LIVELIHOOD NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

PROMOTING GENDER INCLUSIVITY IN THE SMALL SCALE MINING SECTOR IN GHANA

Report submitted by: Devtplan Consult (March, 2020)
Executive Summary

The small-scale mining sector in Ghana currently employs an estimated one million people directly and supports about 4.5 million more people (International Institute for Environment and Development, 2016).

The sector is characterized by unsafe working conditions, pollution of water bodies, land degradation, illegal mining and gender-based exclusion.

Although about 51% of workers in the sector are women (approximately 510,000), most of them are engaged in illegal mining activities. They are disadvantaged and excluded from the potentially lucrative and poverty-alleviating opportunities that small-scale mining could offer, mainly due to lack of access to credit and training, as well as cultural beliefs and norms.

Dutch government aims to economically empower women living in and around small-scale gold mining communities.

Building on the Golden Line Programme goal, Solidaridad through funding from Kering is undertaking various interrelated activities that would empower more women to actively engage in the small-scale mining sector. The overall goal of the project is to enhance women’s visibility, autonomy, economic independence and effectiveness in small scale mining in Ghana.

Solidaridad in partnership with Simavi and Healthy Entrepreneurs is currently implementing the Golden Line Programme in Ghana and Tanzania to help address some of the challenges faced by women in the small-scale mining sector. The 5-year programme (2016-2020), which is funded by the

The Kering Project, which is implemented over an 18 month period, will enable 115 additional women to receive training to improve their skills and knowledge; to create Village Savings and Loan schemes; and to connect with financial institutions to increase their opportunity to access credit to start or improve their businesses within and around the mines.
In relation to the Kering Project interventions, this study was carried out to identify livelihood opportunities for women and women groups in mining communities that will subsequently lead to the capacity building of such women based on the results of the study to enable them harness the opportunities identified. The research was conducted using mainly qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews on a purposively selected sample size of 58 respondents made up of 48 women and 10 key informants from the Minerals Commission, Mine Managers, Business Advisory Centers and Opinion Leaders.

Mining specific livelihood opportunities such as: washing of ore, operation of excavator, record keeping, operation of crushing machines, processing of ore, panning, shanking - i.e. separating large particles of stones from the ore to leave the fine sand for washing, operation of water pump, owning mining concessions, carrying of ore, operation of motor king for mine work, retail of sacks/chemicals/torchlights, buying of ore and rental of mining tools and machines, among others were identified.

Other livelihood opportunities identified in the mining communities include trading, rental of chairs, canopies and PA systems, rubber and cocoa farming, soap making, agro-processing, dressmaking, hairdressing, among others. The research further revealed that the women recognized the need for specialized training in order to take up, especially the mining related roles. The need for savings, loans and grant support were also identified as the potential sources of capital to facilitate their chances of harnessing the identified opportunities.

The desire to own a mining concession was particularly strong among members of the Emmanuel group in Nsuaem while the other groups either opted to engage in the business of renting out mining tools and machines and/or auxiliary businesses in the sector.

The research recommends partnerships with Business Advisory Centres around project communities to adopt the project groups for business advisory support as well as partnerships with the Minerals Commission for community mining groups to facilitate greater participation of women in mining.

Further recommendation for the strengthening of the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) scheme and linking of groups to appropriate financial institutions are considered ideal in light of the challenge of capital inadequacy to harness the identified livelihood opportunities. Business development and alternative livelihoods trainings will also facilitate the proper management of the existing livelihoods of the women and empower them for success in the opportunities identified.

The results of this study provide a wide range of opportunities to redirect efforts of the project and women groups to consider profitable business ventures both in general trade areas and mining businesses. These opportunities have the potential of providing the lifeline for the sustainability of the project groups as well as project interventions once properly harnessed.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
1.0 Background

The small-scale mining sector in Ghana currently employs an estimated one million people directly and supports about 4.5 million more people. The sector is characterized by unsafe working conditions, pollution of water bodies, land degradation, illegal mining and gender-based exclusion.

Although about 51% of workers in the sector are women (approximately 510,000), most of them are engaged in illegal mining activities. Women comprise just about 6% of the labour force in the licensed operations. They are disadvantaged and excluded from the potentially lucrative and poverty-alleviating opportunities that small-scale mining could offer, mainly due to lack of access to credit and training, as well as cultural beliefs and norms.

