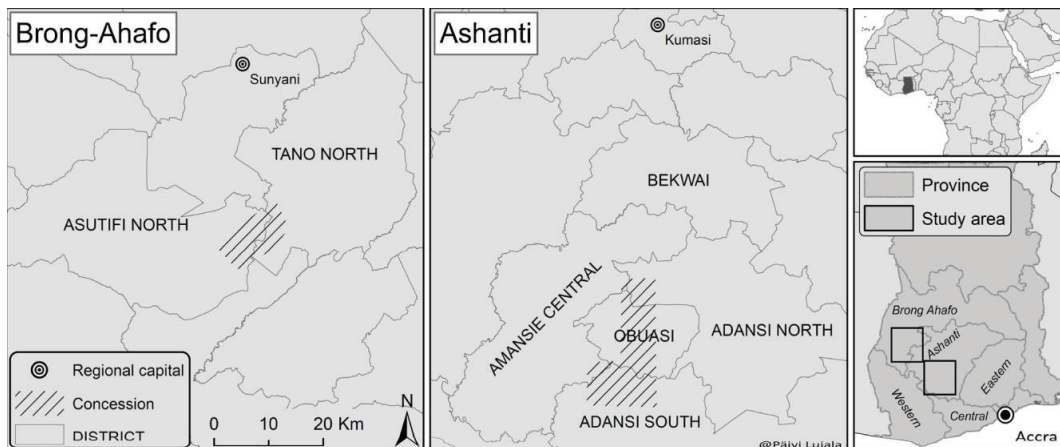


Fig. 2. The study areas and approximate concession locations for Newmont in Ahafo and AGA in Obuasi.

identify the different actors' perceptions on (i) information disclosed by the trust funds in terms of content, accessibility, and relevance; (ii) representation mechanisms in the trust fund; and (iii) to what extent local residents are able to influence decisionmaking in the trust funds. After that, the identified material was screened for patterns and interpreted.

The secondary sources of analysis material consisted of the Obuasi Fund and NADeF's webpages, annual reports, and available guidelines for their operations. This material was used to examine how the trust funds disclose information, what information is being made available, and the representation mechanisms in place.

3.1. Obuasi Community Trust Fund

The Obuasi town, which is the capital of the Obuasi Municipality, is located approximately 60 km from Kumasi (the capital of the Ashanti Region). Since 1897, Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, now AGA, has dominated the large-scale mining in Obuasi. Its concession covers over 20% of Obuasi Municipality's surface, and approximately 80 communities reside within or close to the concession. Gold from Obuasi accounts for over 50% of Ghana's gold production, and most of the social and economic activities in the municipality relate to gold mining, creating a strong linkage between AGA and the residents (Akabzaa et al., 2007; Asuah and Ankoye, 2016). As one informant put it: 'Obuasi is AGA, and AGA is Obuasi'.

In 2004, AGA established the Obuasi Community Trust Fund (Obuasi Fund) to enhance socio-economic development in the local communities. The company pledged 1% of its annual post-tax profits to the fund, and the trust fund accrued US\$ 2.7 million between 2004 and 2012.⁴ The intended beneficiaries of the fund include the people living in the Obuasi Municipality and the affected communities in the four surrounding districts (the Bekwai Municipality, the Amansie Central District, the Adansi North District, and the Adansi South District).

The fund comprises a board, a steering committee, and the secretariat. The board has seven members: two paramount chiefs from the Amansie and Adansi

The steering committee consists of 32 elected representatives including traditional authorities, municipal planning officers, women's group and youth group members, and representatives from local NGOs and other civil society groups. The committee serves as a meeting point for all stakeholders and, according to the secretariat, is the main platform for decision-making, from project selection to implementation. It is the key meeting point between the trust fund and the communities. However, all the decisions it makes need the board's approval.

