



**NETWORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN GHANA
(NETRIGHT)**

**Women's Agency Strengthened to Demand
Accountability, Equity and Transparency from Industry
Actors for Improved Livelihoods**

**COMMUNITY BASELINE SURVEY
JOMORO DISTRICT**

JULY 2013



Mobilising for Women's Rights in Ghana

SECTION ONE

Introduction

This is a report on the current situation in the Jomoro district of the Western Region of Ghana, three years after the first oil lift. NETRIGHT undertook this study with funding from STAR-Ghana to ascertain the current prevailing conditions in the district as a number of intended projects meant to be run in this district did not see the light of day. Jomoro district is one that was so enthusiastic about the oil find, the location and its related economic activities that were going to transform positively, the means of livelihoods of the natives of the place. However, the apparent change of location for major oil related activities to the adjoining district has altered the otherwise high-spirited communities to that of dreariness and dejection, leading to boredom and bleakness.

After holding extensive discussions with key persons at the Jomoro district Assembly, it became imperative that the study be undertaken in three specific communities in order to have a fair representation of the different concerns that face the district. In the light of this revelation, the three communities where the study took place were;

- Half Assini
- Tikobo I
- Kabenla Suazo

In June 2013, this study was carried out in these above- mentioned communities to determine the real situation on the ground. This work is distinctively directed at determining the current state of women's means of livelihoods in the Jomoro district where intended projects that were going to boost economic activities in these communities were abandoned.

Background to the Study

At the discovery of oil in the Western Region of Ghana, The people of the Jomoro district, especially women heaved a sigh of great relief as they were going to enjoy some respite from slow economic activities that otherwise translated into low incomes. A number of economic ventures were going to take place in the district as the government was going to set up a gas plant in the district. This move by the government of Ghana, prompted private businesses to set up other related industries in the area such as Ghana National Petroleum Company/Volta River Authority and Ghana Cement Factory.. As a result, there was an influx of people into these communities in search of opportunities that were going to be available with the start of these industries. In furtherance of this, the indigenes who were already in the food industry saw a gaping prospect of making economic gains with the increasing number of persons moving into these communities. Demand for domestic and commercial accommodation including land acquisition rose so quickly that the cost of living became high. This notwithstanding, the indigenes were of the hope that their means of livelihood would yield high turnovers such that the high cost of living could be supported with maximum returns from their economic activities.

As shown in a baseline study that was commissioned by NETRIGHT and conducted by Rudith King from April to November 2010, the people in these "oil communities" had high expectations in terms of economic empowerment and general development in the communities. To them this was going to improve the lot of women in particular in this area.

This may have happened to people living in some of these communities but with the people of Jomoro district it seems their lives are worse off than before the oil find, three years ago. It is in the light of this assertion that, the study delves into what the abandoned gas project in the district has brought them. Thus, the current hopelessness felt by the indigenes, especially women must be understood and put in the right perspective in order to inform policy makers and civil society groups to direct their resources at remedial steps in improving the lot of people of the district in general, and women in particular.

The objective of the study

This study is to discover the current situation of the people of Jomoro district, three years after the first oil lift. The focus is on women and the livelihoods they engage in at a time that projects that were going to enhance economic activities in the district have been abandoned or suspended. Specific areas to investigate include;

- To ascertain knowledge about the oil discovery

- To identify migration patterns
- To examine the current land tenure situation
- To assess the prevalent livelihood conditions
- To evaluate the overall impact of the existing circumstances on the communities.

Methodology & Design of Research

For the purposes of this study, the Focus Group Discussion of 8-10 women in a group was employed. This method was chosen because it allows for respondents of similar socio-demographic backgrounds to share perspectives on a topic in a group setting. The Focus Group Discussion was a sure way of reaching out to a good number of respondents and also for them to feel relaxed in groups with their kinsmen, talking about their concerns. Additionally, the instrument used to collect the data did not ask for the names and contact numbers of respondents so the respondents based on anonymity were able to give all manner of information without the fear of victimization.

Apart from the demographic characteristics which excluded the names and phone contacts of the respondents, questions were posed to illicit information about their knowledge of the oil discovery, migration issues, land matters, livelihood ventures and the impact of all these on the communities in general and women in particular.

Some respondents voluntarily wanted to speak to their concerns, so the researcher recorded their speeches that were in Nzema or Fante as these are the two pre-dominant languages spoken in the area. At least, 3 focus group discussions were organized in each of the three communities

Sampling & Study Population

Women who are fisher folks, farmers, traders, artisans and professionals from the formal sectors formed the base of our respondents. Upon a careful analysis with the staff of the district Assembly including the Presiding Member, it became imperative that the district capital should form part as it passes for an urban community, as well as a community where we could get fisher folks and diverse formal sector professionals to speak to. Tikobo I was also selected because it is both semi-urban and the commercial heartbeat of the district and so getting access to artisans as well as different kinds of traders was not going to be a problem. . Kabenla Suazo became part of the study due to some responses given by most participants in the 2 other communities. Initially, Takinta was the third community chosen for the study after Half Assini and Tikobo I because that is a predominantly farming community. Kabenla Suazo was selected as a community populated with farmers most of whom have their lands occupied by the state. As a result, some of the indigenes have taken these state institutions to a court of law. Thus, farmers could recount their concerns just as those who have lost their farmlands to the state could equally speak to their matters. All 138 respondents were women located in these three communities.

