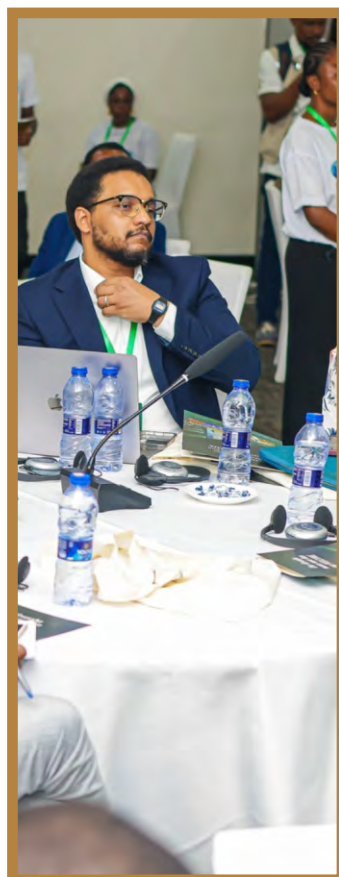


REPORT





EQUITY IN EXTRACTION CONFERENCE 2025

REPORT

High-Level West Africa Conference on Equity in Extraction: Addressing Inequalities in Natural Resource Governance, Critical Mineral Resources and Climate Change

Dates: 14 - 16 October 2025

Venue: Alisa Hotel, Accra, Ghana

Organized by: ISODEC, IDEAs, and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)

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ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	Africa Development Bank
AMDC	African Minerals Development Centre
BUILD	Building Institutions and Networks
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFID	Department for International Development
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth Development Office
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
GHG	Green House Gas
IDEAs	International Development Economics Associates
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Centre
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
MDAs	Ministries Departments and Agencies
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NRGI	Natural Resource Governance Institute
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
WACSO	West African Civil Society Forum
WIMOWA	Women in Mining, West Africa

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Disclaimer

This report presents key discussions, analyses, and reflections from the 2025 *Equity in Extraction Conference*. The views expressed are those of the presenters and participants and do not necessarily represent the positions of ISODEC, IDEAS, or partner institutions. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, ISODEC assumes no liability for errors or omissions in the content.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Date: 14 - 16 October 2025 | **Venue:** Accra, Ghana | **Convened by:** ISODEC in partnership with IDEAs Network

Participants: There were on average over 120 in-person participants and on average 106 online participants representing government MDAs, media, students, academia, civil society, traditional authorities, youth, community representatives, private sector actors and the public from Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and other African countries.

Purpose and Objectives

The three-day conference examined the political economy of Africa's extractive sectors, focusing on equity, gender, climate justice, and subnational governance. Its goal was to generate actionable insights for a just transition and accountable natural resource management that uplifts communities and safeguards the environment.

The objectives of the conference were:

1. To analyze current inequalities associated with natural resource governance in West Africa, particularly in relation to critical mineral resources and climate change (identify inequalities)
2. To develop and recommend policies that promote equity, environmental sustainability, and effective governance of natural resources (Policy Development)
3. To facilitate knowledge-sharing among academics and policy makers, and CSOs, regarding best practices in resource management and climate resilience (knowledge Exchange)
4. To specifically discuss the implications of critical mineral resources on local communities, the environment, biodiversity and the economy (Critical Mineral Focus).
5. To foster dialogue between government representatives, industry leaders, civil society, and international stakeholders to find solutions to the question of addressing inequalities and climate change within the context of natural resource management.

Some key findings include the following:

1. **Persistent Inequalities in Resource Governance:** Despite reforms, both Ghana and Mali show elite capture and weak community benefit mechanisms.
2. **Environmental and Social Trade-offs:** Mining expansion displaces farmers, destroys cocoa farms, and heightens water and soil contamination.
3. **High Illicit Financial Flows: despite reforms, corruption and weak institutions on natural resource governance in Africa is rife, especially in the case of Ghana and Sudan; this has led to capital flight, uneven development (in Ghana, mining districts receive 6% of national social spending, eruption of armed conflicts (Sudan).**
4. **Resource extraction and gender inequalities: mining expansion influences energy poverty among the genders, deepened poverty and livelihoods, loss of human capital.**
5. **Hybrid governance of natural mineral resources: A nexus between Traditional Authority and the State (chiefs as offenders and defenders) will limit mining curse.**

Key Messages

The conference underscored that equity in resource extraction remains a structural governance challenge, perpetuated by elite capture, weak institutional accountability, and fragmented policies. It emphasized the need for hybrid governance systems that integrate traditional authorities with formal institutions to enhance legitimacy and social cohesion in mining areas.

