

Speakers'
Biographies
(in alphabetical order)
and
Session
Abstracts

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Laisa read for a Bachelors of Law from the University of Sussex, England and is admitted as Barristar/Solicitor to the Fiji High Court. She has extensive experience in the area of Industrial Relations having worked in the Ministry of Labour Office in Fiji for 4 years in the area of mediation and reconciliation, trade unions and trade disputes and employment related matters.

In March 2002, Laisa joined the Fiji Women’s Rights Movement, an organization that has pioneered women’s employment rights in Fiji and continues to work with grassroots community women including the mining community. Laisa has been instrumental in organizing forums to discuss issues affecting women in the Mines, conducting employment awareness programmes for female mineworkers and advocating for their rights at the national level and international level.

Laisa is a member of the Labour Advisory Board, which is a statutory body designed to advise Government on legislative and policy matters pertaining to industrial relations. She is also a member of the Asian & Pacific Forum of Women, Law & Development Taskforce on Labour & Migration.

***Womens activities in the
Vatukoula gold mines***

The Mining industry in Fiji commenced in about 1933. For the last 70 years, mining has been one of the largest foreign exchange revenue export earners for Fiji. The largest and only operational gold mine in Fiji today is ‘Vatukoula’ which translates into ‘stones of gold’.

Historically, the mining industry in Fiji was predominately male orientated and continues to be so, except for positions such as gold pickers, administrative assistants and other trivial tasks, which are specifically assigned to women. These women face discriminatory practices such as low wages, health hazards and long hours and difficult working conditions. Mining in Fiji, unlike other countries, continues to be low wage industry, which spurns into other social problems for women such as debt, divorce, and high levels of poverty.

Since as far back as 1947, poor housing conditions has been a source of strikes for workers at Vatukoula. Women are forced to cook in outdoor lean-tos and share toilet and bathroom facilities with 3-4 families. Water and atmospheric pollution cause a major health risk to residents to the Vatukoula community.

This paper will discuss pertinent issues surrounding women in the mining community in Fiji and its implications for the wider community.

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Julia Byford is a freelance consultant in gender, health and community development and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Technology Sydney. Her work and research as a medical anthropologist and midwife in Papua New Guinea extends over 30 years. Her doctoral thesis focused on contemporary women's health in Misima, Milne Bay Province and incorporated the broader context of colonialism and medicine in Papua New Guinea as well as global questions around women's health and childbirth.

In 1998 Julia was commissioned by Oxfam / Community Aid Abroad to investigate community perceptions of the impact of the gold mine on Misima and was subsequently invited to present some of her findings at the ' Tunnel Vision – Women, Mining and Communities' forum hosted by Oxfam/CAA in 2002. Julia continues to be involved in international projects concerning health, community development, microfinance and mining. Her research interests include gender and development, and the impact of gender on health.

Qualifications

1999 PhD The Australian National University, Australia

1989 BA (Hons) La Trobe University, Australia

1974 RM (Registered Midwife)

Mercy Maternity Hospital, Australia

1973 RN (Registered Nurse), Preston and Northcote Community Hospital, Australia

'Too little too late': Women's participation in the Misima mining project

The advent of the mine on Misima saw rapidly changing values and a breakdown of traditional social structures. Male dominance within the mining company, the local and national governments and of the Misimans representing the community in dealings with the mine all contributed to effectively deny women their rights as landowners in this matrilineal society and to have their voices heard. 'Too little too late' is how many Misiman women summed up Misima Mines (MML) efforts in relation to their concerns.

As with mining companies throughout PNG the injection of large amounts of cash and rapid social change associated with mine development widens the gap between the haves and have-nots and leads to a decline in women's economic and social status relative to that of men. Some other adverse impacts for Misiman women included an increased workload due to male absenteeism and male wage earners neglecting traditional tasks, and an increase in divorce that has led to abandoned wives and children. Perhaps the most disturbing impact is the increase in the overall level of violence against women. This experience highlights the urgent need to reduce these negative impacts and ensure that women are able to contribute more effectively in the mining process. But how do we get women's voices heard?

