



Responsible Land Governance: Towards an Evidence Based Approach

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
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The Implications of Infrastructure Investments on Land and Livelihoods- Experience from the Western Coastal Region of Ghana

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Abstract

After more than two decades of exploration activity, commercial quantities of oil and gas were discovered off the coast of Ghana in 2007. The prospects for the sector still remain positive with additional fields coming on stream in the second half of 2016 and 2017. Discovery has led to a high increase in infrastructure projects and investments in the Western Region particularly the six coastal districts. Large tracts of land have been taken over for oil and gas infrastructure, businesses, pipelines, roads and areas for machinery repair. These huge investments obviously have big implications for the communities who live in these areas and for their livelihoods, particularly for those who rely on natural resources. This paper will provide some real life examples of how investments in land (from government and private sector alike) affect the lives of ordinary people; the consequences of resettlement, beyond initial compensation packages; and experiences of bringing to the fore investors, communities, government and CSOs to discuss priority issues and concerns together, and ultimately develop solutions for all parties concerned.

Key Words: Investment, Livelihoods, Ghana, Oil and Gas



Introduction

DAI Europe is currently implementing a DFID-funded program in Ghana- the Ghana Western Region Coastal Foundation (WRCF)-which began in 2014 and runs until 2019. The program is focused on making effective use of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds of oil companies for development, conflict-prevention and growth in Ghana’s oil-producing Western Region. Though not a program with a specific “land focus”, the program has inevitably encountered issues relating to land ownership, land value and land use.

In recent years, there has been much literature and many guidelines produced on responsible land investment, including how best to address the concerns of displaced communities. Though helpful, these guidelines sometimes miss the intricacies and (understandably) cannot advise on every unique situation, particularly as context is key.

The Ghana WRCF program moves beyond the theory and is working on practical ways to empower communities and stimulate multi-stakeholder dialogue to achieve good development results.

This paper provides some real life examples of how investments in land (from government and private sector alike) affect the lives of ordinary people; the consequences of resettlement, beyond initial compensation packages; and experiences of bringing to the fore investors, communities, government and CSOs to discuss priority issues and concerns together, and ultimately develop solutions for all parties concerned.

Project Background- Programme Context, Objectives and Expected Results

Discovery and commercial exploration of offshore oil in Ghana’s Western Region offers major opportunities for economic growth and development. As a result, the private sector is investing in oil and gas related infrastructure and creating jobs directly and indirectly through the supply chain. Additionally, companies, through their corporate social investment portfolios, are engaging in initiatives that address problems, or enhance services in communities affected by their operations. Oil-driven growth in the Western Region has led to high expectations among communities in the six coastal districts that they will benefit from the industry. There is an attendant high population growth in anticipation of jobs and other economic opportunities associated with the oil and gas industry and a rapid increase in cost of living. This prominence increases risks and operational challenges for industry.



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Managing the risks and capitalizing on the opportunities that the oil and gas sector offers requires local knowledge, expertise and collective commitment to local economic and social development over the long term. Therefore, the Department for International Development (DFID), through UKaid, provided funding for the setup of the Western Region Coastal Foundation (WRCF) Program in 2015. The vision of the Foundation is to be the focal point for stakeholders in the region to collectively maximize stability and socio-economic benefits. Its mission is to promote development in communities impacted by the extractive industry through influencing corporate social investments decisions; coordinating and supporting the delivery of economic and social initiatives prioritized by stakeholders.

WRCF champions relationship building, which can mobilize human and financial capital and bring sustainable change from social investments. It works toward inclusiveness by ensuring that representative voices of community members inform its work. In addition, WRCF is a trusted Convener that brings together industry, government and communities across the Western Region, to identify, prioritize and address local development needs. Most importantly, WRCF is an independent entity not tied to any public or private entity, but governed by a Board with representatives from communities, extractives companies and the government.

WRCF identifies and designs projects that strengthen social license and support community development, and provides technical advisory services throughout the life cycle of projects. The Foundation independently assesses and evaluates the impact of social investments, and importantly, it engages communities in on-going conversations that ensure sustainable outcomes from social investments. WRCF provides on-the-ground support to identify opportunities, to mitigate risks and to deliver successful projects.

Ultimately, actions of the WRCF Program will lead to improved stability and inclusive development prospects in the Western Region. At the outcome level, WRCF is expected to meet and manage community expectations, and build constructive relationships between communities, government and industry.

The WRCF has the following objectives:

- To create an innovative and pioneering model of partnership between national and local government, the oil, gas and power industry actors, other private sector firms, development agencies, traditional leaders and local communities.
- To serve as a focal point for stakeholders in the region to work together to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits presented by the oil, gas and power industry and help manage any negative impacts which might arise from the industry's activities.



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- To facilitate a system of integrity and transparency towards an integrated approach to local development based on an open and ongoing process of stakeholder and community dialogue.
- To carry out in depth analysis to inform inclusive social and economic growth in the coastal communities.
- To manage a structured dialogue which discovers and brings together the views of citizens, civil society, private sector, regional and local governments.
- To create an enabling environment to discuss and influence social and economic development priorities in the six coastal districts.
- To facilitate a multi-stakeholder platform to help prioritize development objectives for the Western Region. The platform will explore how oil and gas companies can contribute to stable and inclusive social and environmental development in the region.
- To explore ways to add value to new or existing initiatives in areas such as private sector development, local content in value chains, livelihood development, education and skills training among others.