Participants highlighted the lack of transparency and enforceability in Community Development Agreements (CDAs) as a key constraint to equitable benefit sharing. Persistent gender inequalities in access to jobs, resources, and decision-making reinforce systemic poverty, while energy poverty and low climate awareness continue to burden women disproportionately.

The discussions further established that sustainable industrialization must balance extraction with environmental and social accountability, and that civil society organizations (CSOs) remain critical intermediaries in promoting transparency, advocacy, and citizen participation. Lastly, Africa's pursuit of resource sovereignty requires policies that prioritize domestic value addition, local ownership, and industrial transformation.

Priority Recommendations

To operationalize these insights, the conference recommended:

1. Adoption of hybrid land and mining governance frameworks involving chiefs and local councils.
2. Mandatory disclosure and monitoring of CDAs, supported by CSO and community oversight.
3. Integration of gender and climate equity into extractive and energy transition policies.

4. Creation of dedicated financial instruments for women's livelihoods and clean energy ventures.
5. Formulation of national strategies for mineral beneficiation and industrial processing.
6. Strengthened State - CSO partnerships for accountability and social auditing.
7. Expand climate literacy and environmental education at local levels.
8. Promotion of regional cooperation and policy harmonization through AfCFTA and the African Mining Vision.

Next Steps and Commitments

- ISODEC and IDEAs Network will jointly publish policy briefs and circulate outcomes through ECOWAS and AU policy forums by Q1 2026.
- CSOs and advocacy partners will advance campaigns on CDA transparency and gender inclusion within six months.
- Governments and traditional leaders will pilot hybrid land governance models in selected mining districts by end-2026.
- Academic and research institutions will conduct follow-up studies on gender, climate, and justice dimensions to inform the 2027 conference.



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE



■ Resource abundance vs inequity

West Africa holds large reserves of gold, bauxite, oil, gas, and new minerals, yet weak governance keeps widening social and economic gaps.

■ Climate-extraction nexus

Climate change adds stress to mining areas by disrupting ecosystems, reducing water supplies, and cutting livelihoods in communities that already face extraction pressures.

■ Policy gaps

Reforms such as EITI and national mineral policies exist, but fair sharing of resource gains remains limited and environmental costs continue to rise.

■ Rising demand for critical minerals

Global demand for minerals like lithium and cobalt is rising fast, with projections showing a sharp increase by 2050 driven by the growth of renewable energy.

Why the Conference

West Africa is endowed with abundant natural resources - gold, bauxite, oil, gas, and emerging critical minerals such as lithium and cobalt - positioning it as a strategic hub in the global energy transition. Yet, the governance of these resources has historically deepened social, economic, and environmental inequalities across the region.

Resource extraction often fuels elite capture, displacements, environmental degradation, and weak accountability, widening the inequality gap and undermining community resilience.

The accelerating global shift toward renewable energy has increased demand for critical minerals, with the World Bank (2020) projecting a tenfold rise in lithium demand and a tripling of cobalt demand by 2050. While this surge offers economic prospects for resource-rich African economies, it simultaneously heightens the risks of exploitation, climate stress, and inequitable benefit distribution - especially for women, youth, and marginalized communities.

Context: Inequality - Extraction - Climate Nexus

Evidence from UNEP (2022), NRGi (2023), and the Africa Development Bank (AfDB, 2022) highlights persistent governance gaps in extractive industries that amplify regional inequalities. The IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report further confirms that climate change exacerbates vulnerabilities in mining-dependent economies through ecosystem disruption, water stress, and loss of livelihoods. Despite national reforms guided by frameworks such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and national mineral and energy policies, equitable distribution of resource benefits remains limited, while environmental liabilities continue to rise.

Scope and Objectives

Building on the 2022 High-Level Conference on *Natural Resource Governance and Inequalities*, the 2025 conference deepened the discourse by integrating climate change and equity dimensions into extractive governance. The event sought to:

1. Analyze inequalities in natural resource governance, focusing on critical minerals and climate impacts.
2. Develop and propose policies for equitable, sustainable, and transparent resource management.
3. Facilitate cross-sector knowledge exchange among policymakers, academics, and civil society.
4. Examine community-level implications of mineral extraction on biodiversity, environment, and livelihoods.
5. Strengthen dialogue among governments, private sector actors, CSOs, and regional bodies to promote inclusive governance reforms.