This paper will explore the challenges of incorporating women's voices in the mining process on Misima. The different perceptions of Misiman men and women and the mining company about how to include women will be discussed as well as the strategies used by each group and the results in terms of harm/ benefit and exclusion / participation. Highlighting some of the difficulties experienced by Misiman women may assist in creating more inclusive and positive experiences for other women affected by mining developments.

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Mawuena holds a B.Sc. in Geology & Mining from the University of Jos, Nigeria and an MBA from Bentley College's McCallum Graduate School of Business, in Massachusetts, USA.

Mawuena previously worked with Ashanti Goldfields Company Ltd, Ghana in varying capacities. She was their first female underground exploration geologist amidst a 10,000 strong male-workforce mine-site in the Ashanti Region. She was then invited to the Resource Evaluation Department, where she assisted in the generation of three-dimensional computer models of gold deposits in Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Burkina Faso. The latter required utilizing specialized mining software and advanced statistical analysis, engendering the declaration of 80.4 million ounces of gold reserves. Just prior to pursuing her Master's degree, Mawuena was Ashanti's Investor Relations Officer with a wide range of corporate consultative responsibilities in strategic planning and new business development.

The impact of mine employment on women through changes in household dynamics: A Ghanaian case study

Employment within the mining industry in the Ghanaian context has resulted in significant changes in the general dynamics of households. These socio-economic changes have directly impacted the incidence of HIV / AIDS within these communities, resulting in even more far reaching implications for women in mining environments. This presentation will examine the impact of mine employment on household dynamics within mining communities in Ghana focusing on communities in the Ashanti Region, which incidentally has the highest concentration of mining activities and HIV / AIDS in the country.

The paper will assess how employment of labor from within mining environments affects the income of households identifying how those changes impact the social and economic dynamics of the domestic setting and therefore the lives of women. It will examine the relationship between the changes in household dynamics and the incidence of HIV / AIDS within these communities. The aim will be to identify the increasing incidence of HIV / AIDS among women in mine locations in Ghana as a symptom of the changes that take place when mine employment causes incremental adjustments in household incomes. Current statistics on the incidence of HIV/AIDS among women and mine employees vis-à-vis household incomes and expenditures in the Ashanti Region will be incorporated. The presentation will end with recommendations outlining possible areas international / corporate mine policy development can explore to address the concerns raised. It is hoped that the paper will reinforce the need for greater levels of commitment on the corporate-side of the industry to understanding and addressing these and other related issues pertinent to women in mine-impacted communities.

DOLLY GUISE

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Dr Dolly Guise has been with Tolukuma Gold Mines (TGM) since February 1998 after leaving the Anthropology department at the University of Sydney. TGM operates within Goilala District, in the Central Province of PNG

At present she is the manager for the TGM Community Affairs Department which deals with all landowner and community issues as they relate to the mine and the people.

Her PhD is in Anthropology from the University of Sydney and her research was carried out with the Chirime people in Goilala District.

Dialoguing social bridges and shadows in change

The role and position of women today within the Tolukuma community is, in one sense, complex and complicated holding enormous potential for personal and communal development, and in another sense, all awash and going nowhere fast, painfully and significantly. Seeking answers to the questions to 'why' this is so and 'where to' from here are possibly the easy aspects of this complex situation. Working the new but explosive challenges within a mining context, together with the tight and sensitive pull of tradition is the complexity that makes women today at Tolukuma.

This paper will reflect upon the role of women within the traditional context looking at the way women participated within the traditional socio-ceremonial and political context. The paper will then look at the projects and positions to which the TGM Community Relations Office is introducing women.

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Jennifer Hinton has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Geological Engineering (Environmental & Geotechnical), a Masters of Applied Science in Mining Engineering, and is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Mining Engineering at the University of British Columbia. The focus of her current research involves an integrated assessment of artisanal gold mining, which intends to identify linkages and understand interdependencies between processes in the mine and environmental and community health outcomes. Hinton has most recently been working on the socio-environmental impacts of artisanal and small-scale gold mining in Latin America, focusing on technical and social measures to mitigate risks from mercury pollution in artisanal mining communities. She has written a number of papers on various aspects of this informal sector including an extensive review of 'clean' alternative artisanal gold mining technologies.