The Foundation has four core components that comprise its Program Structure:

1) **Economic & Market Development**

The WRCF explores options and opportunities to add value to new or already existing economic initiatives in value-chains. Informed by robust research and data, with special consideration to gender, particularly, women and youth, the Foundation pursues social and economic programs that provide opportunities for households to increase their economic and social capital through market-oriented interventions in selected value-chains.

2) **Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Platform**

The WRCF manages a structured dialogue to discover and bring together the views of citizens, civil society, the private sector, regional and local governments. It helps to prioritize and coordinate development objectives for the six coastal districts namely Jomoro, Ellembelle, Nzema East, Ahanta West, Sekondi-Takoradi and Shama.

3) **Resource Mobilisation, Partnership & Alliances**

WRCF's resource mobilisation strategy, is in part, built upon early engagement with stakeholders to identify common objectives and activities, which positions the Foundation as an entity to coordinate, facilitate, and deliver well-designed corporate social investments (CSI) and local



content development activities. The core principle of our approach is to promote shared responsibility amongst our partners, to co-design pilot intervention activities based on rigorous analysis, funded with resources contributed by both the Foundation, industry partners and other donor institutions. This will ensure program success and sustainability.

4) Result Measurement & Communications

The WRCF monitors, measures, and reports on how key stakeholders (e.g. communities, companies and government) benefit from its activities and its impact over time. Using a robust, systematic approach to influence measurement, based on globally recognized standards, the Foundation communicates the impact of its program in a transparent and consistent manner.

WRCF and the Land Sector

The nature of WRCF's work is closely linked to the land sector, and brings to the fore a number of key issues which have required careful consideration from the project. Below we have highlighted three issues which the WRCF have encountered, specifically related to land:

- **Land Investment and Changes in Land Use**
- **Resettlement and compensation for individuals and communities moved from their land**
- **The Need for alternative livelihoods and skills development (as a consequence of resettlement)**

As discussed above, the discovery of oil and gas resources has led to a high increase in infrastructure projects and investments in the Western Region particularly the six coastal districts. Large tracts of land have been taken over for oil and gas infrastructure, businesses, pipelines, roads and areas for machinery repair. Land investment by private sector companies the world over is not uncommon, and in recent years has been under increasing scrutiny to ensure that investments are transparent, fair and ultimately legal.

Investment in land is often closely associated with changes in land. In the western region of Ghana, where this project is focused, land has traditionally been used for agricultural production- both commercial and subsistence. Thus changes in land use not only affect local livelihoods, but also have implications for food access and security, and environmental degradation.

Changes in land use lead to the second issue encountered by the project: resettlement and compensation. The land being obtained for use by investors is in most cases land previously inhabited by communities, and thus these communities need to be resettled elsewhere. Issues of resettlement and compensation are



sensitive and can lead to disputes and conflict, particularly if rights to land are unclear. This can lead to disputes within communities, or indeed between locals and investors. This is an issue which particularly affects women and other marginalised groups, who may either lack land rights or be unfairly excluded from compensation received.

Loss of traditional lands also has cultural and social significance for communities. Beyond economic importance, land has often been passed down through generations and has significant cultural value- a value which cannot be compensated for with a monetary sum.

If and when communities are moved from their land and compensated, there can be further issues relating to the need for alternative livelihoods and skills development. In many instances, where previously individuals were engaged in rural livelihoods, their relocation has been to urban areas, forcing a change in livelihood practices. While urban migration may not be a problem in itself, there may be problems if individuals do not have the sufficient skills or funds to seek alternative livelihoods. Further, this increased demand for jobs needs to be met with sufficient opportunity for employment.

Having outlined some of the land issues associated with the WRCF, we now explore each issue in more depth, looking specifically at how the issues play out for the project, and what the project has done to begin to address them.

Issue 1: Land Investment and Changes in Land Use

The Western Region is endowed with natural resources including minerals (gold, manganese, bauxite), forest reserves, timber, cocoa, oil palm, coconut and recently off-shore oil. The oil and gas industry has and will generate a lot of economic activities which has and will continue to influence land use, human settlements, the environment and transportation. As well, the industry has and will present challenges to land users and holders, owing to changing land use. In recognition of this, development partners and the government developed a Western Region Spatial Development Framework with the objective to “*ensure a spatially balanced, diversified and environmentally friendly economy that brings sufficient employment and social services for its people and the nation, based on sustainable use of the natural resource endowment*”. Western Region Development Framework, 2012 p.4¹ As part of this regional framework, all six districts impacted by oil and gas activities have district-specific spatial plans. Proposed infrastructure for the coastal

