Fruits of mining turning sour on Misima Island: resilience or vulnerability?

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Introduction

- High revenues generated from the mineral resources could imply that communities around mining areas in PNG have access to resources to make a better life. However, revenues earned from mineral exports are not related to a higher level of social indicators.

- Community Capitals approach (the Bilum framework) and through this create an alternative avenue to measure the effects of mining on community resilience.
What is resilience?

- Community resilience is a multi-dimensional phenomenon
- The strength of community resilience is dependent on the interactions of these related features
- Building resilience in communities thus requires integrated approach
The ability of communities to respond and adapt after disturbance through learning and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, and strategic planning at local and national levels to maintain, measure, and strengthen community capitals, and hence achieve sustainability.
Methodology

- This study applied a mixed method research methodology by using a combination of several methods to pursue results.
- The use of mixed-methods enabled me to collect a range of data that were relevant to the delivery of health services and the effects on the community capitals, which contribute to the strengthening of resilience among the mine-impacted communities in PNG.
Lack of effective governance

Many of the difficulties associated with the delivery of health and other services in PNG (Misima) originate from the decentralisation of powers from the national government to lower levels of government, specifically the Provincial and the Local Level administrations.

The post-decentralisation effects are linked to the planning approaches.
Some key issues

- Insufficient political and district participation;

- Poor planning capabilities in the districts to develop their own operational plans; and

- Inadequate arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.
Consequences

Challenges with the reporting system on health management issues:

When they are doing the transfer of staff, we have no power, nothing to say against it. For example, if we train somebody for a purpose in the district to do something, and the Catholics want to move their staff to another place, they just move him, and then they leave the place (position) vacant. Not really vacant, but they put another person who is not trained. It gives us a hard time to train another person (MHW1).
Challenges to accessing health services

- Lack of finances: 40%, 14%, 80%
- Lack of transport: 50%, 9%, 80%
- Lack of access to health services: 55%, 14%, 80%

Mining communities
Fruits of mining have turned sour
Fruits of mining continue to turn sour

Misima – Port Micah:

Operational stage

Closing stage

Beyond mine closure
Fieldwork on Misima revealed a limited level of accessibility to services such as transport and power supply. MML had been the main source of these and other essential services during the mine operational period. It made available many of the essential and enabling services including power supply, highly qualified medical personnel, a good road system, regular income and effective banking services. The community in this situation became overly dependent on the developer, and this has clearly had a negative effect on community resilience now that the mine has gone.
Conclusions

- It is also clear that there is lack of consistency in the government and mining company policies in terms of the sustainability of services within the mine impacted communities after mine closure.
- Misima had access to income generating activities and better health services during mining, but encountered challenges after mine closure.
- It also encountered difficulties in accessing basic services which have had on the overall wellbeing of the community members including challenges in accessing health services.
Detraction in resilience on Misima

- Environmental damage
- Economic implications
- Transport and roads issues
- Delay in drug supply
- Sanitation issues
- Banking services
Way forward…

- Build resilience to achieve sustainable communities
- Communities’ response to mining: adaptation and change
- Collaboration and planning in health and other services
- Mobilization and implementation
- Measuring community resilience
Tenkyu tru!