In addition to her work in artisanal mining, she has consulted, researched and published on topics ranging from the remediation of mercury contaminated sites and biological indicators of metals pollution in the environment, to innovative mine closure alternatives and the incorporation of environmental and social factors into mine planning. Hinton has lectured on her work in a number of provincial, national and international conferences. Currently, Hinton is a Fellow in the interdisciplinary CIHR / MSFHR Bridge Program, an innovative initiative created to strengthen linkages between engineering and public health and policy.

Women and artisanal and small scale mining: A review of roles and issues

This paper is a review of women's roles in the artisanal and small scale mining sector (ASM). It primarily draws from studies conducted throughout the Americas, Africa and Asia and is supplemented by interviews of women engaged in various aspects of ASM. In many cases, the roles of women in artisanal mining communities differ significantly from those of men and extend well beyond direct participation in mining activities. Thus, their involvement brings with it different contributions and a completely unique set of risks and opportunities.

This paper first describes the direct involvement of women in mining and then explores their linkages with ASM through their diverse roles within the community. Environmental and human health impacts associated with these various roles and the relationship between women and the natural environment are also examined. By highlighting some of the similarities and differences between women's roles in various communities, this paper seeks to stimulate a discussion of how specific challenges experienced by women in ASM could be addressed.

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Marie is currently a research associate at the School of Mining Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand. She will be directing the social components of research, training & consultancy in the new sustainable development unit that is proposed for the School. Her contribution to this unit will focus on the interaction between the mining industry and the other stakeholders in the sector, and will encompass all aspects of social impacts.

She is also currently the Southern African coordinator of a HIV / AIDS Toolkit for Mining Companies project, which is funded by the IFC. She is also the team leader of an ICMM / World Bank initiated project for the empowerment of communities associated with mining operations.

Marie has extensive experience in working with rural communities, particularly with marginalised groups. She has a sound knowledge of the region and the difficulties that stakeholders in developing countries face in the alleviation of poverty in rural and peri-urban communities. Her co-ordination of the MMSD Southern Africa process, project work on HIV/AIDS in the mineral sector and an assessment of the potential for the mineral sector's contribution to local economic development have provided her with extensive exposure to the issues confronting mining communities and involved her in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

Prior to her involvement with the minerals sector, Marie gained extensive teaching experience at secondary level, and has taught students from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as students with learning disabilities. She has been involved in the empowerment of rural women through literacy and writing skills training. She is also the editor of a volume of short stories by African women. She does ongoing editing of papers for the Commission on Gender Equality.

In the shadow of the sun: Women in mining in southern Africa

This paper focuses on the situation in South Africa, while drawing on relevant experiences in other African countries. South Africa has been recently transformed into a globally lauded democratic state, in which the constitution and legislation demand that equal rights be accorded to all. The minerals sector has not risen to the challenge in respect of women.

The workplace in the minerals sector, and the conditions of women in communities associated with mining operations, are still largely defined by discrimination against marginalized or previously marginalized groups. Normalisation of workforce demographics is receiving priority, but women remain marginalized. Whether as employees or as community members, women are among the least considered in terms of empowerment and access to development opportunities. This paper examines the historic and cultural context of this situation, and considers the loss of intellectual capital that companies suffer as a result.

Corporate reports tend to vagueness around issues of gender equity, even in South Africa, where the Mining Charter stipulates that "the term historically disadvantaged South Africans" refers to all persons who...were

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Malou earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology and a Masters Degree in Public Administration. She also has a Diploma in Engineering Geology. Among her various trainings are in the fields of paleontology, public management, environmental planning and management, environmental impact assessment, and gender and development.

As OIC Regional Director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), Malou is at the helm of the government agency responsible for the conservation, management, development and proper use of the country's mineral resources. As the first and only female MGB regional director, she is at the forefront in the campaign for recognition of women's issues in mining.