Solidaridad in partnership with Simavi and Healthy Entrepreneurs is currently implementing The Golden Line Programme in Ghana and Tanzania to help address some of the challenges faced by women in the small-scale mining sector. The 5-year programme (2016-2020), which is funded by the Dutch government aims to economically empower women living in and around small-scale gold mining communities.

The programme seeks to provide women with increased opportunities to engage in economic activities and to enjoy fair and economic working conditions, as this will enhance their status and self determination to make decisions about their life, work and health.

Building on the Golden Line Programme goal, Solidaridad through funding from Kering is undertaking various interrelated activities that would empower more women to actively engage in the sector, leading to more economic and cultural inclusiveness in gold mining communities. The Kering Project, which is implemented over an 18 month period will enable 115 additional women to receive training to improve their skills and knowledge; to create Village Savings and Loan schemes; and to connect with financial institutions to increase the opportunity to access credit to start or improve their businesses within and around the mines.
The overall goal of this project with Kering is to enhance women’s visibility, autonomy, economic independence and effectiveness in small scale mining in Ghana.

In relation to the implementation of the Kering Project, five women’s groups have been formed in the project communities who receive training on group dynamics, leadership skills and responsible mining as well as general training to increase their business knowledge and skills. As part of the implementation of this Project, Devtplan Consult was contracted to undertake a livelihood needs assessment in project communities to facilitate the identification of alternative livelihood opportunities for women and women groups in mining communities. The results of this assessment will subsequently lead to the capacity building of such women to harness the opportunities identified.

1.1 Objectives of the Study
The objectives of the study are: to conduct a livelihoods needs assessment in project mines and identify livelihoods opportunities for women in mining communities; identify the interest of women in pursuing the available livelihood opportunities as well as the prospects for establishing a women own small scale mining company. Also provide training to 5 women’s groups in livelihoods opportunities.

1.2 Methodology
The research was conducted using mainly qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews. This was to facilitate the collection of in-depth information on the perceptions of the sample group in relation to existing livelihood for women as well as prevailing opportunities for alternative livelihood in various sectors including mining for women in mining communities.

The sample for this assessment was selected purposively, targeting Kering Project communities and women groups in the communities. The communities were Tarkwa Nsuaem, Bibiani and Atuntuma in the Western and Western North Regions of Ghana. Convenience sampling was used to select four women groups out of the five groups located within the project communities. This was to reduce the risk of poor representation of the required sample population. Five focus group discussions were conducted on a total sample size of 48 women, through which relevant data was collected on prevailing livelihoods, challenges as well as opportunities for alternative livelihoods in mining sites and communities.
In addition, key informant interviews were conducted on mine managers, opinion leaders, Officials from the Business Advisory Centers (BACs) and Officials of the Minerals Commission of Ghana. These departments were purposively considered for this assessment based on their background knowledge of livelihoods in the selected communities, mining regulations and opportunities to enhance the livelihood of women in the stated communities.

In all, two Officials from the Minerals Commission of Ghana in Tarkwa and Bibiani provided insight on mining processes and licensing. While two Officials from the Business Advisory Centres (BACs) of the Tarkwa Nsueam Municipal and Wassa Akropong provided relevant information on livelihoods and opportunities for women in the project communities. Six mine managers in Nsuaem, Bibiani and Wassa Akropong-Japa also provided details on women participation in the Mines and possible opportunities for women in the sector.

The final group of key informants who made input to this assessment was two opinion leaders from Nsueam and Atuntuma - an assembly member and a member of the council of elders respectively. Their input provided additional insights into livelihood opportunities for women in the Kering Project communities and mining sites.

1.3 Scope
The main focus of this study was to determine the existing livelihoods of Kering Project women groups, the available opportunities for alternative livelihoods in project mine communities as well as existing and potential livelihoods for women in mining.