About 6% of the total research population was below 20years. This group of respondents may be working or learning trades because they do not have any adult support to further their education and so must work or learn a trade to be self-dependent. Another 9% of the respondents who are over 60 years are still engaging in income generating activities. They may be doing so because their children who must be caring for them may have left for better economic opportunities and so have to fend for themselves. There are a number of people in this category, who have to contend with caring for their grandchildren, left behind by parents as well. It is interesting to note that, out of the total sample size, the number of respondents who fall between the ages of 25-45 form about 50%. It is suggestive of the fact that the youthful population of the district have left in search of livelihoods.

Another characteristic worth mentioning is the fact that 65% of the sample population were Nzemas followed by Akans who constituted 20% of the sample. The remaining 15% were migrants including Ewes, Adangmes,

Ahantas, Sefwis, Grushies, Kusasis and Waalas. Forty percent of the sampled population are married but are mostly living without their spouses. Some of these men cannot live with a situation when their trader wives support the homes and so have left with little or no communication between them and their families. A quarter of the population (27%) comprise of single mothers with 1 or 2 children each. Another striking trend is the fact that women in the district capital have fewer children than their counterparts in the rural community.

The educational levels of the respondents were fairly low. A quarter (26%) had never been to school. Almost two-fifths (35%) had started school but had dropped out before completing basic education. Slightly less than a quarter (23%) had completed MSLC/JHS. Another 6% had some or completed secondary education while sixteen percent of the sample had either a diploma or a bachelor's degree.

About 39% of the participants earn a monthly income of over 500 Ghana cedis. It may be explained by the fact that, some of these women are cash crop farmers and traders of foodstuffs. Over 20% of the participants earn between 0-199 Ghana cedis monthly. Most of the lower income earners lived in the rural community. They might spend less on food but they had more children and thus more mouths to feed with the meager income they earned.

Organization of the Report

This report has been organized in four sections. The first section covers the introduction to the research, which includes background to the study, objective of the research work, methodology & design of research and sampling & study population. The section is concluded with the way the research report is structured. The next section will be the profile of the Jomoro district. Section three presents the information as presented by the respondents through the focus group discussions and some audio visuals from the field. The fourth and final section is the research findings and conclusions.

SECTION TWO

THE PROFILE OF JOMORO DISTRICT

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 Location and Size

The Jomoro District, which used to be part of the then Nzema District was created by Legislative Instrument 1394 in 1988. It is located in the Southwestern corner of the Western Region of Ghana. It is bounded on the South by Latitude 4,80° N and the Atlantic Ocean {Gulf of Guinea}. It is bounded in the North by Latitude 5,21 N and the Nini River. It also lies between Longitude 2,35° W to the East and 3,07° W to the West.

The district covers an area of 1344 square kilometers. This is about 5.6% of the total area of the Western Region. It shares boundaries with Wassa-Amenfi and Aowin-Suaman to the North, Nzema East District to the East and La Côte D'Ivoire to the West and the Gulf of Guinea at the South.

1.2 Relief

The south-central part of the district including the Ankasa Forest Reserve is an area of rolling granite topography consisting of frequent steep-sided small round hills rising to 200-600 feet or no flat uplands and no broad valleys.

Around the coastal area, the relief is lower consisting of flattish upland areas and steep valleys. A minor relief feature is the one formed by a ridge of highland running northwest to southeast from the Tano to Bonyere that terminates on its northern side in the Nawulley scarp.

1.3 Rainfall

A high rainfall, falling in two wet seasons and a uniformly high temperature characterizes the climate of the district. The climate is classified as Equatorial Monsoon and owes its rains to low pressure areas over the Sahara attracting winds from the South of the Equator.

The climate is favourable for plant growth and it is the climate rather than the soil, which is the greatest asset of the district. The harmattan air mass that brings dry conditions comes under the effects of the Monsoon and the Equatorial mass. The result is a variable weather, which includes moderate to very heavy rains.

1.4 Climate

Although gaps in climatic records on the district make them unreliable for planning purposes, the district is believed to be the wettest part of the country. Temperature in the district is generally very high with a monthly mean of 26° C. Relative humidity throughout the district is also very high about 90% during the night and falling to about 75% when temperature rises in the afternoon.