¹ Development of the Western Region Spatial Development Framework was supported by Norway Development Agency, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, and Town and Country Planning Department of Ghana



districts include the Western Corridor Gas Infrastructure: a gas processing plant at Atuabo and onshore pipelines, an oil refinery and large-scale facility to store Liquefied Petroleum Gas and other petroleum products at Pumpuni in the Ahanta West District, a gas powered electricity generation plant at Domunli Lagoon/Bonyere in the Jomoro District and a thermal plant at Aboadze in the Shama District among others. Thus speculative land purchases, construction of large infrastructure for oil and gas activities and allied services are rapidly changing the landscape of the six coastal districts. Rapid conversion of agricultural land for residential, commercial and industrial uses is displacing traditional agro-based livelihoods with negative implications for food security and overall resilience of ecosystems in the six coastal districts.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture estimates in 2010 show that total arable land in the Western Region is 6,720 Km² with food crop production coverage as follows – maize: 56,094 hectares, rice: 15,434 hectares and cassava: 74,429 hectares.² About 58.1% of the active population in the Western Region is engaged in agriculture.³ In Nzema East and Ellembelle, it is estimated that over 65% of the economically active population are engaged in agriculture (including fishing) and agro-processing. Over the last half decade, it is estimated that 25,000 acres of arable land have been lost to oil-related infrastructure development. In Shama district alone, operators of quarries, sand and gravel extraction and other forms of mining have so far cleared about 2,104 acres of arable lands, representing 39% of existing natural areas in the district. Again, over 2,334 acres of primarily agricultural lands have been earmarked as free zones and oil and gas enclaves in Shama District pending development. In 2003, in Yabiw in the Shama District, over 1,530 hectares of land was delineated as a free zones enclave affecting some 1000 farmers.⁴ In Nyankrom in the same district, 34 hectares of farmland will be converted into a fertilizer plant. Takoradi Thermal Plant Expansion project in Aboadze in Shama district covers an area of 3.6 hectares affecting over 170 acres of farmlands. A survey carried out within the months of January to April 2015 revealed that between 1,500 and 4,500 acres of fertile agricultural land have been cleared for oil and gas companies, real estate or warehouses in Ahanta West district alone. Construction of the Ghana National Gas Plant affected hundreds of coconut farmers in Atuabo (in the Ellembelle District) whose farms had been decimated by the Cape St.Paul Wilt disease. The company has laid gas pipelines stretching over 111km through 85 communities across 4 districts.⁵ The Atuabo Freeport, covering 2000 acres of land, will affect Anokye, Atuabo and Asemda, and Eni's gas activities has affected the town of Sanzule.

² Mofa.gov.gh/site/?page_id=660

³ www.ghana.gov.gh/index-php/about-ghana/region/western

⁴ Overview of Issues posed by Social, Economic and Ecosystem Change in Shama District

⁵ A northern pipeline from Atuabo which is under construction will affect more communities.



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Factors contributing to the above state of affairs include the mandate of district assemblies which have the authority to regulate land use yet traditional leaders and families hold ownership rights over the land. As stated above, district assemblies have spatial development plans to guide land use decision-making and land allocation for different uses, nevertheless, traditional leaders and landowners give out large tracts of agricultural land without regard to these spatial plans, especially when economically attractive land use options are available, which offer huge sums of money. The result is that spatial development plans have not been effectively implemented, which if it were the case, would avoid some of the challenges that communities, particularly farming communities, are facing. Another challenge to implementation of the spatial plans is that, these were driven by development partners and oil companies which contracted consultants to get this done, hence these plans are not wholly owned by the assemblies. There is also high turnover of planning officers at these district assemblies leading to loss of institutional memory and commitment to making the plans work.

Aside from loss of farmlands, lands earmarked for social services may also be sold. A site located between Ewusiejo and Aboadze for a hospital was sold to a company; but refusal of one of the district's leaders to sign off on the deal led to relocation of the company to a different site. In addition, while some towns do not have gas infrastructure, their proximity to oil and gas facilities creates a unique set of challenges related to an increased spate of land purchasing, high cost of land, migration and social vices. In addition, farmers are converting farms for food crops and coconuts into rubber plantations because rubber fetches high sums when sold to the Ghana Rubber Estate Limited (GREL) in the Ahanta West District which utilizes out-grower schemes and provides training in good agricultural practices to improve their outputs. This development has given some hope to farmers whose coconut farms were destroyed by Cape St. Paul Wilt's Disease.

Degradation of the coastal environment affects livelihood and human settlements. Sand wining for construction has led to incursions of sea water into communities leading to eroding coastlines, which require construction of sea defense walls. Construction in flood prone areas leads to flooding of adjoining communities, calling for resettlement of communities in some districts, for example in Shama District. Due to high demand for accommodation, urban areas like Shama and the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis have seen development of unregulated housing projects.



Environmental impact of the changing land use is real. Mangroves are being cut for fuel wood in some communities (Butre and Busua), others are filling swamps for residential accommodation (Apowa, Amanful, Funko). This leads to loss of breeding grounds for fish, crustaceans (crabs and periwinkles), and erosion of coastlines and most significantly loss of carbon-removers.

Poverty levels in the six districts are varied. Shama, Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis and Ahanta West (Ahantas) Districts are urban with a lower poverty ratio compared to the Nzema East, Ellembelle and Jomoro Districts (Nzemas) that are peri-urban and rural.⁶ Some of the very large oil and gas infrastructure are located in the last three districts. Further, the off-shore oil rigs are within the seas bordering these districts (e.g. FPSO Kwame Nkrumah). The Ghana Gas plant and Eni's gas infrastructure are in the Ellembelle District. These infrastructures have brought opportunities in the districts including the service sector (hotels), markets (Esiama), rental accommodation (Aiyinase), factories, which are dotted along the towns in the districts and improved road networks in some towns, among others.