The study was carried out across three project mine communities, which are Tarkwa Nsueam, Bibiani and Atuntuma in the Western and Western North Regions of Ghana. Sector specific data was also gathered from the municipal and district levels in Wassa Akropong and Tarkwa.
CHAPTER 2
LIVELIHOOD NEEDS ASSESSMENT
2.0 Mining Specific Livelihood Assessment

The details of the various livelihood needs of the four sampled women groups is provided under two main categorizations; general livelihood assessment and mining specific livelihood assessment. A further categorization is the prospects for a women owned small scale mining company. These categorizations provides detailed findings from the field in relation to the day-to-day livelihood needs of women, specific livelihood needs in the mining sector for women as well as perceptions and potential in women owned small scale mining company as a way of enhancing their livelihood.

2.1 General Livelihood Assessment

In relation to data from focus group discussions (FGDs) made up of 48 respondents, the prevailing livelihoods specific to members of the Kering Project women groups are;

- Small scale mining
- Sale of books
- Sale of baby products
- Food vending
- Comm. cards vendor
- Baking
- Sale of mine chemicals
- Seamstress
- Fufu mill
- Sale of provisions
- Sale of water
- Hair dressing
- Sale Foodstuff
- Sale of domestic fuel
- Mobile money agent
- Sale of soap
- Farming
- Sale of foodstuff
- Sale of domestic fuel
- Mobile money agent
- Sale of soap
- Farming
- Sale of clothes

These businesses according to respondents are financed mainly through loans, savings from mine activities as well as family support funds. The major challenges of the businesses were stated as; limited capital, poor market and hazardous working conditions especially for the mining related work. All respondents believe that the stated challenges can be addressed through loans, grant opportunities in the form of skills development in alternative livelihoods activities, village savings and loans opportunities, personal savings and business management training.

In line with the results from the FGDs, key informant interviews with BACs and opinion leaders (4 respondents) identified the lack of capital and training in both business management and alternative livelihood ventures as hindrance to livelihood enhancement of women in the project communities.
In furtherance to this, data collected from the FGDs and the stated key informants (52 respondents) revealed the following livelihood opportunities for women in mining communities.

- Small scale mining
- Rental of mining tools and machines
- Wholesale of purified water
- Sale of clothes
- Rubber plantation
- Soap making
- Baking
- Cocoa plantation
- Agro processing (gari, oil palm, chips, cassava dough, etc.)
- Food vending
- Cold store
- Vegetable farming
- Sale of foodstuff
- Sale of electrical gadgets
- Sale of provisions
- Rental of chairs
- Canopies and PASystems
- Sale of soap
- Dressmaking
- Hairdressing
- Drinking spots

The BACs as part of its mandate provides support in the form of business counseling and advisory services, training in alternative livelihood businesses, business management training, financial service linkages, as well as providing startup kits for women venturing into oil palm processing. These interventions in the midst of challenges such as, inadequate logistics (staff, equipment, finance) and lack of private/civil society partnerships to promote micro businesses have been major setbacks to the scale up of the department’s activities for the benefit of women in the project communities. The BAC also indicated the relatively low interest of women and youth in mining communities to enroll in their alternative livelihood training programmes due to the perception that mining/mining related activities are more profitable than the other businesses.

In line with this, the sampled women groups identified their own efforts in the form of savings to raise capital, loans from financial institutions or family, grant support from NGOs as business capital including training grants from civil society organizations/NGOs as the medium through which the listed livelihood opportunities can be harnessed.
To narrow the stated livelihood opportunities to their own special needs, the sampled women groups (48 respondents) identified the following opportunities as their desired options of alternative livelihood ventures.

- Small scale mining
- Cold store
- Sale of clothes
- Sale of electrical gadgets
- Baking
- Soap making
- Food vending
- Agro processing (corn dough, cassavadough, etc.)
- Sale of Foodstuff
- Rental of Chairs
- Canopies and PASystems
- Petty trading
- Rental of mining tools and machines

These livelihood ventures will however materialize into established businesses following the availability of capital and startup training opportunities to facilitate commencement. The groups indicated that they will rely greatly on external support in the form of loans and grants to finance these new ventures as their savings will not be enough to initiate commencement.

2.2 Mining Specific Livelihood Assessment

Data collected from the FGDs revealed that out of 48 respondents, 5 women were actively engaged in mining activities, 16 were previously engaged in mining but have suspended mining activities due largely to the ban on small scale mining. Six other women have stopped mining activities completely because of the health risk associated with it. The remaining 21 women have not engaged in mining activities and have no immediate plans to venture into the sector.