Women in mining: The Diwalwal direct state development project

Diwalwal is a gold-rush site located in the island of Mindanao in Southern Philippines. It has been the site of crude and semi-mechanized types of mining operations since 1983. It provides livelihood opportunities to some 20,000 miners, millers, and entrepreneurs coming from all parts of the country. It is estimated that 70% of all small scale gold production in Mindanao comes from Diwalwal.

Serious environmental, health and social problems present in Diwalwal compelled the Philippine government to undertake direct state development of the area by proclaiming the site as a mineral reservation. As a mineral reservation, the government shall rationalize the mining and other related operations / activities in the area through the implementation of the Diwalwal Direct State Development Project.

This paper presents the different issues confronting women in the Diwalwal gold rush site. It presents the extent of participation of women in mining, milling, and other business activities as well as in governance and policy making. It likewise presents proposed strategies and activities for inclusion in the Diwalwal Comprehensive Development Plan to ensure that the needs and aspirations of women for a better life are effectively addressed.

KAY KALIM

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Kay Kalim was a Medical Laboratory Assistant and worked with the Pathology Section in Lae and Madang General Hospitals before joining up with the Department of Environment and Conservation. She graduated with a degree in Applied Chemistry in 1988 from the University of Technology, Lae. She joined the Bureau of Water Resources in 1989 in the Water Conservation and Planning Section and concentrated in the water resources management area of the Bureau of Water Resources. Her work allowed her to participate in various environmental impact assessment processes especially related to mining activities in Papua New Guinea because there was this requirement for developers to obtain water use permits after an Environmental Plan is approved. She was heavily involved in the Lihir approval process in various stages of the mining phase. Other public hearing processes for issuing of Water Use Permits for other resource developments were also attended.

Her work also allows her to have direct liaison with the local communities within the project areas and women are always part of this consultation process. Although no major papers were written by her on the work she does, the exposure and experience gained in understanding the way people feel about different projects is something that helps her understand how people, and women in particular, should be treated in various areas of PNG. She plays an important role in liaising between developers and locals by explaining legal processes to the parties and relaying information to the State. Her daily work involves attending to landowners over their concerns on environment and social impacts within project sites, especially mining and petroleum activities.

The social and environmental impacts of mining on women in mining project areas

This presentation will be covering the issues of environmental and social impacts within mining areas with emphasis on why and how these issues may be addressed. Information will be derived from my own experience and some published texts within the Department of Environment and Conservation and from consultants. I will look at how mining projects have had a significant influence on the Papua New Guinea economy since independence in 1975. Mining is still the biggest earner for the country's economy. The paper will explore the economic development and examine the social and environmental impacts it creates. Discussions of environmental impacts are becoming a household topic for families within mining project areas because they now understand that the environment is important for their daily livelihood. In addition there are social impacts brought by the mine, sometimes quite severe compared to the environmental impact. However these are often never discussed openly. The paper will try to suggest some reasons why most reports produced for mining activity contain very little on the social issues faced in the project areas with the main focus being on women and using customary traditions applied in the country as the basis for the concluding remarks.

PAT KOPUSAR

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Pat Kopusar is an indigenous Australian woman currently employed as a Community Development Officer for Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation in Perth, Western Australia.

During the past she has been a national representative for community control Aboriginal health organisations and is currently Chair of the West Australian Aboriginal Health Information and Ethics Committee. She has worked in the areas of health, women's issues and Aboriginal family violence. Most of her experience has been in the rural and remote Aboriginal communities of Western Australia.

Some of her achievements have been writing and developing an Aboriginal family violence package titled "Wrong Way" in 2000 and co-authoring in 1997 a research and evaluation document on education and training for Aboriginal women in Australia titled "Just Enough to Tease Us".

For the past three - four years she has developed and delivered workshops, both as a co-worker and sole presenter. These workshops are centered around human rights for indigenous Australian people.

What is life? Australian indigenous women's perspective

The life of a Noongar Woman today is that of a survivor. What is significant about the life of a surviving indigenous Woman?

She is part of a "people" within an oppressive system. Generally speaking she will have the poorest health, least education, least employment and be less safe and secure. Domestic violence in Australia is probably the greatest threat to the Aboriginal family as it comes from within. Her life will be shorter than the other Australian women.