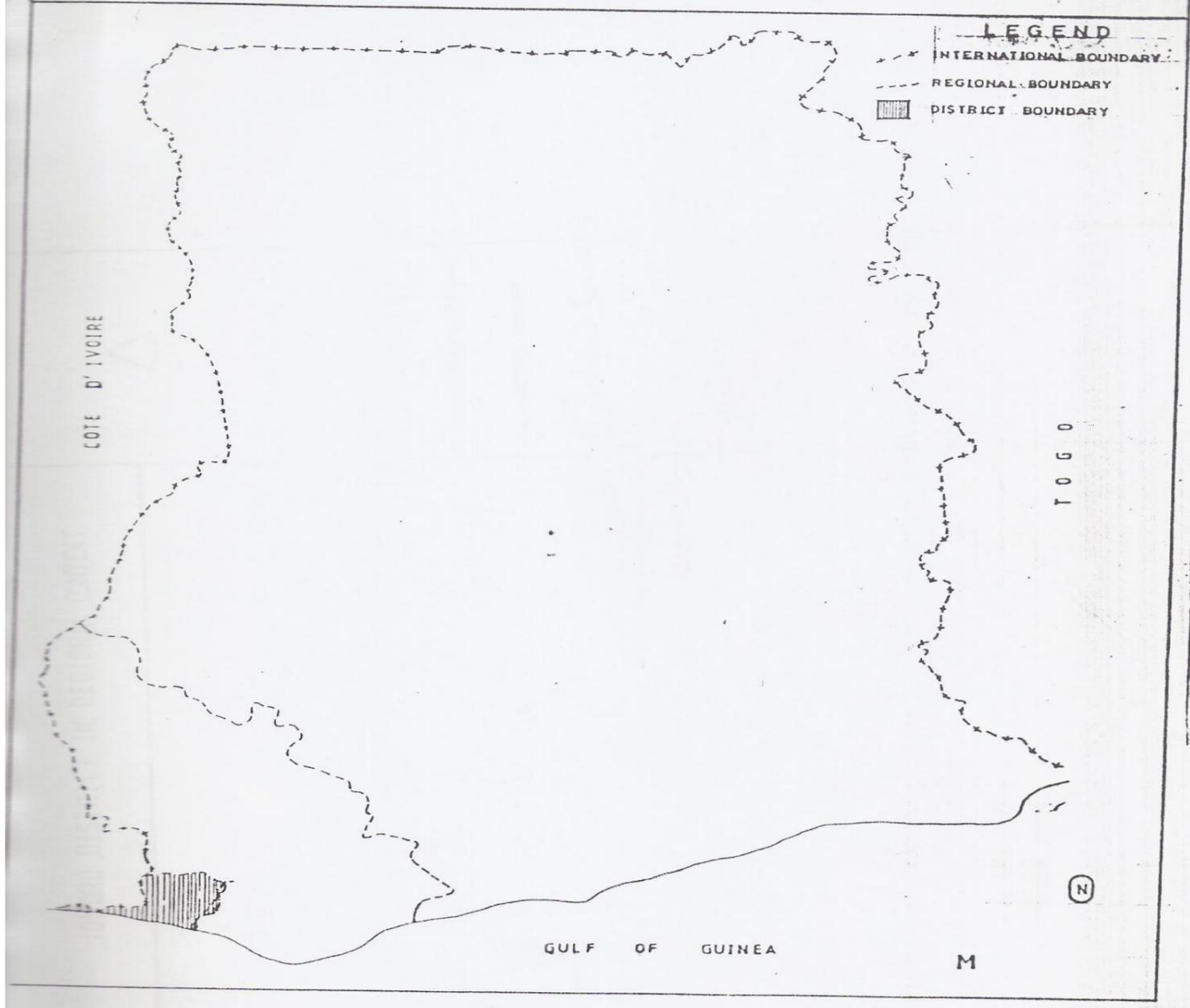
1.5 Vegetation

The district lies within the forest belt of Ghana. The original vegetation in the interior parts of the district is the Tropical Rain Forest type characterized by its evergreen scenery with a vast variety of plant species. The present vegetation is made up of:

- i) Forest reserve (Ankasa) characterized by original high forest where cultivation is not allowed.
- ii) Areas of fallow land and tree crops, farms/plantations and wasteland.
- iii) Major areas of swamp forest which have not seen much cultivation because of their Waterlogged nature for most times of the year.

Figure 1.0

JOMORO DISTRICT IN NATIONAL CONTEXT



1.6 Conditions of the Natural Environment

The district has extensive rainforest which has given rise to timber extraction. Lumbering activities can be found round Mpataba, Nuba, Ankasa, Tikobo No.1, Ellenda and Anwiafutu area. There is, however, no established timber processing companies except some illegal chainsaw operators.

The activities of timber extractors in the district have had negative effect in

- (a) Depleting economic trees as a result of the neglect of afforestation and re-afforestation programmes and the destruction of young trees all leading to micro climate change and ecological in balance.
- (b) Destruction of crops through the indiscriminate manner in which the trees are felled and conveyed from the bush.

The forests are also used for crop farming. Major crops grown are cassava, coconut, maize, cocoa, and plantain. The use of traditional farming methods which include slash and burn and the extraction of wood fuel is gradually having a deleterious effect on the natural environment by degradation.

Fuel wood is the main source of energy for domestic use (cooking), 36.1% followed by electricity, kerosene, charcoal and liquefied petroleum gas 24%, 21.7%, 13.4% and 4% respectively. A household survey conducted, indicates that, 49.1% of the energy used in the district is supplied or exploited from the forest.

This situation has contributed to the depletion of tree species. There is the need to adopt alternative strategies for instance establishing wood lots and afforestation by NGOs and governmental agencies as an intervention.

1.7 Conditions of the Built Environment

Most homes (24 percent) were found to be built with cement and 16.7percent built with raffia. Buildings roofed with iron roofing were (27%) and thatched (22.5%). 52.7% of the houses have habitable rooms ranging from 2-5 with 36.7% having habitable rooms from 6-10 while 9.9% of

the houses have habitable rooms more than eleven (11+). More than 10 persons (44.5%) live in a house in the district. 1-4 households (86.9%) live in a house in the district.