Issue 2: Resettlement and compensation for communities and individuals moved from their land

Land is owned by the chieftaincy institution of a traditional area, also known as 'stools' or families. Nzema land is owned by stools (Nzema East, Western and Eastern Nzema) while in the Ahanta areas (Shama, STMA and Ahanta West) lands may be owned by stools or families. The system of inheritance in all the districts is matrilineal (mostly among Akan speaking ethnic groups), where family members belonging to the maternal line of inheritance have ownership and control rights. The practice is that community and family members are allocated portions of this communal land for farming. Though every family or community member has access to the land, control remains in the hands of the chief, or in the case of the family – with male leaders. In apportioning land for farming, males get larger acreage than females, therefore, men grow cash crops (coconut, oil palm) while women, owing to their smaller portions, grow subsistence crops.⁷ There are tenant farmers (migrants) who farm on 'abunu' or 'abusa' basis in which farm produce when sold is divided into two or three parts with the land owner receiving one part.⁸

⁶ A Community Perception and Social Economic Survey (CPSES), conducted by WRCF in 2016, found the average poverty incidence for the districts to be Jomoro 28.2%, Ellembelle 26.2%, Nzema East 26.8%, Ahanta West 25.%, STMA 11.4% and Shama is 22.7%.

⁷ Females are not given control over land because when they marry, control of the land would go to their husbands who are considered 'outsiders'. However, some women own cash crops.

⁸ 'Abunu' (division by two) and abusa (division by three) are farming practices in which non-land owners are allocated land to farm sharing the farm produce or money derived from sale of produce with the land owner.



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Ownership, access and control over land correlates with compensation received for lands acquired for oil and gas activities. Land owners who sell land get more money than those who sell crops. Usually, when the chief or family leaders get the compensation, they share among families that constitute the stool, or among the family members. A stool that receives compensation for land divides the money into three – one part is for the community which is put into an account to be used for development projects, another part goes to the chief for upkeep of the traditional leaders, and the third part goes to the stool which is used to support festivals and education of needy children. In cases where private investors acquire land, negotiation for compensation is with the community leaders rather than the entire community, and rightly so, however since entire communities or families do not know, or never get to know how much is paid, some leaders do not disclose full amounts received for compensation, or do not appropriately compensate their people. This leads to mistrust, discontentment and sometimes disruption of activities of companies. For example, in Akentenkyi in the Ahanta West District, the chief who had received compensation for land for a university, applied funds for his private business giving community members minimal amounts; this led to a court case against him and his eventual de-stoolment as a chief.

Most community members are happy to sell their lands because for many, it is the first time they receive large amounts of money. Some use the money to refurbish their houses; turning mud-brick houses into cement block houses. Despite these large-payouts, within a short time, most community people dissipate compensation received, thereby becoming poor, sometimes poorer than before the sale of land for commercial purposes.

With respect to crops, compensation for cash crops (oil palm, coconut, cocoa, etc) is high for owners who are mostly males, while women receive the least compensation for crops due to the size and type of crops grown on the land. Thus, for example, men receive GHC15,000 (US\$3,750) for oil palm farms of about 15 acres, while women receive GHC900 (US\$225) to GHC2500 (US\$625) for cassava or vegetables farms covering up to five acres.⁹

The Cape St. Paul's Wilt Disease (CSPWD) has devastated about half of the coconut plantations along the coast which seriously affected the economic livelihood of the people in coastal district areas, leading to low incomes and increased unemployment. Therefore, for many of the coconut growing areas, influx of commercial entities needing land for infrastructure was welcome relief. The Government compulsorily acquired the land for the gas facility at Atuabo plus other lands for pipelines covering a 111 km stretch

⁹ Exchange rate off US\$1 to GH¢4



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affecting 85 communities in four districts. Though government has paid compensation for unencumbered lands, crops and fixtures on these lands, there are a number of land owners who have not been compensated due to ownership disputes. Compensation for the land on which the gas facility is built has not been paid to date due to disputes over the rightful chief to receive the compensation.

Disputes over land oftentimes take years to resolve, which then means funds allocated by the government to compensate land owners in cases of government acquisitions has to be kept in an escrow account by the Land Valuation Division for an indefinite time. These funds are released as and when rightful land owners are determined by courts of law. Some land owners claim they do not have funds for litigation.

Loss of farmland and low compensation for crops has implications for women's economic opportunities, women's empowerment and generational change. Owing to their low literacy rate compared to men, women are less likely to take advantage of economic opportunities within the oil and gas industry.¹⁰ Some women displaced from their farms desire to get into trading activities and yet are unable to get access to reasonable credit to trade with.¹¹ There is a loss of belongingness to family land where community members have to find new lands to farm on. Further, their bargaining power is weakened because having lost their land, many end up as tenant farmers with fewer rights on other people's land. Women are spending more to farm than previously. They sometimes must pay a token for these new farm lands. When previously women would walk to their farms, now they have to travel by car to new farms. In the Ahanta West District, women are travelling by car from their communities (Hotopo, Ewusiejo, Bokro) to Ayiem, a green zone area, to farm. Furthermore, women trek long hours to farms, which affects how much time they spend on household chores and family care, or where they put family care first, amount of time spent on the farm is affected, which in turn affects what they grow and how much they are able to sell. Norpalm, a Norwegian oil palm plantation in the Ahanta West District, periodically gives land to community members to grow short-time yielding vegetables when the company prepares the land to replant oil palm.