The secretariat, employed by the board, is responsible for the running of the fund on a daily basis. It includes a project manager, an administrative officer who is also responsible for contracts, and two project officers. During the fieldwork, the project manager position was unoccupied, and AGA's sustainability manager had assumed responsibility for the position.

The Obuasi Fund finances community development projects and economic support to develop local businesses. In cooperation with AGA, the trust fund has donated equipment to the local hospital, built classrooms, offered scholarships, and constructed sports grounds. Most prominent has been the construction of public toilets and water boreholes in different communities. To develop local small-scale business, the fund finances capacity building and provides micro-credit loans.

Community members can apply for funds through their district assembly or unit committee members (the latter are representatives for village groups). The secretariat receives the funding applications and forwards them to the steering committee for assessment before sending them to the board for final approval.

3.2. Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation

In the Brong-Ahafo Region, large-scale mining began in the 1990s and is mostly concentrated in Ahafo, which is located 40 km south of Sunyani (capital of the Brong-Ahafo Region). Newmont's subsidiary, Newmont Ahafo Mine, has dominated industrial gold mining in the area since 2006, and its concession covers approximately 40 square kilometres, producing 350 thousand ounces of gold in 2016 (Kim et al., 2013; Newmont, 2017).

Newmont established the NADeF in 2008 to support community development programs in the Ahafo mine communities⁵ in the Tano

No further information was available on the funding situation for the period after 2012, most likely because of the temporary closures of the mine and the uncertain future of the mine.

North and Asufiti North districts. The NADeF resulted from a two-year consultation process with the communities and other stakeholders, which first led to the formation of a fifty-four-member multi-stakeholder group, the Ahafo Social Responsibility Forum (ASRF)⁶, and later to an agreement (Ahafo Social Responsibility Agreement) between the Ahafo mine communities and Newmont Ghana Gold Limited. Newmont contributes US\$ 1 per ounce of gold produced and 1% of the net pre-tax profit to the fund. In 2017, the NADeF spent approximately US\$ 1.2 million on development projects and had accrued US\$ 10 million as an endowment fund (NADeF, 2018).

The NADeF has a twelve-member secretariat and a board of trustees with nine board members. Whilst the secretariat serves as the main administrative body that designs, implements, and monitors the projects, it nevertheless answers to the board. Thus, the board has the responsibility and power to make the key decisions on investment and spending. The board includes the chairperson, who is nominated by the ASRF (must be approved by Newmont), two company representatives from Newmont, five community representatives nominated by the communities (non-ASRF members), and the head of the secretariat.

The NADeF works in consultation with ten seven-member sustainable development committees, with each representing one of the ten mining communities (Ahafo Social Responsibility Agreement, 2008). The committee is the main linkage between the NADeF and the mining communities, and is composed of a youth representative and a women's representative, two traditional leaders, a unit committee representative (a local governmental division under the district assembly), and a community member nominated by the traditional authority. The ten committees, according to the NADeF, are proof of institutionalized community participation and ensure that the trust fund operates in a transparent manner. In addition, the committees work in conjunction with the Asufiti North and Tano North district assemblies to ensure that the fund's projects align with the districts' development plans and strategic goals. Other committees, such as the financial and administrative committee, project committees, the tender board, and the tender opening and evaluation committees, are involved in running the specific operations of the fund.

The NADeF has funded the construction of classroom blocks, libraries, health centres, the renovation of the chiefs' palaces, scholarships for further education, and micro-credit schemes for (mostly) women to engage in self-employment projects (Essah and Andrews, 2016).

4. Results

4.1. Transparency

For information disclosure to be effective and promote local residents' participation in trust fund management, it must cover the inputs that the fund is receiving, the outputs (i.e., the funded projects), and the processes that link the two. Furthermore, the information needs to be timely, accessible, relevant, and understandable to the residents.