The common roles of the 27 women with experience in mine activities were categorized in two; the main roles referring to roles directly linked to mining and auxiliary roles referring to other roles provided to miners on the mining sites. The common roles for the stated sample were listed as:

**Main Roles**
- Carrying of load
- Dig and wash
- Shanking (i.e separating large particles of stones from the ore to leave fine sand for washing)
- Washing tailings

**Auxiliary Roles**
- Food vending
- Retail of sacks, chemicals, torchlights etc.
- Catering for mine workers (i.e contracts from mine owners or a group of mine workers for women to cook their desired meals)
The FGDs revealed that the major challenges encountered by women under the main roles have been the health effects of carrying heavy loads and exposure to mine chemicals. More related to the auxiliary roles, the major challenge was stated as capital inadequacy to scale up the businesses. Common among both role categories was also the challenge of government ban on small scale mining which respondents indicated as a great disservice to their businesses in the sector.

In relation to alternative roles for women in the mining sites, mine managers (6 respondents) revealed that the active participation of women in the mining sector is a trend that is yet to gain full acceptance in most mining sites. They attributed this to the labor intensive nature of the job making it unsuitable for women, the myth that women in their mensuration reduces the yield of ore and the fact that women cannot combine the task of mining with household management. In the light of these limitations, women roles are largely limited to the auxiliary roles of mining.

Data from women groups as well as key informants (Mine Managers, Opinion Leaders and Minerals Commission) constituting 58 respondents revealed some alternative roles suitable for women participation in the mining sector. These roles were listed as:

- Washing of ore
- Operation of excavator
- Operation of crushing machines
- Panning
- Owning mining concession
- Shanking (i.e separating large particles of stones from the ore to leave fine sand for washing)
- Carrying of loads
- Operation of water pump
- Payment of mine workers and record keeping
- Mine management (administrative role)
- Geologist
- Mining engineer
- Minerals engineer
- Consultants to small scale mines
- Food vending
- Buying of ore
- Operation of motorking for mine work
- Rental of mining tools and machines
- Vending of torchlights, sacks, hammers, chemicals, blankets etc.
- Catering for mine workers (i.e contracts from mine owners or a group of workers for women to cook their desired meals)

Mine managers attributed the lack of modern machines and equipment, inadequate capital, lack of safety gadgets for workers, negative attitude of workers towards work and difficulty in managing large numbers of workers as constrains that affect the expansion of mining activities including employment of workers. These constrains therefore affect the immediate employment of women to most of the potential role areas listed above.
In light of these potential roles for women in the mining sector, the sampled women groups identified the following roles as their preferred roles of interest to participate in the mining sector.

Main Roles
- Washing of ore
- Operation of excavator
- Record Keeping
- Operation of crushers
- Processing of ore
- Owning mining concessions

Auxiliary Roles
- Food vending
- Retail of sacks, chemicals, torchlights etc.
- Catering for mineworkers
- Buying of ore
- Rental of mining tools and machines

They recognized that, for most of the main roles such as Operation of Excavator, Operation of Crushers and Record Keeping, they will need specialized training in order to take up such roles. Other roles such as washing of ore and processing of ore can be learnt on the job while observing others; respondents indicated a maximum of a week’s observation of the tasks to perfect such roles.

Reference to the potential main roles for women in the mining sector, key informants from the Minerals Commission and Mine Managers (8 respondents) identified the University of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa (UMaT) as the right institution to train people in such skill areas. UMaT runs informal training courses for the small scale mining sector and can be partnered to train women in specific skills. Alternatively, women interested in learning skills like Excavator operation and Crusher operation can be referred to mining companies to start as operator support in order learn on the job, this could take up to six months or more to learn the skill.