Another effect of land grabbing is loss of cultural sites. Some groves and forest reserves have been sold or converted to farms. In Hotopo in the Ahanta West District, some forests have been sold. In Aketenkyi, in the Ahanta West District a forest called 'Aketenkyi epɔ' (grove) has been converted to oil palm farms. The

¹⁰ The oil and gas sector requires specialized skills such as welders and engineers most of whom are men.

¹¹ As part of efforts by the Government of Ghana to increase financial inclusion, changes in policy regulations has led to an exponential growth of financial institutions including micro-finance institutions that offer myriad services including small loans to traders. However women tend to be averse to loans, or where they do access loans the amounts are usually insignificant –GH¢500 to GH¢2500.



people of Sanzule would have lost the community cemetery in negotiations with Eni for land for its gas activities if the paramount chief of the Eastern Nzema Traditional Area had not intervened.

Issue 3: The Need for alternative livelihoods and skills development (as a consequence of resettlement)

Displacement from farming activities contributes to high expectations among the youth to get jobs in the oil and gas industry though they lack employable skills, particularly as industry's demand for skilled workforce is quite low. In 2016, the oil and gas sector created 15,000 jobs with Ghanaians being 82.5%.¹² The World Bank reports that the number of youth unemployed in the country in 2016 was 48%. Women are particularly disadvantaged as they have a higher job inactivity rate than males at 17% compared to 11% for males. Some oil and gas companies offer scholarships for students through secondary, university and the post graduate levels. Yet the number of people benefitting from these scholarships is insignificant. Tullow Ghana Ltd. built a technical training center at the Takoradi Polytechnic to provide skills to young people who can be employed. In addition, there is the USAID Ghana Supply Chain Development Program that provides capacity support to small and medium enterprises and business service providers to participate in procurement of employment contracts within the oil sector. Reduced marine catch due to a number of factors including unsustainable fishing practices as well competition with oil rigs and other infrastructure at sea has meant that fishing is no longer attractive for the youth. Some have therefore attempted to get into fish farming to supplement their income. Even then, there are reports of loss of fish ponds when lands are sold to industry.

The myriad land uses in the coastal districts, and oil infrastructure in the sea, has affected farmers, youth, fisher-folk due to seasonality of marine fishing, rural and urban dwellers who are displaced because buildings are converted from residential to commercial properties among others. These challenges require interventions that are short, medium and long term informed by research and analysis and demonstration of good farming practices.

WRCF Support to Promote Sustainable Solutions

As stated earlier, WRCF's interventions aim to build constructive relationships between communities, government and industry. Additionally, WRCF interventions support stakeholder -led socio-economic

¹² Local Content and Economic Development, Paper presented by Dr. Juliette Twumasi-Anokye of the Ghana Petroleum Commission at a Summer School on the Extractive Industry in September, 2016



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development activities to promote stability and economic growth in the six coastal districts. Stability in communities ensures that companies' operations are not affected since disruptions could lead to loss of several millions of dollars. In 2016, attacks on oil facilities that disrupted production in Nigeria led to Chevron shutting down about 90,000 barrels a day of output following an attack on its joint-venture offshore platform.¹³ Instability also has implications on revenue generated by government to shore up the economy, including provision of social services and infrastructural developments. Taking the case of Nigeria, the International Energy Agency estimated in May, 2016 that the Nigerian Government could lose US\$1 billion in revenue as attacks on oil installations increased.

For communities, instability has grave implications for fulfillment of expectations. In addition, oil and gas production in Ghana is inherently expected to lead to improved economic prospects not just for the communities most affected by oil and gas activities, but the entire country, because increased revenue is applied to key sectors of the economy. Therefore, expectations of economic growth are as much a concern for communities as it is for the government.

Objectives of the three players to whom WRCF directs its activities (industry, government and communities) are not dissimilar, yet a convergence and consensus of ideas to respond to community needs has evaded these key players. Communities have high expectations that private companies will meet their socio-economic needs; companies' expectation is government will provide much needed social services and economic opportunities from revenue it generates, therefore their role in implementing corporate social investment initiatives are meant to complement government's core responsibilities. We observed that most companies were in compliance with their own corporate social investment policies and internationally agreed (World Bank) policies on involuntary resettlement. Decentralized government structures, which are closest to communities, have the mandate to lead in addressing economic imbalances and putting the economies of local districts on a path of accelerated growth and poverty reduction, yet do not receive sufficient funds from central government to roll out their plans, nor are they involved in negotiations between private companies and central government.

Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

In this conundrum, WRCF identified ineffective relationships among community, industry, and government, as a factor that affects stability, and undermines efforts at providing sustainable economic

¹³ <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-05-06/nigerian-oil-output-plunges-to-20-year-low-as-attacks-escalate> accessed on 01/19/17



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interventions in the six coastal districts. Communities were not organized to effectively present concerns to government authorities and industry. In addition, there was lack of clarity on who to address community concerns to. Similarly, while government and industry conducted some consultations, these could be better streamlined in managing expectations of communities. There had been multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms spearheaded by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that had emerged in response to oil and gas activities in the region, with the view to bringing key actors together, but these platforms lacked inclusiveness as they were limited in their scope to high level policy making activities, excluding communities.