Between the system in place and the disperse/desecrate view of the land you will find that an indigenous Australian woman deals with poverty on a daily basis. She will however, be outspoken and will stand up for her children.

We will look at how this can be better, at opportunities for change and at how the community is handling the issue and the scourge of Aboriginal family violence. The presentation will focus on the life of an Aboriginal woman in Australia and an outline of Yorgum's current Family Violence Package.

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Expectations of women in a mining exploration project: Hidden Valley, Wau, Morobe Province

Mining is not a new activity to women in the Wau and Watut Women of the Bulolo District, in the Morobe Province. It has been a daily activity since the early 1930s when gold was discovered in the area. The last large mining operation in the area was by New Guinea Goldfields, which ceased operation in 1987. CRA commenced exploration on the Hidden Valley Gold Project shortly after that in 1987. Exploration work continued up until 2003.

In this paper, Section One will discuss expectations of women in the mining exploration stage of the Hidden Valley Gold Project. Women from landowner communities and the general impact community share some common positive expectation such as an improvement in the economy and social services delivery a mine presence would have on the community of Wau and Watut. They also share negative expectations such as an increase in social and environmental problems.

Section Two will discuss initiatives of women in the landowner communities and the impact community in addressing the positive and negative expectations they have should a mine develop. It would also discuss how the Morobe Consolidated Goldfields Limited and the government are working to address the mentioned positive and negative expectations of women.

Section Three will discuss short falls in addressing women's expectation by the existing organisations.

In conclusion, we look at how women may be better able to address the issue of poverty alleviation and sustainable development in a mining exploration community.

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Ingrid Macdonald was appointed as the Oxfam Community Aid Abroad Mining Ombudsman in September 2001. She previously worked in both the public and private sector in the areas of environmental and natural resource management. Ingrid has qualifications in politics, geography and law. She is also currently enrolled as a PhD candidate in law at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Mining's tunnel vision: Undermining women's rights?

Oxfam Community Aid Abroad has pursued gender equality and women's empowerment in its development programs, humanitarian relief and advocacy work for many years. The agency has also supported overseas communities affected by the activities of Australian mining companies for the last decade, culminating in the establishment of the Mining Ombudsman in February 2000. However, we have found that there is currently limited information available or discussion about women's roles and rights in relation to the activities of the mining industry.

As a result, on World Environment Day, 5 June 2002, Oxfam Community Aid Abroad convened the 'Tunnel Vision: Mining, Women and Communities,' forum in Melbourne, Australia. The forum brought together speakers from Indigenous Australia and the Asia-Pacific to explore the impacts of mining operations on women in affected communities. The forum illustrated how women tend to be excluded from the economic benefits of mining and bear the burden of many of the negative social and environmental impacts. It highlighted the need for all stakeholders to pro-actively pursue gender equality and women's empowerment in all activities and projects.

The forum was the first of its type to be held in Australia and it highlighted how it cannot be assumed that women automatically benefit from large-scale economic development projects such as mining operations. This paper will discuss the 'Tunnel Vision' conference, the resulting 'Tunnel Vision' publication, and the marked requirement for more research and action to address the differential and often destructive impacts that mining operations have on women from local communities.

GERALDINE McGUIRE

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Geraldine McGuire is an Environmental Scientist with a 1st class Honours Degree from the University of Queensland and a PhD from the University of Western Australia. She has specialized in providing environmentally and socially sustainable solutions for resource projects in tropical regions for the last 10 years. As the Manager Environment for PT Kelian Equatorial Mining (KEM) in Indonesia for 6 years, Geraldine had overall responsibility for the site's mine closure, environmental monitoring, environmental awareness and rehabilitation programmes. She managed 15 staff, 80 local contractors and liaised with Indonesian government regulators and NGO's. Geraldine provides ongoing consultancy services to KEM as coordinator of the Kelian Mine Closure Steering Committee and works with indigenous communities dealing with mining and resource management issues in northern Australia.

Refer to www.sustainable-solutions-global.com for further details and CV.