The interviews revealed that local residents feel that they do not obtain proper information on how much funding the funds receive from the mining companies. Commenting on this, a female trader in Obuasi said 'we are never told how much the AGA gives the trust fund for constructing toilets and boreholes; we are just told when they are finished and they say these are donations from the company'. Some of the residents also have an impression that the mining companies make more profits than the amount that they pay to the funds entails. As a male shop owner in Ahafo explained: 'there is no way we can know what is happening in the foundation, as they conceal information

⁵ Kenyasi No.1, Kenyasi No.2, Yamfo, Ntotroso, Wamahinso, Gyedu, Terchire, about the money they get from Newmont'. Unconvinced that the amount of money that the NADeF says it obtains from Newmont matches what the foundation should be receiving, the respondent added: 'even if you go to the office and ask them to let you see the accounts, they will tell you it is confidential'. A further issue indicated by some of the interviewees was that although local residents perhaps could obtain information on how much the fund was receiving, they still 'have no proof of how much profits the company made' (NGO representative).

In principle, some of the information that the residents are requesting is available. For example, the NADeF's and Newmont's annual reports and webpages provide information on how much the NADeF has received from the company. The annual reports also include information on the board's activities throughout the previous year, a presentation of commissioned projects, an auditor report, a statement on the financial position, and information on the fund's cash flow (NADeF, 2016, 2018). In addition, the NADeF has a notice board outside its office presenting information similar to that on its webpages. Thus, some information is accessible to residents if they visit the secretariat's office. The Obuasi Fund, on the other hand, does not have a website of its own; instead, it uses various platforms, such as radio, public information address systems situated in the communities, and posters, to inform people about its operations. In addition, a representative for the fund's secretariat said that 'the representatives in the steering committee broadcast whatever we do'.

Reflecting on the available information, several local residents indicated dissatisfaction with the content of the information that they receive from the two funds. Amongst other things, community members seem to lack information on how the inputs are leading to the outputs, as indicated by an NGO worker: 'they can tell the communities what they have done, but the information about the processes of realizing the projects never finds its way out'. Several respondents stated that they did not know the criteria and processes behind choosing a particular contractor for construction projects. For instance, a mason stated that he is 'interested in getting contracts for constructing some of [the] projects, but [that] it is difficult to know how the decisions are made to get such contracts'.

Many of the interviewed local residents said that not only did they have little information about the fund and its functions but they also found it very difficult to obtain information on the funds even when they wanted to know more. Some said that when the trust funds were first established, there was more information but that after a certain period, they experienced less communication from the funds. In Obuasi, in the beginning, the local residents were hopeful that the trust fund could be an initiative that would bring change to the communities. The trust fund had regular meetings with them, but later on, these became increasingly infrequent; 'Now, we just see things happening, but we do not know how or why and have no one to give answers to [our] questions' (male, small-scale miner).

There is an apparent contrast between trust funds' commitment 'to be open to our stakeholders' (NADeF website) and some of the information that is publicly available and people's awareness of the information. This situation indicates that the information channels between the funds and local residents are not adequate. Although there are meetings with the communities, many residents feel that they are excluded from the key meetings and thus from making substantial contributions to the funds' management. Indeed, the meetings organized by the trust funds such as the annual general meetings often involve key stakeholders such as the mining companies, traditional authorities, district assembly representatives, and some NGO representatives but only a few common community members. As a re-

(footnote continued)

Adrobaa, Susuanso, and Afrisipakrom.

⁶ The ASRF is composed of representatives from the ten Ahafo mine communities, local and regional governments, and civil society groups.

sult, according to some residents, less information reaches them, as the representatives rarely share information from the meetings with them.

Addressing the failure of information flow, one respondent felt that the meetings should be open and transparent to everybody who wishes to attend, 'but there are no such things here, and we cannot say that we participate in any decisions made or know exactly what is happening' (male, teacher).