A key informant from the Minerals Commission in Tarkwa also identified the Agyle Safety Training Institute in Tarkwa-Bonsu as a training center for people interested in learning skills in Excavator operation. The institute trains people for a period of one month to be proficient in this skill at a minimum cost of GH¢2,000.00.
In relation to the role of owning mining concessions, the Emmanuel group in Nsuaem (7 respondents) was the only group among the four sampled women groups that felt strongly about starting its own small scale mining business. Other groups had split thoughts about the idea, with up to 80% of the sampled members in the other three groups (i.e 32 respondents out of 41) opting out of the idea of owning a mining concession. The underlying reason for their reluctance to own mining concessions was the fact that they could not guarantee profitable returns on their investment. **In their analysis the mining sector is generally risky, one only stands to gain if investment is made on a good concession however, the true value of a concession can only be determined after the investment.**

Aside the above reason, the capital outlay for small scale mining was something respondents confessed they could never raise as a group and the mountain of processes associated with licensing such business ventures is further demoralizing. However, with external support in the form of funding, the Emmanuel women group in Nsuaem is willing to defy all odds and start a small scale mining company.

In relation to the potential auxiliary roles for women in mining sites, all the three sampled groups who opted out of the idea of owning a mining concession expressed interest in these other roles. **Particular attention was given to the rental of mining tools and machines by the Golden Ladies women’s group. The group considered this opportunity as the ideal business venture to operate in solidarity.** Other business opportunities such as the retail of sacks, chemicals, torchlights and the buying of ore were considered for implementation by individuals in the groups. With a seemingly limited capital requirement compared to a mining company, the women groups revealed during the focused group discussions that the stated businesses will be beyond their reach to finance without any external funding support. Their ideal options of funding support were grants and loans.
Figures 1 and 2 provide a summarized analysis of the livelihood status and opportunities in Kering Project communities.
Figure 2: Mining Specific Livelihood Assessment

**Women Role in Mining**

**Main Roles:**
- Carrying of load
- Dig and wash
- Shaking
- Wash tailings

**Auxiliary Roles:**
- Food vending
- Retail of sacks, chemicals, torchlights etc.
- Catering for mine workers

**Key Informants:**
- Minerals Commission
  - Tarkwa: 1
  - Bibiani: 1
  - Sample: 2

- Mine Managers
  - Nsuaem: 2
  - Wassa Akropong: 1
  - Bibiani: 3
  - Sample: 6

- Opinion Leaders
  - Nsuaem: 1
  - Atuntuma: 1
  - Sample: 2

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**Mine Roles of Interest to Women**

**Main Roles:**
- Washing of ore
- Operation of excavator
- Operation of crushing machines
- Panning
- Owning mining concessions
- Shankling
- Carrying of loads
- Operation of water pump
- Payment of mine workers and record keeping
- Mine management (administrative role)
- Geologist
- Mining engineer
- Minerals engineer
- Consultants to small scale mines

**Auxiliary Roles:**
- Food vending
- Retail of snacks, chemicals, torchlights, etc.
- Catering for mine workers
- Buying of ore
- Rentals of mining tools and machines

**Women Groups**
- Nsuaem: Golden Ladies - 18
- Nsuaem: Emmanuel - 7
- Bibiani: Emmanuel - 18
- Atuntuma: Agya Pa Ye - 5
- Sample: 48
2.3 Prospects for Women Owned Small Scale Mining Company

Information from key informants at the Minerals Commission and Mine Managers (8 respondents) reveals that no special opportunities presently exist for a purely women owned small scale mining company.

The opportunities are the same for both men and women. Some of which are the availability of rich concessions for small scale mining, the high demand for gold in the market as well as the effectiveness of the licensing process due to the decentralization of Minerals Commission processes. The Minerals Commission (2 respondents) especially believes that the lack of interest on the part of women to participate in the mining sector over the years have deprived them of any special opportunities in the sector. Thus, with increased participation of women in the mining sector, there may come an era where special opportunities will be created in favor of women own mining concessions.

In relation to facilitating women participation in the mining sector, the community mining program introduced by the inter-ministerial committee against galamsey (illegal mining) was cited as a good opportunity.

A key informant (mine manager) who serves on the committee for the establishment of community mining ventures in the Atwima Mponua District indicated that the intervention demands 10% female participation in all community mines. The program intends to create employment opportunities for the youth within mining communities with special consideration given to females to economically empower them through the sector.

District Assemblies lead the process for the establishment of the community mine with the District Chief Executive (DCE) approving land allocation, facilitating the licensing process as well as initial funding for the community mining concession. In his opinion, the process of land acquisition, financing and licensing for the community mining program is faster than individually owned small scale mining companies. It will thus be easier to increase the percentage participation of women in community mining ventures but relatively difficult to establish a solely female operated community mining company given that communities may not easily welcome such an idea due to the continued male dominance in the sector.

