



An integrated approach to community relations at Iduapriem

The Iduapriem mine, an open-cast mine located in the Tarkwa area in western Ghana, was first started in 1991 by Ghanaian Australian Goldfields (GAG), with the first gold pour a year later in 1992. The mine was acquired by Ashanti Goldfields in 1996 and became part of AngloGold Ashanti during the business combination with Ashanti in 2004. Until recently, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) had been a significant investor in the company through a series of investments from 1991 onwards and, in line with the IFC's development guidelines, environmental and social requirements and practice increased over this period. Iduapriem is one of five major mines in the Tarkwa area which has become heavily dependent on mining. Local communities remain largely reliant on subsistence farming.

At the end of 2007, the mine employed 1,325 people, including 605 contractors. Mining is undertaken by Taywood Mining, a subsidiary of Taysec (Ghana) Ltd.

While community relations and community development have always been a feature of the mine's operations, the approach to community engagement has been formalised over the past two to three years, with the establishment of a professional community relations team and a

more strategic approach to the matter. This approach comprises a combination of social giving on the one hand, with the mitigation of the impact of mining on the community on the other, executed through formal stakeholder engagement action plans (SEAPs). Key factors that are considered as part of the mine's engagement with the local community include: human rights and security, resettlement and compensation, the promotion of alternative livelihoods, and emergency preparedness.

The SEAP provides for liaison with the eight host communities affected by mining operations and takes place at three levels. It is aimed at building relationships and achieving mutually acceptable outcomes. The levels are:

- Community Consultative Committees (CCCs) comprising members of each community, which meet on a monthly basis;
- Community Liaison Groups (CLGs) that meet on a quarterly basis. They deal with issues of common concern between communities and thus comprise representatives from each of the CCCs; and
- The Monitoring Advisory Group (MAG), which includes CCC members along with other interest groups, such as local chiefs, the Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM), Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN) and elected municipal representatives. This group meets twice a year and is independently chaired.

The mine has gathered socio-economic baseline information about the eight host communities, along with the identification of economic development activities and future land use, particularly once the mine closes (currently planned for 2018). The baseline assessment, conducted in 2004 by an independent party and sponsored by the IFC, identified five areas of concern, namely:

- poor yield (and accompanying low income) of agricultural production;
- inefficient post-harvest management and marketing of the production;
- low levels of education, rendering local community members virtually unemployable in the formal sectors;
- lack of access to micro-credit facilities; and
- generally a poor quality of life (centred around health, sanitation and education).

A range of initiatives has been undertaken over the past three years:

Education and training

In terms of education enhancement the mine provides tertiary scholarships to 10 students per year, has established three Early Childhood Development centres (catering for some 240 children in total) and has supported the attraction of teachers to the area. A particular problem in this respect has been the lack of appropriate housing facilities which meant that the Government Education Service is not able to attract appropriate teaching skills. This is being addressed by the mine.



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Addressing the challenge of employing of local community members is an important area of work, with emphasis being placed on a new apprenticeship programme ensuring places for community members at the University of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa and also training in employable skills. The former endeavour has not proved to be easy: of the 16 candidates identified by the mine in 2007, only three were accepted by the university. Thus, skills training has assumed greater importance, with placement opportunities being created for nine local learners during the year with local master craftsmen in employable skills such as auto mechanics, sign writing and screen printing, welding and spraying, hairdressing, etc. Efforts have also been made to ensure that jobs for which no formal skills are required are reserved for community members, with work to the value of \$82,000 being allocated from January to November 2007. Finally, the Hand-in-Hand programme has benefited 1,050 community members since inception in 2005.

Health and sanitation

Community initiatives under this banner include the provision of boreholes and hand-dug wells, sanitation facilities, medical outreach programmes, including first aid training for community members and the provision of a Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) centre for HIV/AIDS in the nearby Tarkwa town, which was built in collaboration with a neighbouring mining operation, Gold Fields Ghana Ltd.

Agriculture

Agricultural assistance has come in the form of year-round irrigation schemes, aqua-culture projects, input and extension services to oil palm and cassava growers, and the setting up of piggeries (see box for details). These activities form an integral part of the Hand-in-Hand project.

Resettlement

“Our intentions have been sound, but our efforts have not been without problems,” says MD David Renner, “such as the legacy associated with the resettlement of a group of farmers who occupied an area close to Teberobie village which is now an active rock waste dump.”

Despite the fact that the resettlement was conducted in line with Ghanaian legislation and aligned with IFC policy the implementation of those requirements stalled as a result of difficulties encountered with Ghana's land tenure system, an issue that was clearly underestimated in the development of the Resettlement Action Plan. (The IFC policy is also AngloGold Ashanti policy since its adoption by the board in 2005.)

Says Renner: “We are continuing to work within the structures we have created to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome and anticipate that, following a recent MAG agreement on the way forward, this might be resolved within the next year.”