Only 29.6% have toilet facilities such as KVIP. Those with pit latrine and water closet within their houses are in percentage terms 15% and 8.6% respectively. 70.4% have toilet facilities outside their houses i.e. they use public toilets. The use of bush and beaches (46%) as place of convenience is very common. These practices rather affect the natural environment. Refuse disposal is largely by open public dumping which is 36.8%. Unorganized dumping under coconut trees 9.7% is also practiced.

The filth from these refuse dumps wash into streams and rivers which are sources of domestic water for 20% of the people. This unhealthy situation exposes the people in the district to disease infection. 9.7% throw refuse into community refuse containers where sanitation vehicles remove them. The refuse containers are located in Half-Assini, Jaway Wharf, Tikobo No. 1 and Elubo.

1.8 Water and Electricity Supply

The water situation in the district is a little better than sanitation. 22 percent of the sampled population have access to bore-hole, 30% pipe-borne, 28% protected wells with 20% drinking from streams and rivers. There are five (5) Small Town Water Supply Systems provided by EU and Gov't of Ghana and managed by Half Assini Water Board. Nuba, Tikobo No.1-Allowulley and Bonyere-Ezinlibo Water Boards. The other system is at Elubo managed by Ghana Water Company.

The IDA project for water at Beyin is still not completed. When this project is completed it would reduce pressure and the waiting time to fetch from water sources.

1.9 Sites for Historic Scientific or Aesthetic Importance

The district has some sites of historic, scientific or aesthetic importance. These include;

- i. Long coastline characterized by beautiful sandy beaches
- ii. Ankasa Forest Reserve and the Ninisuhien Natural Park. The Resource Park covers an area of 13,245 sq. miles with animals such as elephants, leopards, wildcat, African civet, bush broad fronted crocodile etc.

- iii. The Beyin Fort
- iv. Nzulezu settlement on stilt on the River Amanzulley offers beautiful scenery for tourists.
- v. The Adusuazo Valley and the Tano-Dwenye confluence scene
- vi. The Dwenye Lagoon is an ideal for boat riding
- vii. The strategic market at Tikobo No.1, Elubo and Jaway Wharf

1.10 Geology

The district lies in five main geological formations namely, the Lower Birimian, the Upper Birimian, the Granites Tertiary Sands and the Coastal Sands.

The Lower Birimian consists mostly of phillites with injected quartz veins while the Upper Birimian consists mostly of volcanic rocks and relatively minor amounts of phillites. The granite was formed into the older Birimian formations.

The Lower and Upper Birimian and the granites are all Pre-Cambrian and were formed very early in the geological time scale. The tertiary deposits of the southwest of the district are very much younger and represent a relatively recent addition to the Ancient African massif of which other formations form part. These deposits form a mantle of uniform sandy clays overlying a number of different geological formations below.

The coastal sands consist of very young sand and alluvial deposits along and behind the shore line of the district.

1.1.1 Drainage

Mainly the Tano, Ankasa, Suhwen, Elloin and Amanzulle Rivers and their tributaries drain the district. The other water body of importance is the Dwenye Lagoon.

1.1.2 Soils

The soils of the district belong predominately to the Boi Association, the Ankasa Association, the Tikobo Association and the Fredericksburg Association.

POPULATION AND ITS GROWTH

The population of the Jomoro District is 13,340. The population has increased over the years from 37,685 in 1970 to 111,348 in 2000. Population growth in the district has accelerated over the past 40 years. The phenomenal growth in population was as a result of increase in birth rate and decrease in mortality rate over the period.

Apart from the increase in birth rate and decrease in mortality rate, it might be the immigration as a result of the increased economic activity in the coconut or copra industry which created a situation of in-migration to the district.

Closely related to the above was the completion of the highway linking La Cote D'Ivoire between the late 1980 and early 1990. This generated a rapid wave of in-migration from other part of the country to the district.

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

The population distribution of the district is influenced by various factors including vegetation, type of economic activity, infrastructure, cultural and administrative policies. The district capital Half Assini has the largest population in the district. The town has the infrastructure and economic influence to attract migration and retain residents. This is followed by Elubo, Tikobo No. 1 and Bonyere.

The distribution of the population in the district is uneven. This is reflected in the differences between the population size and land area.

The district can best be described as typically rural. Out of the total 931 settlements only 4 settlements could be described as urban in 2005, thus having population of 5000 and above; Half Assini (16,159) Elubo (14,361) Tikobo No. 1 (7655) Bonyere (7288).

Nine (9) settlements have population between 3000 and 4999. These include Tikobo No. 2 (4984) Ahobre No. 2 (4226) Ezinlibo (4177) Takinta (3968) Jaway Wharf (3581) Samenye (3461) Mpataba (3352) Nuba (3189) Kengen (3052).

Apart from twenty two other settlements which have population between 1000 and 3000 all the rest have population below 1000. The settlement population pattern of the district does not argue well for development in the case of the provision of certain facilities which require a minimum population threshold to make them viable. .

Population Density

Population density is the population by land size kilometer square. The population densities have also been increasing in the district. The population density as at 1970 was 28 per square kilometer. However, this increased to 53 in 1984, 83 in 2000 and 114.1 in 2010.