There is presently a record of 2 community mining companies in Nyinahini in the Atwima Nponua District and 3 others in the Wassa Akropong areas with none in Bibiani as well as Tarkwa Nsuaem and Atuntuma.

As a department, the Minerals Commission has begun recognizing the potential of women to play a role in the mining sector and though not in line with any particular regulations, the Commission in recent recruitments for its satellite Offices have recruited some women to manage some of those Offices. In addition, the Commission is engaging with Universities and other training institutions that run mining related programs to enroll more women on the programs; this will help create a pool of qualified women to take up roles in the sector.
In the absence of special opportunities for women own small scale mining companies, key informants (Minerals Commission, Mine Managers and Opinion Leaders) identified a number of challenges that may hinder the successful operation of such Companies. The following challenges were identified:

1. Mining is capital intensive and the ability of most women to raise such funds may be a challenge
2. The traditional perception of mining being a man’s job may affect their ability to operate in the sector
3. The huge risk of investing in an unprofitable concession
4. Women may encounter difficulty in managing the attitude of workers
5. Women may encounter difficulty in handling accidents when they occur on the sites

Respondents from the Minerals Commission indicated the readiness of the Commission to create an enabling environment for women participation in the mining sector by training women associations on new trends in the sector as well as monitoring training activities for their workers to fully integrate in the sector.

Responding to the processes for licensing a small scale mining company, the following steps were provides as general steps for such companies:

1. Conduct a search at the Commission to identify whether the area is designated for small scale mining
2. Prepare site plan and present to Lands Commission
3. Inspection by Minerals Commission to validate the areas
4. Buy and complete an application form for the license
5. Minerals commission will do a brief impact assessment and based on that give their recommendations.
6. Application are then sent to the Minerals Commission head office and if it’s okay they approve and the applicant is asked to pay the needed fees
7. Agreement is then made after all the permitting requirements at Environmental Protection Agency- Environmental permit, Water Resources Commission- Water use permit and Minerals Commission- operating permit
8. Ideally it takes 91 days to complete the process in the absence of any challenges with the documentation and the site.
CHAPTER 3
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
3.0 Introduction
This chapter provides a summary of key findings from the field, recommendations to the Kering Project following the results of the assessment as well as conclusions drawn based on the findings. It is anticipated that these recommendations will inform the level of further interventions to the project communities.

3.1 Key Findings
• The findings reveal a common perception of livelihood opportunities for women in mining communities. This borders on the risk factors associated with certain business ventures such as mining thus, the less risky the business, the right livelihood activity for a woman. This perception has contributed in defining the current livelihood activities of the sampled groups as well as their ambitions in relation to pursuing alternative livelihood opportunities.

• The study revealed that major challenges encountered by women under the mining specific roles are the health effects of carrying heavy loads and exposure to mine chemicals. In addition, capital inadequacy to carry out the auxiliary roles in the mining sectors have hindered women’s ability to harness the full potential in the sector. Government ban on small scale mining was also linked to general livelihood challenges in the mining communities.

• Data from women groups as well as key informants (Mine Managers, Opinion Leaders and Minerals Commission) revealed some alternative roles suitable for women participation in the mining sector such as: washing of ore, operation of excavator, operation of crushing machines, panning, record keeping, processing of ore, owning mining concession, shanking, carrying of loads, operation of water pump, including food vending, operation of motor king for mine work, retail of sacks/chemicals/torchlights, catering for mine workers among others.

• In light of these potential roles for women in the mining sector, the sampled women groups identified roles such as: washing of ore, operation of excavator, record keeping, operation of crushers, processing of ore, owning mining concessions, food vending, retail of sacks/chemicals/torchlights, catering for mine workers, buying of ore as well as rental of mining tools and machines as their preferred roles of interest to participate in the mining sector. They recognized that, for most of the main roles such as Operation of Excavator, Operation of Crushers and Record Keeping, they will need specialized training in order to take up such roles.
In relation to the role of owning mining concessions, the Emmanuel group in Nsueam (7 respondents) was the only group among the four sampled women groups that felt strongly about starting its own small-scale mining business. The majority of the sample were either interested in engaging in the business of renting out mining tools and machines or the other auxiliary businesses in the sector.