WRCF's multi-stakeholder dialogue platform brings together communities, government and industry around development of **sustainable** economic **solutions** that are **locally informed**. The dialogue structure is designed to get information on social and economic issues and serves as a way of sharing information to enhance transparency and accountability among all stakeholders. The platform creates and institutionalises conversations at different levels for identifying, discussing, prioritising and addressing growth and development needs of the districts. It ensures transparent processes in the engagement among communities, government, oil, gas and power stakeholders, and empowers community members to take collective decisions and actions around effects of oil, gas and power issues. Trust is built among the actors. The Platform provides information to all stakeholders to enable them build consensus, based on accurate insights and relevant data.

With the aim of ensuring that every voice is heard around the opportunities and concerns that the oil and gas industry brings, the dialogue platform includes household level conversations conducted by volunteers. These individual concerns are aggregated and discussed at community level meetings to prioritise the most pressing community concerns. Individuals with concerns relating to land and compensation get the opportunity to share their experiences including steps taken to get receive compensation with others. This allows other community members to learn from others. Through a validation process, communities identify five individuals to represent the community at area level meetings and at district level. As the conversations are escalated through the chain, commonalities across communities and districts emerge. These issues are captured to identify trending issues.

Findings from the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop

Of the 1263 issues logged by WRCF in the 2016 round of community conversations, 49 land related issues were highlighted by community members across the six coastal districts of the Western Region. The issues



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related to compensation, livelihood, reinstatement and resettlement resulting from the activities of the Oil and Gas industry, Mining, Construction and plantation industry. Table 1 below describes the number of issues relating to land discussed at WRCF community conversations:

District	Category	Compensation	Livelihood	Reinstatement	Resettlement	Total
Ahanta West	Land (Oil and Gas)	1			1	2
	Land (Plantations)	1				1
Ellembele	Land (Construction)	2				2
	Land (Oil and Gas)	9	2	3		14
	Land (Oil, Gas and Mining)	2	1			3
	Land (Educational facility)	1				1
	Land (Mining)	3	1		1	5
Jomoro	Land (Oil and Gas)	1	1			2
Nzema East	Land (Oil and Gas)	7	2			9
Shama	Land (Oil and Gas)	2				2
Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan	Land (Oil and Gas)	8				8
Total	All	37	7	3	2	49

Table 1: Number of issues relating to land logged by WRCF Dialogue Platform

On compensation concerns, the Ellembele District discussed the most issues (#17, 46%) relating to their land as a result of it hosting of the Ghana Gas plant and its network of pipelines, construction of new



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highways and access routes to the plant, and the existence of mining or quarry operations. Communities such as Nkroful (Ellunibo, Tema and Ebanso) intensely elaborated on the oil and gas and quarry operation's disproportionate compensation package compared to the loss of their farm land. In some cases, the compensation for land or houses affected have not been paid at all. In the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan area, most of the issues from Adientem, Kansaworodo, Whindo and Ntankorful complained about the lack of compensation for land owners who have been affected by the laying of the gas pipelines.

14% of issues raised related specifically to livelihood concerns of community members. The issues centered on the occupation of farmlands by the oil, gas and mining industries and inadequate alternative livelihood programs. Nuabesa, a community in Nzema East reported the need for a rubber farm that was taken by Ghana Gas to be released to the members of the area to harvest and use its proceeds to continue developmental projects such as water and a Community-based Health Planning and Service (CHPS) compound. From Anwia of the Ellembele District, community members complained to be resettled by mining company as a result of heavy blasting affecting their building structures as well as the health implications.

The number of people participating in the community conversations is high, far exceeding annual targets for the programme; evidence that people have an avenue to air their grievances and receive feedback on solutions to these grievances. In 2015, the Dialogue Platform reached 46,500 people against a target of 21,600; in 2016, a total of 29,971 people were reached, against a target 18,000, composed of composed of 15,099 (50.4%), women 14872 (49.6%), youth 12,518 (41.8%). There was a 24% repeat participation in all conversations.

Issues raised at community conversations are categorised into broad themes including Water (Quality, Accessibility, Affordability), Economic (Livelihoods, Employment, Compensation, Access to Credit), Education (Quality, Infrastructure and Personnel), Environment (Pollution, Climate, Receding sea line), Infrastructure (Roads/Bridges, Community Centers, Electricity, Telecommunication, Markets Cold Storage, Lorry Stations, Recreation centres), Sanitation (Waste Management, Drainage, Places of Convenience), Health (Delivery, Infrastructure, Medical Personnel, Disease Outbreaks, Drugs/Consumables), and Governance (Inclusiveness, Consultation, Decision-Making, Corruption, Local Government Action). Most of the issues relate to services that must be provided by government hence WRCF's engagement with the local government structures. Local government is informed of community needs, and utilise the dialogue platform as an accountability mechanism to report on progress of their work.