Another issue that most respondents indicated as a major hindrance for accessing relevant information was the format, which makes it difficult for them to understand the content. On the NADeF website, the information provided is primarily in English, and it is very technical, perhaps providing a platform for only the outside world to observe the fund's engagement in addressing various social issues. Pointing to this issue, one respondent explained: 'the information that the NADeF has on their website only shows the good part, but we know there are a lot of issues in running the foundation. People are not satisfied with the way they work' (male, shopkeeper).

On other occasions, some residents were not satisfied with the frequency with which they receive information and felt that there were too long delays in obtaining responses from the trust funds. As a male local community leader said: 'we only know that things are happening when we are asked to attend the commissioning of certain projects, but when we tell the trust fund our problem, it can take a long time before we get an answer'. Another respondent, formerly a women's representative in the ASRF, explained: 'the ways by which information is given to the communities is not good enough. In my community, our representative does not live here and does not come to visit very often, not even to tell us about how our requests are handled'. Without adequate information, one cannot expect local people to form and provide views on the operations of the trust funds, nor can the communities have a chance to discuss issues about the trust funds with their representatives, as they lack a basis to discuss them.

Based on the interviews, the overall picture is that although the trust funds claim that information about their operations, performance, and outcomes is available, the disclosed information is not substantial enough for the residents and is hard to reach. The residents lack information about the funds' processes and procedures, and in general, the information is not timely enough to allow the real-time monitoring and evaluation of the trust funds.

4.2. Representation

For community representation to contribute to meaningful participation in trust fund management, there must be a willingness by local community members to become involved in fund management, and they must have the opportunity to do so either directly or through their representatives.

The respondents indicated that the funds' alienation from the community decreased their willingness to be involved in the fund management. The interviews revealed that choices regarding the selection of the location for the secretariat's office and the fund's name were partially to blame for this alienation. The secretariat of the Obuasi Fund, for example, is located in a former AGA staff house approximately fifteen meters from the company's sustainability department office. To many, the location underscored the close affiliation between the trust fund and the company, decreasing the community members' sense of ownership and motivation to be involved in the operations of the trust fund: 'People do not visit the trust fund's office because they think it belongs to AGA and has nothing to do with the communities' (female, teacher). The NADeF, on the other hand, has "Newmont" as part of its name, and the company's colours dominate the foundation's website and all the funded projects. This close association between the company and the fund makes local residents feel that the NADeF does not belong to them but to the company:

'Maybe if they called it the Ahafo community foundation, more people would be curious and even consider it theirs' (local NGO worker).

Further accounts on the issue of representation pointed to the role of the traditional authorities. In Ghana, these figures are the core local leaders, as the chieftainship is recognized by the constitution and plays a major role in various social and political aspects, particularly concerning the acquisition, ownership, and distribution of land.

Administering land where minerals are found gives an advantage to the chiefs, who often assume the role of negotiator with the mining companies and, consequently, the trust funds. Confirming the strong position of the chiefs, a representative for an NGO in Obuasi stated that 'the Adansi chief either decides to sit on the board or appoints another person to represent him'.

According to most of the interviewed local residents, the representation by the chiefs is problematic. By far, the most pressing issue was that the people did not feel that the chiefs should represent them: 'Even though the chiefs and politicians represent us, they never ask our opinion. They just go there and say what they want. The problem we have is that the chief's house is respected, and it is almost a crime to disagree with what they say' (female, local trader). In particular, the youth felt little access to the chiefs, as explained by a 21-year-old male high school dropout: 'It is always difficult for us to give opinions on how we want the money to be distributed or what we need to be funded because the chiefs and the assemblyman always decide for us'.