It is observed that with exception in age 0-4 there is a reducing population age, which indicates the effects of mortality. The young dependant age group (0-14 years) is 41.3% of the population. The high proportion of children in this age group would put much burden on the District Assembly in the area of providing educational facilities and other social amenities needed by children in their development to adulthood.

On the other hand the working age group of (15-64years) is 53.4% and 65+ where one cannot work the percentage is 5.3.

Dependency Ratio

The dependency ratio as at 2000 was 87.1% lower than the regional average of 88.3. This should be of concern to the district since every adult person in the productive age group has to support at least one dependant.

The base population for both sexes is large and with a very high growth rate (3.2%) for the district; which leads to rapid population increase. In the district as age increases the population for both sexes decrease. In Jomoro there is fewer female children than males. As age increases, however, to the working age group, this pattern changes and there are more females than males.

The district is endowed with rich human resource base that is able and willing to work but the wherewithal is the issue. There are issues of economic opportunities, which is making the working generation to emigrate in order to satisfy the basic necessities of life. Tourism sites are

all over but the workforce is far more than what this industry can employ. It is on this premise that setting up of industries including coconut ones will be welcome news to get the indigenes to stay as well as others to immigrate to boost the buoyancy of the district.

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SECTION THREE

THE IMPACT OF THE OILFIND ON LIVELIHOODS IN JOMORO DISTRICT

This section is divided into three segments. Each segment will be devoted to one of the three communities visited for the purposes of this research and then all the six areas addressed will be looked at. Mainly, the women in this area together with the general populace seem to be apathetic with anything that has to do with Government. The reason is that, after their hopes were raised that a gas plant was going to be situated in the district, a number of people from other parts of the country and even beyond all migrated to the district. Other industries also moved into the area to take advantage of the expected cheap energy to prospect for land for industrial and commercial purposes.

The economic life started thriving with the influx of people to the district. People started expanding their means of livelihood with loans and life savings in order to accommodate the growing market. Others even acquired parcels of land to develop them into residential and commercial accommodation.

However, the Government decided to move the project from the Jomoro district to the adjoining district of Ellebelle. The industries that wanted to set up in the district have virtually abandoned the intent of doing business in the vicinity. With their hopes shattered and lands taken over by Government, the people have their liquid funds locked up in their investments with the immigrants as well as most of the indigenes moving out of the impoverished community. This has angered the people in the district to the extent that they would not hear the name nor see eye to eye with the people of Ellebelle. To them, their means of livelihood have been crushed only to be enjoyed by their neighbours.

A. Half Assini

This is the district capital of Jomoro. Almost all the respondents were either formal sector professional or fisherfolks. A couple of them engaged in various forms of trading. It is

noteworthy that, all the respondents were females with ages as low as 16years up to over 60years. The fact that some less than 18 years and above 60 year olds are actually trying to support themselves economically may be suggestive of a trend. That younger and much older people are compelled to engage in economic ventures suggests that the group of people who are supposed to be working to support the much younger and older people have either left the community or cannot cope with their needs let alone support their dependents. Another worrying feature is the fact that, most of the younger respondents had children and yet are unmarried. In a poverty-stricken environment, it is not surprising that adults within their prime working ages find it almost impossible to meet their personal responsibilities, let alone take care of their dependents who have their own dependents. If an adult is unable to take care of her children, it stands to reason that she is unable to take responsibility of her aged relatives as well. Among the respondents, an overwhelmingly majority of them are Christians and have either never been to school or have gone up to the middle school or JHS levels. The professionals, however, range from SHS to Bachelor's degrees. As evidenced in a number of studies, the respondents with little or no education have higher number of children with low incomes as against the professionals who earn higher incomes with fewer children and higher levels of education. They are either Nzemas or Akans. A further probe into the prevalence of these two ethnic groups in the district showed that, the natives are Nzemas and most of the fishermen who work there are Akans, from nearby coastal towns. As a result, they come in with their families as migrant fishermen and eventually live permanently there.

1. Knowledge about Oil Discovery

In Half Assini, all the respondents had heard through the mass media and some NGOs that there has been an oil find in the area and as a result of that, a gas plant was going to be sited in the district. This rippling effect of the gas plant being in the district was going to be the setting up of industries like Ghana Cement factory at Nawulley where they have large deposits of limestone among others. According to them, rumours started trickling in that, the gas plant was rather going to be located at Ellembele district which made the whole district led by its assembly send resolutions and delegations to the executive wing of government. After countless attempts to

maintain the location of the gas plant in the district, they lost their “baby” to the people of Ellembele eventually.

2. **Migration**

From the discussions held, it became evident that immediately the news was released about the oil find, people of all ages and sex, especially the youth and businesses rushed into the district in search of economic opportunities. It instantly made the town vibrant and increased socio-economic activities.

However, when the location of the gas plant was changed from Jomoro, the people who immigrated into the towns started emigrating from the place. The indigenes also started emigrating into other localities in search of means of livelihood. This is because, economic activities had fallen even below what pertained before the oil find. Thus, those who wanted to stay did so at their own risk. A good number of those who left went to either neighbouring Cote’ D’Ivoire or mining communities to engage in illegal mining activities.