The BACs were identified as the only immediate institutions within the project catchment area which provides support to businesses. The Centers provide support in the form of business counseling and advisory services, training in alternative livelihood businesses, business management training, financial service linkages, as well as providing startup kits for women venturing into oil palm processing.

As part of the key findings of this research, the Minerals Commission especially believes that the lack of interest on the part of women to participate in the mining sector over the years have deprived them of any special opportunities in the sector. Thus, with increased participation of women in the mining sector, there may come an era where special opportunities will be created in favor of women own mining concessions.

In relation to facilitating women participation in the mining sector, the community mining program introduced by the Inter-ministerial Committee against Illegal Mining was cited as a good opportunity. The intervention demands 10% female participation in all community mines with potential for increase in the percentage participation but no likelihood for the establishment of a solely female operated community mine. Presently 2 community mining companies exist in Nyinahini and 3 others in the Wassakropong areas with none in Bibiani as well as Tarkwa Nsueam and Atuntuma.

Key informants to this research also identified challenges such as the capital intensive nature of mining, the traditional perception of mining as a man’s job, the huge risk of investing in unprofitable concessions, difficulty in managing the attitude of mine workers as well as difficulty in handling accidents as possible hindrances to operating a solely women own small scale mining company.

Another key finding from the research were the opportunities identified from by the sampled women groups as their desired options of alternative livelihood which were; small scale mining, sale of clothes, baking, food vending, sale of foodstuff, rental of chairs/canopies/PA systems, rental of mining tools and machines, cold store, sale of electrical gadgets, soap making, agro processing and petty trading.
3.2 Recommendations

The results of the assessments revealed relatively high opportunities for the livelihood development of the sampled groups in general business areas as well as auxiliary businesses in the mines. Major challenge impeding the ability of women to take advantage of the opportunities is the issue of capital and skills. The following recommendations are therefore made to the Kering Project implemented by Solidaridad.

1. In line with the demand of the women groups for business management support, it will be helpful to initiate partnerships with BACs around project communities to adopt the project groups for business advisory support. This will aid in the sustainability of their current businesses as well as future business ventures.

2. Facilitate the process for the training of women with interest in acquiring skills in the operation of crushers and excavators to learn such skills as well as link them to employment opportunities in the sector. This will encourage an increased interest from more women to venture into such skill areas.

3. The major challenge of capital inadequacy to finance new businesses and existing business opportunities can also be managed by strengthening the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) scheme to sufficiently provide soft loans to members for their regular business activities.

4. Capitalize on the community mining program to increase participation of women in the sector. Engage with various district assemblies within the project catchment area to encourage the implementation of the program within the project communities as well as encourage existing community mines to increase female participation beyond the 10% mandated. An increased participation of females in the sector will subsequently defuse the idea of mining being a man’s job.

5. Provide training to project groups in the alternative livelihood opportunities available to them and how to harness such opportunities. This will provide the women with the right information to make effective decisions regarding their livelihoods.

6. Further support in the form of linking project groups to financial service providers will provide the financial opportunity for groups to access loans for a common business venture.

7. Reference to women still in active mining activities, a grant support in the form of occupational health and safety training for mining roles as well as safety apparel will be helpful in encouraging their continued participation in the sector.
8. Provide leadership for Emmanuel women’s group in Nsuaem to think through their idea of starting a small-scale mining company and strategize for successful commencement.

9. Provide support to Golden Ladies women’s group in Nsuaem to strategize towards the commencement of a group business venture in the rental of mining tools and machines.

10. Facilitate the training of women groups in alternative livelihood ventures through the support of the BACs in trades such as soap making, baking, agro processing, etc.

3.3 Conclusion

The mining communities in Ghana are generally bedeviled with poor development and economic hardships resulting from the destruction of arable lands and high cost of living. None mine workers especially women often feel the brunt of these hardships the most. As household managers, the economic empowerment of women in mining communities will lessen the effect of these challenges on especially the younger generation.

The Kering Project could not have been a better project intervention than it is now. The women groups’ aside the assessment specific questions expressed high hopes about the project interventions and their determination to make a difference in their communities through these interventions.