A further issue is that the respondents felt that the chiefs, supposedly representing the community, did not necessarily seek to advance the interests of community development through the trust funds but, rather, sought to exploit their own personal opportunities. 'We are represented by our chiefs in the committees, but the chiefs are often subcontracted by the mining company and consider themselves before us' (a former ASRF representative). Consequently, some respondents indicated that when the representative positions are left in the hands of the chiefs and local politicians, it leads to mistrust: 'Already in this country, we have issues with corruption in the mining sector, and it always involves some traditional authorities and local politicians. We find it difficult to trust these people as our representatives' (female, teacher). In addition, some interviewees pointed out that this type of representation caused tenders to not be awarded to ordinary community members: 'There are many people from our communities who can do these jobs, but because Newmont is always deciding for the NADeF, they only employ outsiders. I cannot get a contract to construct a toilet or classroom; mostly known business people and influential chiefs and politicians get these contracts' (male, entrepreneur).

Although, for example, NADeF's annual reports state that the Ahafo mining communities are represented in the ASRF through their chiefs, district assembly members, local NGOs, and other community members (NADeF, 2018), it was unclear to many respondents who their official representative in the fund was: 'If you go to the NADeF and complain, they will tell you to go and talk to your local representative. The problem is that most of us do not know who represents us in there. People sometimes say it is the chief, some say the assemblyman, nothing is clear' (male, welder). Even when people knew whom they could contact to express their needs and concerns, many noted that it was difficult to gain audience with the representatives. Adding his opinion on representation, a small-scale miner in Obuasi described the situation by saying: 'There is no one amongst us with them'.

Overall, there was limited enthusiasm amongst the common citizens to engage in trust fund management, as they felt that the funds belonged to the companies rather than to the people and that the existing representation mechanisms restricted communities from directly deciding who should represent them in the trust funds and voice their concerns. To an extent, these results also provide evidence that the funds were strengthening the existing power relations and the social and political patronage networks already in place.

4.3. Influence

According to the trust fund representatives, the existence of the various committees provide spaces for community members to influence decisions. A representative for the NADeF said that the fund seeks to involve local communities in decision-making 'through a deliberative communication platform that brings to the table the voices of the public'. Similarly, the Obuasi Fund secretariat stressed that the engagement of community representatives in the steering committee was to strengthen their influence in decision-making.

The community members, however, almost unequivocally stated that the ways in which they are involved in the management of the funds does not lead to having any real influence on the trust funds' operations. In fact, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees stated that they did not feel that the trust funds paid attention to their needs and concerns, even after they had voiced them. Even if one went to the secretariat, it was unlikely that the person would feel welcome and heard: 'You have to be a big man! You must be a chief, his associate, or a politician for them to listen to you' (an NGO representative). The fact that the community members felt that their wishes were not considered generated a feeling of having no substantial influence on the funds amongst the interviewees: 'Even when we say these things, people who have more power are listened to more than us' (male, taxi driver).

Further, some residents felt that the existing committees are just ways to legitimize the functioning of the trust fund, given that the small committees have no influence and, ultimately, the board must approve all community need assessments and make the decisions. Moreover, the interviewees feel that even the committee members did not necessarily represent the local residents: 'These people who are in the committees do not really talk to the communities about the extent to which they can influence decisions. They go to the meetings, discuss amongst themselves, and decide what to do; very little of what they talk about is from the community members' (female, teacher).

In conclusion, it emerges that even the interviewees who had a sense of responsibility and formal opportunity to influence the fund's decisions found the opportunities to have meaningful influence to be very limited. As a representative from a local NGO in Kenyasi 1 stated: 'We are considered to be stakeholders in NADeF but our opinions never form a strong part of the decisions made'. Similarly, their counterpart in Obuasi added: 'Our role in the trust fund can be questioned when it comes to decision-making, as our views rarely have a substantial impact'.

5. Discussion and concluding remarks

Proponents of transparency emphasize the role of information disclosure as a key to forming a basis for participation and catalysing citizen engagement to demand better management and increased accountability in the management of natural resources and their revenues (Epremian et al., 2016; Haufler, 2010). This article finds that the two case funds disseminate information to beneficiaries through different channels and seek to include community members through representatives in the fund boards and committees. Thus, at least some mechanisms that could contribute to transformative transparency and meaningful participation by local residents in the management of the funds are in place.