To them, since the gas plant project was moved out, all the related businesses that would have sprouted for all manner of job opportunities for the people also pulled out. With the natives also moving out alongside the immigrants, there were fewer people to buy the goods and services of those who wanted to stay save for the professionals in the formal sector. Thus life has become unbearably difficult for them as poverty is on the rise. People who could had to simply leave in search of their livelihoods. The fisherfolks also started leaving the community because they are fishing without any yield due to the proximity of the oil rig to the community. This group of people also left with their entire families to further worsen the plight of the native fishmongers who depend on the fishermen for their means of livelihood.

3. **Land**

While both immigrants and the indigenes grabbed land for commercial and domestic purposes, the prices of rent also shot up to twice the rates. Furthermore, some government institutions acquired parcels of land, which have resulted in prolonged legal battles in the law courts in the adjoining communities. Some individuals who acquired land with the intention of developing them for commercial purposes at exorbitant rates were now trying to retrieve their monies from the original landowners that have resulted

in all manner of conflicts. The indigenes who were engaged in subsistence farming on other people's lands were faced with ejection irrespective of whether the crops are ready for harvesting or not which also became a loss of income for those involved.

4. **Livelihood**

Half Assini is generally not a community with vibrant socio-economic activities until the prospect of improved livelihoods with the oil find. Thus, the massive immigration was welcome news to the citizens because of its implications for their means of livelihood. In a community where the majority of the people engage in the service and trading industries, numbers is of essence. Returns on their income generating activities were overwhelmingly good just for a while and then, the unfortunate news of the gas plant was broken. The women believe that they are worse off now than they were before the oil find. According to them, the reason is that, apart from the outwards movement of the immigrants, the indigenes themselves are equally moving out. Once the population size reduces, it translates into low returns as service and trade industries thrive on numbers.

The respondents see their capital dwindling because most of the things they sell are perishables that go bad should buyers fail to buy within a certain period. Even in the service industry, when people are hungry, they refuse to make new clothes or visit the hairdressers' and so income levels reduce.

These negative trends have led mainly to the youth leaving in search of means of livelihoods, leaving their dependents with the aged and friends at home. This increases the financial burdens on those at home, which in turn pushes the younger ones out of school in search of income generating activities to support oneself. Most of the time, the indigenes who leave in search of economic exploits either do not succeed and a couple of them lose their lives through illegal mining and the like..

Another threat to their means of livelihood is that, the farmlands close by the communities have been acquired by either individuals or the state and so traders of foodstuffs have to cross the lake to farther places before they can get food to sell. According to the respondents, pre-mix fuel is over priced in the community, which adds

to the cost of getting food to sell. The other dimension is the danger of travelling on the lake as well as high cost of transportation for carting the foodstuffs from the farm sites.

It is equally significant to mention that, with the oil rig close by the community, fishing activities have been negatively affected. Fishermen have little or no catch when they go to sea and because they are mostly migrant fishermen, most of them have moved out of the community with their families. This adversely affects the livelihood of the women who sell the fish. Now they have to resort to selling frozen fish that has little appeal to people who live by the sea.

A good number of these women felt that they needed more funds to boost their businesses. Others believed that, the gas plant could still be located in the district. Thus, all the other industries that were coming in initially to set up will come back for others to also follow. To them, man will do anything to satisfy his basic needs and so people are engaging in dangerous and life threatening ventures just to keep their heads above the waters.(illegal mining and commercial sex work for instance).

5. **Impact on the Community**

Considering the prevailing conditions, everyone believes that there are neither job opportunities nor improved social amenities. In fact, they are the biggest losers in all these developments. To them, they have even lost what they had before the oil find. Temporary staff and labourers initially employed by these emerging industries and the immigrants who came in bought many things because they were many and had regular incomes. The artisans could provide services to the many prospective customers and make good returns on their inputs. With the exodus of the immigrants and the jobless indigenes, traders hardly sell their wares while artisans have minimal customers to provide services for.

The safest of the groups are the formal sector professionals. Even within this group, different sectors are complaining of the negative effects of these phenomena to the daily discharge of their duties. The educationists complain of low enrollment, the security agencies complain of high crime rates while the health sector report high teenage pregnancy rates.

The two major conflict areas are the land disputes that have resulted from the initial land grabbing undertaken by the state, businesses and individuals. The other is the inter district conflict which exists between the people of Jomoro, the original location of the gas plant and the people of Ellebelle where the gas plant is now located. As they share a common border, the situation must be looked into in a timely manner to avert any probable sustained conflict.

The district administration develops the district with income generated internally with a little assistance from government. When income is low, the corresponding tax revenue to the district is automatically low. Thus, efforts to improve the lot of the people are also not commendable. The new market that was recently built has all the gates broken down and the entire roof of the market stalls is virtually non-existent. As a result, the market women have refused to pay any levies to the district until such time that these concerns are addressed. This is because; with the current situation, their goods left in the market are stolen. Either they have to pay private security persons to guard their wares or they have to cart them to their homes daily. Considering the fact that Jomoro is one of the places with the highest rainfall amounts in the year, one can imagine what happens to these women when it rains during the day. In all sincerity, these women believe that their community was deprived before the oil find but currently, the town is hanging on a thin line and undeserving of the status of district capital.