Conference Scope and Participation

The three-day conference convened over 104 participants, including policymakers, researchers, civil society leaders, community representatives, international partners, media, and private sector actors. Discussions were organized around keynote addresses, panel discussions, and thematic workshops, culminating in a communiqué outlining priority policy recommendations and commitments toward achieving equity in extraction and climate justice in West Africa.

Evidence and Knowledge Base

The conference discussions drew on a robust evidence base from academic research, donor reports, and policy analyses. Core reference frameworks included:

- Africa Mining Vision (AMV, AU 2009): Advocating for equitable and sustainable mineral development.
- Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI, 2023): Promoting open data and accountability in mineral revenues.
- World Bank and AfDB Reports (2022 - 2023): Highlighting fiscal dependency and governance reforms in mining and oil sectors.
- UNEP and UNDP (2023): Framing natural resource management within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate adaptation agenda.
- IPCC AR6 Regional Assessment (2023): Identifying the extractive - climate - inequality nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa.

These insights grounded the conference in current regional realities and global policy debates, linking field evidence from Ghana, Mali, and Sudan to structural questions of power, accountability, and justice.

CONFERENCE DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

Format and Structure

The three-day conference adopted a hybrid design, blending in-person plenaries, thematic panel discussions, and interactive questions and answers (Q&A) sessions, supported by live streaming for virtual presenters and participants. Proceedings were simultaneously documented by rapporteurs and recorded for transcription.

Day 1 established the framing, bringing together senior policymakers, researchers, and civil society actors to discuss the intersections of equity, extraction, and climate change.

Day 2 explored country case studies and governance models through technical panels.

Day 3 focused on action planning, regional cooperation, and commitment-building toward a shared roadmap for equitable resource governance.

Methodological Approach

The conference employed a participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue model, emphasizing inclusivity and evidence-based exchange. Key methodological tools included:

- Plenary Keynotes and Panel Presentations: That set the conceptual and empirical foundations.
- Moderated Discussions and Open Floor Questions: Allowing participants to share experiences, challenge perspectives, and propose solutions.
- Thematic Clustering of Sessions: Focused on governance, gender, livelihoods, and climate change.
- Real-time documentation: Rapporteurs synthesized discussions into daily summaries, identifying patterns, divergences, and emerging recommendations.
- Data triangulation: Where feasible, references were cross-checked with EITI datasets, government reports, and peer-reviewed studies to maintain analytical rigor.

Participant Profile

The conference hosted approximately 104 participants from 14 countries across West, Central, South and East Africa, representing:

- Government, ministries and agencies (e.g., Office of the Vice President, NDPC)
- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and advocacy networks on transparency, climate justice, and gender equity
- Research and academic institutions including the University of Ghana, UDS, and international partners such as Humboldt University and Istanbul University
- Traditional and community leaders, representing mining-affected areas
- Development partners and donors including the FCDO, and the EU Delegation
- Media and youth organizations promoting public accountability

The participant composition achieved strong gender representation (46% women) and included voices from youth groups and persons with disabilities (PLWDs), ensuring a holistic conversation on equity.

Conference proceedings were captured through:

- Direct session recording (Video, audio and transcription)
- Rapporteur notes synthesized under the leadership of **Dr Moses Kambu (Lead Rapporteur)**
- Daily debriefs with moderators and organizing teams to validate summaries
- Triangulation of participant feedback and presentation of materials

Keynote Speakers and Moderators

The opening sessions featured distinguished scholars, policymakers, and practitioners with decades of experience in natural resource governance and development policy:

- **Prof. Saa Dittoh** - Agricultural Economist, University for Development Studies (UDS); expert in smallholder systems and food security.
- **Dr. Bishop Akolgo** - Economist and governance specialist; former Executive Director, ISODEC.
- **Prof. Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai** - Political economist, University of Ghana; expert on state capture and resource politics.
- **Dr. Pascal Kaba** - Policy researcher, moderator for the Ghana - Mali thematic sessions.
- **Hedvig Lagercrantz & Dagmar Mithofer** - Humboldt University of Berlin, Department of Agricultural Economics.
- **Abraham Enam** - Senior Researcher and Policy Analyst, Istanbul University, Turkey.
- **Dr. Charles Abugre** - Executive Director, IDEAS.
- **Dr. Muez Ali** - Research and Policy Associate, Centre for Sustainable Future.
- **Charlotte Kpogli-Dzadey** - Lecturer-Department of Multidisciplinary Studies, Ho Technical University, Ghana.
- **Prof. Agyepomaa Gyeke-Dako** - Professor of Economics, University of Ghana.
- **Representatives of the EU Delegation, NDPC, and FCDO** participated as institutional partners.