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At the apex of the dialogue platform is the Citizens Advisory Council composed of representatives of oil and gas companies (Tullow Ghana Ltd. and Ghana National Gas Company Ltd.), communities (represented by nine senior level chiefs and queen mothers), government (leadership of district assemblies, Fisheries Commission, Environmental Protection Agency) and civil society (NGOs, Media). This body, which is not inquisitorial, summons actors who appear at a public session of the Council to respond to issues raised by communities. These public sessions are attended by representatives of communities and provide an opportunity for companies to share information on the operations and livelihood empowerment initiatives to take people out of poverty. For the community, the Council epitomises a neutral body before which their representatives appear to tell their story, and indeed companies appear to provide information and follow up action taken on issues.

On land and compensations, the Land Valuation Division and Ghana National Gas Company Ltd., have appeared before the Advisory Council to explain delays associated with land compensation for lands compulsorily acquired by government for the gas plant, assuring residents of prompt payments once lands are unencumbered and real owners are determined by a court of law. They also informed crop and land owners of the escrow account in trust of those who should be compensated.

All responses from government and industry are fed-back to communities; this has built trust between communities and the WRCF. Although we may not be able to solve the land and compensation issues due to its intricacies, we connect communities to those who have a responsibility to respond to issues, and provide companies with data to inform their interventions. Industry appreciates the intermediary role that WRCF plays in relaying information from industry to communities.

Pilot Initiatives – Technical and Vocational Education Training

Informed by data on issues from the communities, the WRCF designs, pilots and communicates information on interventions that demonstrate a positive return on investment, sustainability and scalability with a potential to create jobs, increase income and get people out of poverty. As is to be expected, economic empowerment (covering employment, land and compensation) is the top trending issue from community conversations. WRCF is leading a coordinated multi-stakeholder effort to structure and drive a well-designed, evidence based Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) support program that seeks to address the root weaknesses in TVET and delivery system, meet industry informed standards, and improve workforce linkages into the extractive sector. Towards this end, the WRCF, with support from the



Ministry of Petroleum,¹⁴ will build capacity of trainers at Kikam and Takoradi Technical Institutes this February on proficiency in welding and fabrication processes and hands-on-training for teachers on new welding and fabrication equipment and maintenance. Through this, WRCF expects to leverage support from oil and gas, and mining industries for scale up across the country. An aquaculture pilot intervention, as an alternative livelihood measure to address dwindling marine fish, is ongoing in the three out of the six coastal districts which have topography ideal for fish farming.¹⁵ Prior to WRCF's involvement, fish farmers were making losses from aquaculture due mainly to non-application of appropriate farming practices.¹⁶ The WRCF pilots demonstrate that this initiative can be turned into a thriving business if the proper practices are applied, including introduction of climate smart practices like the 'monk', to regulate water in the ponds.¹⁷ Further, WRCF is cognizant of the gender dynamics of aquaculture where women do not own ponds and have restricted roles in activities related to this trade.¹⁸ To ensure women are engaged in aquaculture, river bodies are not polluted, and to utilize run-off from fish ponds, part of the WRCF demonstration pilot is to introduce vegetable farming in between fish ponds. These vegetable gardens would be watered by the nutrient-rich run-off from the ponds.

Technical Assistance

WRCF provides technical assistance to companies' projects through assessment of interventions to draw out lessons, as well as identify opportunities for scale up. One such project is a cassava intervention supported by the Jubilee Partners.¹⁹ WRCF is supporting the project by assessing viability of cassava farming as an economic livelihood. In relation to this, we will be test harvesting the Jubilee Partners cassava to identify the kinds of soils that cassava thrives well and provide market linkages to the farmers.

¹⁴ This is part of the Ministry of Petroleum's Oil and Gas Capacity Development Project.

¹⁵ In 2016, WRCF with support from Vitol Foundation conducted a scoping study on opportunities for oil and gas corporate social investment in the fisheries sector of the Western Region. USAID-supported Sustainable Fisheries Management Project in Ghana also seeks to address challenges with dwindling marine fish catch.

¹⁶ Farmers were using wrong sizes of fingerlings; feed conversion ratio was high leading to smaller sized fish that did not yield high prices and there was loss of fish during rainy seasons.

¹⁷ The monk is a structure built in the fish ponds that enables the farmer to regulate water in and out of the ponds. Farmers are able to sell fish by lowering the water level to show buyers sizes of fish without catching the fish out of the pond with the risk of death.

¹⁸ Within the fishing sector, men are the 'hunters' who go out to sea while women sell and process fish. Interestingly, women own canoes and fund fishing expeditions. In the non-marine fishing sector in the Western Region, fish farmers constitute associations which own ponds. Overwhelmingly, fish farming association members are males.

¹⁹ Jubilee Partners are composed of Tullow Oil Ltd., Kosmos Energy Ghana Ltd., Ghana National Petroleum Corporation, Anardarko and Petro SA.



Developing Links with Complementary Programmes

Coconut oil export is equally an important economic activity in the coastal districts. To increase sales for coconut farmers, the WRCF is linking farmers with processors who can off take large quantities of coconut. Similarly, we have compiled a list of entrepreneurs from the Region to be linked to the DFID-supported Enhancing Growth in New Enterprises (ENGINE) program that provides start-up or seed capital to micro and small enterprises.²⁰

WRCF is collaborating with the Ghana National Gas Company Ltd. to engage 85 communities affected by the gas pipelines to establish community owned enterprises for jobs maintaining the right of way including weeding.