B. Tikobo I

This is the economic heartbeat of the Jomoro district. On the way from Takoradi to Half Assini, one would get to this sub urban community before getting to the district capital. A stranger would mistake the place for the capital because of the number of people, activities and shops you find lined up just by the wayside. The demographic characteristics of this community are the same as the district capital except that, this population has more youth and artisans than Half Assini. This could be explained by the fact that, the entire district is losing its life because of the change of location of the gas plant so the people who do not have the courage to leave for the unknown feel more

comfortable staying at the "wall street" of Jomoro district. Being a more populated community, artisans will survive better here just as the traders of all sorts.

1. **Knowledge about Oil Discovery**

Just like the people of the district capital, residents of Tikobo I from the mass media and some NGOs about the oil find in the area and the siting of a gas plant in the district. What excited the people of this community most was the intent of setting up the Ghana Cement factory at Nawulley where they have large deposits of limestone among others. This is because, Nawulley is so close by Tikobo I that, residents could maintain their homes in this community and still work in this proposed Ghana Cement factory. However, this and many other dreams of the people were not going to be as the rumour eventually came true when the location of the gas plant changed to Ellembelle.

2. **Migration**

Much as the immigration flow was into the entire district, the numbers that settled in Tikobo I was overwhelming. This could be explained by the fact that, this community is the economic nerve center of the district. As such, the immigrants who were interested in trading preferred to be here. The discussions revealed that, most of the people who moved in were within the youth bracket. Additionally, both sexes trooped in just to exploit the economic opportunities available. Marriages and other social ties were formed in readiness for the boom.

Unfortunately, the location of the gas plant shattered the aspirations of both the indigenes and the immigrants. Following from this, the people who immigrated into the community started emigrating from the place alongside a sizeable number of the indigenes in search of alternate means of livelihood. This is because, economic activities had plummeted even below what pertained before the oil find. Thus, those who wanted to stay did so at their own peril.

Life is proving to be more difficult than before and so many people moved into the illegal mining from this community. Another set of people went into neighbouring Cote' D'Ivoire; a practice that is common to the area due to the proximity of the community to

the Ivorian border. Every community thrives on its people and so once the numbers decrease abruptly, it has a shocking effect on the livelihood of the people.

3. **Land**

The situation of land in this community is no different from that of the previous community except for the price differentials. Price quotations for parcels of land at Tikobo I were higher than those at Half Assini. The rents for both domestic and commercial properties have equally shot up. Though no major land issues apart from individuals' cases were ongoing, the community knew about the major land disputes at the third community that was included in this research.

However, indigenes who were engaged in subsistence farming on other people's lands were ejected irrespective of whether their crops were ready for harvesting or not. A case of income loss and broken contracts for those involved.

4. **Livelihood**

The livelihood situation in Tikobo I is no different from what pertains in Half Assini except that the number of people who came in and those who left after the re-location is the most striking of the impact. The more people came in, the higher the returns they made and so when the many immigrants left in addition to some of the indigenes, income levels for those remaining automatically decreased. What is more, the numbers of the working population decreased, increasing the dependency ratio on the remaining working population. Secondly, in anticipation of a large consuming public, some women invested all their liquid funds as well as loans into livelihood activities that would be relevant to the "new clientele" such as catering services, dressmaking, dressmaking and selling of all kinds of consumable and non-consumable goods. Others who were already in one kind of commercial venture or the other increased the quantities of wares that they stocked in anticipation of increased number of customers. The relocation has therefore left them with debt and crushed their aspirations such that some people have developed health problems.

5. **Impact on the Community**

Of the three communities visited, Tikobo I is the community that has felt the brunt of the relocation most. . As stated earlier, this community accommodated majority of the

immigrants due to its vibrancy. Accordingly, Tikobo I led the numbers that left the district. This has translated into low sales and patronage of goods and services.

What is more, some of the indigenes who left for greener pastures in other parts of the region, encountered near fatalities and returned home with diseases. A number of youth from this community have lost their lives whilst engaged in illegal mining and commercial sex work. While those who went into commercial sex work returned with unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, others who went into illegal mining died when mining “shafts” caved in on them. Some also became paralyzed with another group of people hit it acute respiratory infections and or skin diseases. This further increased the dependency rates. There are therefore elderly women in this community engaging in income generating activities, as some have to take care of the middle-aged children and their grandchildren.

Another aspect of the situation is the fact that, the area is well known for its copra but modernized means of processing is absent and so these farmers have to sell their coconut to some Nigerians who buy them in large quantities and send them to their home country. The situation is that, the indigenes are known for processing coconut into oil using traditional and energy consuming methods. At the advent of the oil find, they were of the view that, they could either work to raise enough funds to procure modern machines to extract the coconut oil. There is a section of the people who even had the hope that, once industrialists came into the area to look for prospects, this area could be identified and financed in order to maximize production and eventually improve income levels. However, this was not to be but rather dampened their hopes of ever improving. The Nigerians who currently buy the copra and send them to their country according to the indigenes, had come into the area to exploit what opportunities they could get but when the relocation occurred, these foreigners decided to rather buy and export the products as that will be economically beneficial to them than processing in the community.