Environmental impacts of mining on women in Indonesia and northern Australia

Mining in Indonesia and northern Australia is conducted by both large scale companies and smaller scale artisanal miners. Both types of mining can result in significant environmental damage which impact on local communities. Women can be more susceptible to the environmental impacts of mining which results in destruction of traditional lands and the use of chemicals for processing. Removal of forests can prevent women from accessing traditional medicines, foods and cultural materials. The pollution of water by mining effluent can contaminate drinking and bathing water; and result in toxic levels of metals in local fish. The use of dangerous substances such as mercury by women can lead to birth deformities.

Women need to be better informed about these impacts and have greater involvement and influence at both the planning and closure stages of mine developments. Consultation about the environmental impacts of mining needs to be gender specific to encourage women to discuss issues which pertain to women's roles in the provision of health, education, food security and cultural pursuits (ceremony). This paper discusses a number of case studies from Indonesia and northern Australia and provides examples of how women's knowledge can be incorporated into mining projects.

JACKLYNNE L MEMBUP

House Wife

Masahet Island

Lihir Group

New Ireland Province

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Jacklynne Membup, is housewife and representative on various committees in her ward 14 area within the Nimamar Local Level Government.

She holds a Diploma in Social Development from the PNG Institute of Public Administration (formerly PNG Administrative College)

After graduating from PNG IPA in 1983, she worked for seven years as Community Development Officer, with the Department of Morobe, spending most of her working years in the Mining township of Wau.

In 1991 she joined the mining company on her island of Lihir working as a Community Relations Officer but specifically with the task of mediating with the Local women population and the management. She served the Mining Company for 11.5 years as Senior Women’s Officer under the Department of National Affairs and she resigned in September 2002.

The status of women affected by mining in Lihir

In 2002 when I attended The Mining and the Community II Conference I was not surprised that the majority of speakers and participants were men. We have all witnessed how, to date, male superiority dominates the family, community, province and national development.

This paper will present the impacts that mining company Lihir Gold, has had on women in the Lihir Group of islands. These women are the silent contributors and the backbone of family well-being, community stability and nation building.

I will relate both the negative and positive impacts of the gold mine since exploration days right through the construction phase and eventually into the production and operations stage of the project.

In the beginning women were seen as victims but as time goes on a wider world of opportunities awaits them. Are they able or transparency denies them this opportunity.

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Patricia Pepena is a Senior Resources Scientist with the Department of Mining. She is the Co-ordinator for Misima and Porgera Mines Closure Planning Processes.

Patricia holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Papua New Guinea and a Master of Environmental Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia.

James Wanjik is the Assistant Director for Mineral Assessment Branch in the Department of Mining. He is the Chairperson for Misima and Porgera Mine Closure Committees.

James holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from University of Papua New Guinea and a Master of Laws degree in resources law and policy at the University of Dundee, Scotland, United Kingdom. He also holds a Diploma of Economic Policy Analysis from National Research Institute and a Diploma of Management at Divine Word University.

Women's participation in mine closure planning for sustainability

“ So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, blessed them, and said, Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control” Gn 1:27-28

Since the beginning of time, man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God. As procreators they became co-creators with God and at the same time they were made managers of his creation with an important obligation to ensure its sustainability.

Mining is an activity undertaken by man on land - the very soil from which he was formed and from whose bone and flesh woman was created. Men and women are compelled to protect their very roots and more so to ensure that the goodness of the land is maintained and further nourished to uphold and sustain life not only during development phase of land-based activities like mining but also during their closures.

Mine closure is the final phase of a mine project cycle and has only recently been viewed as an important phase in the light of sustainability issues impacting on the biophysical and socioeconomic environments. As such, emerging mining industry best practice dictates that mine closure plans, at least in their conceptual form, should be addressed at project feasibility stage.

