

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING WITHIN
THE FRAMEWORK OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) IN BOGOSO-
PRESTEA AREA OF WASSA WEST DISTRICT OF GHANA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role and influence of communities in environmental decision-making within the framework of environmental impact assessment highlighting the different views of respondents on participation. The study involved formal and informal interviews with respondents. The study identified that information exchange between catchments communities and miners in the opinion of 51% of respondents is low; however regulatory bodies and the mining company interviewed are of the opinion that information exchange is relatively high. About (45%) of community respondents expressed that communities are very much aware of the impacts of mining. In addition, 61% of respondents made known that communities play small role in the implementation of mining impact mitigation measures. Moreover, the study showed that communities have serious concerns for the impacts of mining, and about 72% of community respondents confirmed that communities are keener on the positive impacts they can get from mining companies. However, Abraham Inkoom, one community member, believes the government has shares in the mining companies and no matter how communities disagree with them; they cannot be stopped from working. Moreover, the results revealed that community involvement in impact identification has improved a little over the years in Bogoso-Prestea area but communities do not have the will to extend their involvement into monetary contributions for the development of the community capacity for environmental monitoring. Finally, the study revealed that that an EPA officer with knowledge in sociology or anthropology would be of immense benefit for effective community participation in environmental decision making even though the knowledge in these fields alone is not sufficient to achieve that purpose. Thus, there exist opportunities for communities to participate in environmental decision-making but factors such as over concentration on community leaders and inadequate capacities in participation strategies militate against the possible achievement of effective community participation.

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