C. **Kabenla Suazo**

Farming is the predominant occupation in this community. However, throughout the group discussions, it became evident that apart from it being a farming community, some

of the indigenes had actually taken some state institutions to court. The reason for such an action was necessitated by a takeover of their coconut plantations by state institutions. What is more, these owners were not consulted before their coconut trees were pulled down. In a farming community like this, their sources of livelihood are either cash or food crop farming with these same people engaging in food vending as extra income generating activity. It is noteworthy that two women and a man led the crusade and sent this land matter to court. This is evidence that there are assertive women who can fight for what rightfully belongs to them.

These farmers who are both females and males grow food crops like cassava beneath the coconut plantations. As a result, the people have become impoverished because, they cannot have access to their land, both cash/food crops have been pulled down and they also have to pay for the services of lawyers to assist them in taking fair compensation from the intended land owners. The matter has been at the court for well over two years. Initially, the matter was between Ghana Gas, Ghana National Petroleum Company & Volta River Authority on one hand and about 283 indigenes whose parcels of land range from small farms to large coconut plantations. The indigenes are led by Esther Armoh, Egbadzo Frances Agira and Francis Eliefe-Honnah. Later on when the relocation occurred, Ghana Gas and GNPC left, leaving VRA which still has an interest in the parcels of Land. There are a number of disagreements as to how much these state institutions want to pay and how much the indigenes want to accept.

There is a plantation where the state wants to pay 45,000 Ghana Cedis while the landowner wants to accept at least three times that (135,000 Ghana cedis). The unfortunate part of all these going on is that, once the matter is before the court, no one is able to plough the land, a scenario that has made them poorer than before.

As a result of this idleness, men in these communities have fled in search of incomes to support their families. With the absence of men, no remittances and no means of livelihood as these farmlands cannot be used while the matter is pending in court, the women also leave in search of means of livelihoods.

The people in this community are as angry with the state institutions who are taking over their land as they are with the people of Ellembele. This is because after pulling down their farm produce, it does not look like something will be done in these communities anytime soon. All you see written in their faces are dejection, depression, misery and hopelessness. The people are simply put, inconsolable.

SECTION FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

This report is based on the perspectives of female citizens from all walks of life in the communities of Half Assini, Tikobo I and Kabenla Suazo. These women raised a number of key issues that are important to consider to improve the socio-economic circumstances of the women and the entire district. First, it is unclear to the citizens why a project was promised to them and then later was moved to another. As districts that share a common boundary, there is the need to look into what undercurrents exist due to the relocation of the Gas plant and seek to assuage their anger/frustration so it does not lead to conflict with the other district. The animosity and rivalry shown in all the group discussions were so intense.

It is equally essential to establish what alternative plans the central government has for this district in the face of this relocation. This is because the respondents believe that government officials deceived them about locating the gas plant in Jomoro only to acquire votes from the people.

The women believe that the entire district populace, especially women, have been impoverished due to a number of factors;

- i. Immigrants trooped in to take advantage of the perceived increase in economic activities that resulted in increased demand for goods and services, which in turn translated into high cost of these goods, and services.
- ii. The relocation made both immigrants and indigenes leave which reduced the population below what it was before the oil find Demand for goods and services plummeted resulting in low incomes. This assertion was actually raised by the officials of the District Assembly before the study was started and after most of the respondents mentioned it, they confirmed it as they had already stated it as one of the factors that has led to reduced revenue for the assembly.
- iii. With the absence of the gas plant and its allied industries, there is high unemployment because means of livelihood that the indigenes engaged in have also been crushed as in the case of cash/food crop farms taken over forcibly by state institutions and lying fallow presently.

- iv. In the face of high unemployment, men feel irresponsible and so leave their families to engage in illegal mining among others to survive. They may end up dead or with diseases. This in turn puts more pressure on the women who also emigrate to support their families, which does not augur well for families.
- v. Children are sometimes left with other relations who may be in the dependent bracket. These guardians are compelled to break their backs to cater for the children otherwise; the children are left to fend for themselves which exposes them to numerous hazards.
- vi. The situation in the preceding point coupled with hardships increases the occurrences of social vices including minor thievery, actual robberies, teenage pregnancies and high school drop out rates.

Suffice it to say that, there are people who are determined to stay in the community but low patronage of goods and services will eventually dwindle their working capital.. Much as most of these women think that they need money to enhance their means of livelihood, they fail to realize that, what they need is awareness creation and the availability of economic activities like coconut oil production machines so that, people will be attracted to the communities to stay and work. Should well meaning natives, home and abroad pull resources together and collaborate with the assembly, a couple of these modern coconut processing machines can be acquired and installed at locations close to the plantations for easy access to the raw materials. The women groups can also come together and seek assistance from non-profit organizations to support them in this and similar livelihood ventures that can further attract other industrialists to explore other opportunities including linking the coconut oil ventures to businesses that may require their end products as their raw materials. This in turn increases demand for goods and services, which will translate into high economic returns. Otherwise, once there are fewer people who need goods and services, any amount of money invested in their means of livelihood (what they believe can solve their problems) will be erased. This is because the services and goods are sparingly sought for so either one's money is locked up in the stocks or you keep spending your low sales gradually until there is nothing left.

Ultimately, the government has to liaise with the district assembly as a matter of urgency, to create enabling environment in addition to presenting an alternate economic opportunities to improve the socio-economic development of the people and to curb any civil disturbances, the relocation of the Gas plant could generate into.