The current large-scale mining projects that are addressing mine closure issues are Misima, Ok Tedi and Porgera. Lihir submitted a conceptual mine closure plan in 1999 which will be reviewed and updated in the coming years. Lessons learnt from the Misima Mine Closure and Sustainability Planning process in particular, provide

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Dr. Rau is a biologist and has been working in environment monitoring at Ok Tedi Mining for 9 years. She is an experienced field researcher and has lectured at the University of PNG in biological Sciences. She is currently coordinator of Environmental Community Liaisons in the Community Relations Department at Ok Tedi. She has also worked and participated in UNDP/UNESCO Programmes on mangrove utilisation and research on coastal management for Asia and Pacific Region. She has worked and travelled widely within PNG and abroad. Education: PhD in Biology

Women not in mining

The majority of Papua New Guinea (PNG) women live a traditional subsistence lifestyle in villages. The way they live is defined by their status in the tribal culture and therefore "western" induced changes receive great challenges where they are concerned. PNG women who come from the tribes that own land on which mining operations are developed are at the forefront of the second millennium technological, material and cultural changes. They are exposed, often not by choice to profound changes to their way of life in very short time periods, from very simple 'primitive' to the "mobile phone" age.

Local tribal women are key stakeholders to mining operations where mine benefit packages are particularly targeted at women and children. Yet, they face serious challenges to become equal participants in the management of projects which are expected to benefit them and the children. Their roles and status in their culture can mean breaking taboos if they actively participate in these projects. It can be seen as disrespect to their women peers and male village leaders. In patrilineal tribes, participation of women in funded projects is highly frowned on by the men folk. Women will not speak in meetings, even when invited, in the presence of their men folk.

This situation places complex social challenges to mining companies who have to implement sustainable development projects, particularly those targeted at women and children. How can mining companies get around these often delicate situations? This paper considers the challenges faced by Ok Tedi Mining Company and these local women in managing and implementing sustainable development projects for women and children of the tribes in the vicinity of the mine operations.

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Nene earned a Bachelors Degree in Geology and a Masters Degree in Economic-Geology and has had some training in Mineral Economics, Environmental Management and Modern Management Methods. Her work involves the drafting mineral and environmental policies. Lately, her work has been on mineral development strategy and promotion, taking into account economic, social and environmental aspects. Nene is familiar with analyzing economics trend in the mineral sector, doing comparative studies of mining policies and laws in order to make Guinea mining policy more attractive to new investments. Additionally she has been conducting studies and writing reports on various subjects involving mineral resources development and environmental protection.

Nene is the President of the Guinea Association of "Women in Mining and Environment Protection". This association is trying to find ways to improve the living conditions of women involved in artisanal mining in Eastern Guinea. She is also part time representative of the Africa America Institute, assisting the institute in the recruitment of Guinean national candidates for post graduate programs in the USA.

Besides being fluent in French and English Nene has made many work related trips to countries such as the United States, Canada, France, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, Brazil, Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi, Addis Ababa.

Women's activities in artisanal mining in Guinea

Artisanal mining was the only extractive method used for gold, diamonds, salt, clay and gravel for centuries in Guinea. In Guinea, women are very active both in gold, diamond, salt, clay and gravel artisanal mining. In the first half of the 20th century, gold production by artisanal miners reached 3 tonnes / year. Women's participation in artisanal mining almost equals that of men. In 1995 it was estimated that, of over 500,000 artisanal miners, 240,000 were women. In some mining districts women exceed men in numbers, men being more present in leadership positions and in activities that require strong physical work.

The activities of men in artisanal mining are mainly in sinking wells or in the excavation of the ore. Women's activities are more diverse, including recycling water, removing the ore from the wells, crushing and pulverising the ore, and sometimes transporting the ore to the streams, washing, panning or sluicing and sorting it. In addition to these activities women are also in charge of mine reclamation, maintaining the mining camps and food supplies.

Although the working conditions for women are similar to the men, they do not receive equal compensation. Most of the time their salary is just sufficient to feed their family for the day.

In Guinea, working conditions in artisanal mining are very painful, laborious and dangerous. Women involved in these activities are exposed to many technical, social, economical and environmental constraints which make life in the mining site very precarious for them.

This paper is attempts to address the major issues facing women's involvement in artisanal mining in Guinea in order to define clear short and long term actions that could help them improve their living conditions and contribute to the idea of sustainable development in their communities.