However, the results show that the disclosed information does not seem to reach the local residents, a finding that is in line with previous studies conducted on national-level information dissemination on natural resource management in Ghana (Lujala et al., 2018; Ofori and Lujala, 2015). The interviews also revealed that the current forms and the content of information from the two trust funds were not sufficient to form a transformative basis for the management of

the funds. Taken together, there seems to be a clear gap between the community members and trust fund officials' perceptions of what constitutes transparency, where the latter see the mere information disclosure to be sufficient.

Moreover, this study found that people actively tried to obtain information about the trust funds to only a limited degree. This finding can be due to several factors; for example, people have other pressing needs to attend to, or the information is of little value (Fox, 2015; Kosack and Fung, 2014; Lieberman et al., 2014; Lujala and Epremian, 2017; Ofori and Lujala, 2015). However, a crucial aspect for the people in the study areas was the feeling that they would not have had a real opportunity to influence fund management even if they had the information and wanted to do so. This result suggests that people are rational in their information seeking: little effort is used to ends that are unlikely to improve their situation. Another frequently mentioned reason for limited interest towards the funds was their perceived dependence on the mining companies; the residents would like the funds to be more firmly in the hands of the local communities in order to reduce the influence of the mining company in the trust fund decisionmaking.

Further, the local residents felt that their representatives in the funds did not actually represent them. The fieldwork documented that most individuals representing communities had taken their roles by virtue of their social and political positions. According to the community members, this type of representation has led to decision-making that they cannot influence and to the implementation of projects that often do not address their pressing needs.⁵ Consequently, the role of the traditional authorities and assembly members as representatives for the local residents seemed to reinforce the existing forms of local power dynamics and to limit the local residents' influence on trust fund management, an outcome that has been documented in other cases of local decision-making (Cornwall, 2003; Dupuy, 2017; Maconachie, 2012).

In multi-stakeholder institutions, as in the trust funds studied, the strength of social and political affiliations and the positions of individuals affect resource management practices and the sharing of information and benefits. Thus, the existing social relations embedded within the local power dynamics can restrict spaces for local residents to influence decision-making and resource management. Therefore, there is a need to understand the micro politics of participation as a situated practice framed by local political, social, and cultural particularities.

The results presented in this article are disappointing considering that both trust funds make information available and actively seek to promote participation by local residents through various avenues. To enhance meaningful participation in the studied funds and other similar trust funds, the results from this article suggest that their governance structures – and profiles – should be as independent as possible from the mining companies and should be placed more in the hands of the communities that they are intended to benefit. In this regard, symbolic measures may also be important. In the case of the studied trust funds, there were requests to rename the NADeF to the Ahafo Community Development Foundation (i.e., to remove the company name from the fund's name) and relocate the Obuasi Fund's secretariat away from the company's premises to reduce the apparent relation between the fund and the company. The mechanisms to increase local residents' sense of ownership are central for the success of involving local people in the trust fund's management, and there needs to be a clear strategy for how to motivate local residents to take part in LBSTF management. Further, the trust funds should aim at disclosing information that is relevant, timely, and understandable for the local community members in such ways that it reaches the intended audience. Finally, community representatives in the trust funds should include not only those who already have social and political positions in the community but also individuals whom the beneficiaries themselves choose or elect for the purpose of the trust fund.

⁵ Our meaning is not to imply that 'common people' would necessary always make better decisions than the 'elite', nor that 'elites' consider their own private interests first and foremost. Neither do we deny that common people can also be as captured by private interests as the elites (in fact, they are very likely to be). Our argument is that meaningful

participation should allow community members to voice their opinions and concerns, and enable them to influence decisions that directly concern them (in this particular case, as the intended beneficiaries of the trust funds).

Care should be exercised so that fund management does not simply mirror the existing social and political hierarchies.

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