Through the dialogue platform, a pool of volunteers (1,550 across six districts) and facilitators (24) in communities has enhanced skills and knowledge to take up leadership positions in their communities. They have been trained on facilitation, understanding gender, leadership skills and understanding the oil and gas sector. Communities now have people they can trust to facilitate community meetings and consensus building, who can engage government and the private sector around community needs. These volunteers are also able to mobilize communities for self-help initiatives in response to their concerns. Some are elected to serve in the local assemblies. In Assuoko Essaman, a facilitator working with volunteers appealed to a bank to support furnishing for the community's health facility which had not been operational for two years.

Through convergence of concerns and ideas at community conversations, communities are embarking on own initiatives to address some of their challenges. In Beahu, community members levied each other to rent a house for a community health facility. In Asemko, community members contributed to the construction of a permanent community meeting place.

Industry and government, particularly the decentralized structures continue to respond to concerns and issues of communities. Local assemblies include concerns of communities in their district plans, repair bridges and roads, and provide boreholes among others. Ghana National Petroleum Commission (GNPC) expanded its scholarship scheme from four districts to six districts.

²⁰ Enhancing Growth in New Enterprises (ENGINE) is a multi-year projects that seeks to equip micro and small enterprises with skills and resources to improve their business plans and internal operations while creating a community of entrepreneurs through increased access to business development and financial services.



Perceptions of WRCF

Overall, beneficiaries' perception of the presence of the WRCF programme is positive. In 2016 (after two years of conversations), the WRCF conducted a Community Perception and Socio-economic Survey (CPSES), which found that decision making in WRCF's target communities were perceived as more inclusive than in non-target communities: 37% of respondents from target communities reported that the local government reported back to the people 'well' or 'very well', compared to 26% of respondents in non-target communities. 44% of respondents from target communities reported that people like them were listened to by community or traditional leaders 'often' or 'always', compared to 30% of respondents in non-target communities. 46% of respondents from target communities reported that people like them were listened to by NGOs 'often' or 'always', compared to 23% of respondents in non-target communities.²¹

Looking to the Future

Despite the good work and process made by the WRCF program in bringing together representatives from communities, government and industry, there is still more work to be done. Noting that disquiet over compensation relates to compulsorily acquired lands, there is continuous engagement between WRCF, the Land Valuation Division and the Ghana National Gas Company Ltd to support land owners to verify their titles, so as to receive compensation. For those whose compensation for land has delayed, the institutions must put in place a process to support contesting parties to resolve their disputes. While this may seem outside the purview of the actors, the reality is that not resolving these land disputes could potentially lead to conflict and disruption of operations of the gas company.

District spatial development plans must be implemented as these provide clear regulations around land use. Though district assemblies have spatial development plans, traditional and family leaders are still selling land without reference to these plans. The dichotomy between the roles of the traditional leaders (customary owners of land) and the district assemblies needs to be resolved through a process of consultations that show current challenges, and opportunities to be derived from enforcing the spatial plans.

Private companies in the oil and gas sector must continue to engage in sustainable interventions that take account of the multiple needs of local communities. The WRCF has data on issues which are unique to communities, as well as issues that cut across a number of communities and districts. A systemic,

²¹ The CPSES was conducted in 2,052 households in 228 communities out of which 114 were communities that WRCF has conversations and 114 are in non-WRCF communities.



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collaborative approach by oil and gas companies to addressing issues across several communities and districts may encourage wider development impacts on people across the coastal districts, as oppose to each company simply limiting its interest to communities that are affected by its operations, to the neglect of other communities which are not so affected.

Traditional leaders, heads of families and private persons should be sensitized to the dangers of lost inheritance for generations unborn, food insecurity and potential conflict fueled by aggrieved residents. They should note that vulnerable rural folks are being deprived of their farmlands and livelihood. Government's efforts at streamlining land administration, hopefully, would lead to proper documentation on who owns what land.²²

Special attention to the condition and position of women arising from displacement, insufficient compensation and exacerbating reproductive and productive burdens should be a consideration in the design of diversified livelihood interventions by government and the private sector. While most initiatives are gender neutral, it should be recognized that women are disproportionately affected by effects of oil and gas activities, therefore allocating quotas or special initiatives to boost their income earning power should be apt.

Attention to the concerns of the youth should continue to be a focus around which skills training, scholarships and livelihood initiatives are designed. These initiatives should move away from one-off measures to ones that are systemic and sustainable. This requires thorough analyses, expert involvement in the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting with clear case studies of winnable models developed and shared across other development sectors of the country.

A sustainability measure to ensure the three actors (government, community and industry) continue to engage to address the myriad problems is the transformation of the WRCF program into an entity - Western Region Coastal Foundation - as a non-profit company limited by guarantee.

²² A Land Administration Project in its first phase (2003 – 2010) laid the foundation for reviewing laws on land and implemented pilots on customary boundary demarcation and systemic title registration among others. The second phase of the project (2011 – 2016) is enabled land sector agencies to be more response to clients and reduced time spent on land transactions among others.



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