The results of the assessment provide a wide range of opportunities to redirect efforts of the Project and women groups to consider profitable business ventures both in general trade areas and mining businesses. These opportunities have the potential of providing the lifeline for the sustainability of the Project groups once properly harnessed. It will be beneficial to the Project if the necessary support is secured for groups to initiate their group ventures, as this will facilitate greater bonding between members and accelerate the acceptance of project interventions widely.
ANNEX 1: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN’S GROUPS

1. What is the name of your group?
2. When was it formed?
3. What is the main objective of the group?
4. Do you have a structured leadership for your group?

BUSINESS INFORMATION
1. What businesses are you engaged in as a group?
2. What businesses are you engaged individually?
3. What is required to start such businesses?
4. Where did you get your startup capital for your businesses – group and individual?
5. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest score) how profitable are your businesses as a group?
6. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest score) how profitable are your businesses individually?
7. What are the challenges you face in your businesses – group and individual?
8. What do you think can be done to overcome these challenges – group and individual?
9. What other businesses are you engaged in which has not been mentioned?

MINING SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES
1. Are you currently involved in any Mining activities – individually or as a group?
2. What are your common roles in the Mines?
3. What are the other opportunities in the mines that you will be interested in?
4. What skills do you think you will require to take up such roles?
5. Will you be interested in upgrading your skills in order to take up your preferred roles in the mines?
6. What kind of support will you require in order for you to upgrade your skills?
7. Will you be interested in venturing into small scale Mining?
8. What do you know about the processes of starting a small scale mining company?
9. Will you prefer to start such a small scale mining Company as a group or individuals?
10. Will you be interested in learning the processes and requirements for starting such a Company?
11. Do you have an idea of the capital requirements for starting a small scale mining company?
12. Where do you hope to get such capital to start mining?

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMUNITY
1. What businesses are thriving in your immediate community?
2. What new business opportunities exist in this community or nearby communities that you are interested in venturing into?
3. What kind of skills and resources will you require to venture into it?
ANNEX 2:
KEY INFORMANT – COMMUNITY LEADERS
INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How long have you lived in this community?
2. What is your role in this community?
3. What are the major businesses in this community?
4. What is required to start such businesses?
5. What are the challenges of these businesses?
6. Aside mining related activities, what other economic activities can women consider which have the potential of thriving in this community?
7. Are women actively involved in mining in this community?
8. Will you encourage women to get actively involved in mining?
9. If yes, why?
10. If no, why?
11. What roles are currently held by women in the mines?
12. What other roles in the mines will you recommend to women?
13. What opportunities exist for a solely women owned small scale mining company in your community?
14. What challenges do you foresee for a solely women owned small scale mining company in your community?
ANNEX 3:
KEY INFORMANT – COMMUNITY LEADERS

MINERALS COMMISSION/ MINE MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is your mandate?
2. What interventions exist in your institution/ company to facilitate women participation in the mining sector?
3. What mining roles are commonly held by women?
4. Which other mining roles will be ideal for women?
5. What are the skills requirements for women to take up such roles?
6. Which institutions can provide skills upgrade to women in these lines?
7. What role can your institution/ company play for women to participate in other roles on the mine?
8. What opportunities will you consider creating in favor of women participation in the Sector?
9. What do you think women will need in order to take advantage of those opportunities?
10. What do you think prevents women from venturing into the mining sector?
11. What opportunities exist for the establishment of a purely women owned small scale mining company?
12. What challenges do you foresee for a purely women owned small scale mining company?
13. What are the requirements for starting a small scale mining company/ community mining– capital and regulatory requirements?
ANNEX 4: KEY INFORMANT – BAC/DISTRICT ASSEMBLY
INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is your mandate?
2. What services do you provide for existing and potential business owners?
3. Would you say your services are widely recognized and patronized by your target groups?
4. What challenges do you encounter in the execution of your mandate?
5. What business opportunities are specific to the project community area that can be considered by women and women groups?
6. What is required to start such businesses?
7. Do you provide any support to women or women groups that are interested in venturing into such businesses?
8. What opportunities exist for women in the mining value chain?
9. What is required to start such businesses?
10. How are women taking advantage of these opportunities and why?
11. Do you have any interventions for women in the mining sector?
12. If yes, what are these interventions?
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