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DAY ONE

14 October 2025

Resource Governance

OPENING SESSION

The conference began with a highly engaging and insightful opening session that set the tone to generate meaningful and actionable dialogue on the urgency of redefining resource governance in the face of climate and economic transitions and how Africa can equitably govern its extractive resources amid the global energy transition.



Day 1 set the strategic and policy tone for the conference through a welcome address, framing session, and keynote address emphasizing the links between resource governance, critical minerals, and climate justice. Two technical panels explored the political economy of resource governance and critical minerals in the context of climate transition, featuring four expert presentations and two moderators. An experience-sharing session complemented the discussions with practical field insights on natural resource governance.

Welcome Address -Sam Danse (ISODEC Executive Director)

Mr. Danse highlighted the dual reality of West Africa's resource wealth as both a *privilege and a risk*, stressing that governance quality determines whether extraction fosters inclusive development or entrenches inequality. He drew attention to the climate-extraction feedback loop, where mining drives environmental degradation and deepens social divides. Citing alarming statistics on Africa's declining agricultural productivity and rising adaptation costs, he urged for politically feasible, socially just, and environmentally sound solutions. The address framed the conference as a platform for designing actionable governance frameworks-emphasizing community participation, gender inclusion, and climate resilience as pillars of equitable extraction.



Conference Framing -Dr. Charles Abugre (IDEAS)

Dr. Abugre contextualized the dialogue within the structural inequalities of extraction economies, arguing that macroeconomic gains from mining have failed to translate into equitable development. He diagnosed Africa's extractive model as one that perpetuates elite accumulation, weak sovereignty, and external dependency-legacies of neoliberal reforms. Introducing the themes of sovereignty and critical minerals, he called for African control over value chains and long-term planning rooted in research, technology, and industrial policy. His analysis underscored that critical minerals are strategic assets, not mere commodities, and should anchor inclusive, innovation-driven growth.

Keynote Address -Dr. Audrey Smock Amoah (NDPC)

Dr. Amoah reinforced the paradox of Africa's resource abundance amid poverty, emphasizing that only a fraction of mining revenues benefits local communities. She linked governance failures and environmental degradation to deepening inequality and climate vulnerability, citing Ghana's polluted River Pra as emblematic of extractive injustice. She called for policy coherence between national and local governance, equitable carbon finance mechanisms, and regional collaboration under Agenda 2063. The keynote highlighted the urgency of value addition, local content, and institutional accountability to transform extraction into human development gains. She aligned the conference outcomes with Ghana's forthcoming National Development Policy Framework (2026 - 2029), promoting jobs, resilience, and shared prosperity.

Collectively, the session established that equitable extraction demands structural reforms-anchored in transparency, sovereignty, community empowerment, and climate-compatible governance. It called for a paradigm shift from extractive dependence to resource-based transformation, positioning Africa not as a raw material supplier but as a co-creator in the global green transition.



Interactive Session and Reflections:

Discussions emphasized the need to bridge research and policy, differentiate artisanal mining from destructive galamsey, and strengthen community inclusion and accountability. Comparative lessons from Nigeria's *Host Community Development Trusts* highlighted pathways for reform.

Key Recommendations:

- Institutionalize research - policy linkages to integrate academic findings into governance processes.
- Develop equitable benefit-sharing frameworks inspired by regional best practices.
- Promote sustainable livelihood alternatives and engage traditional leaders in environmental governance.
- Quantify economic trade-offs to inform data-driven advocacy and policymaking.

Conference Session on Gold Extraction in Sudan and Governance Reflections

The session on “*Gold Extraction in Sudan: Unequal, Unsustainable, and Destructive*” offered a deep political economy analysis of Sudan's gold industry and its regional implications. Discussions revealed a triple-layered production system: artisanal mining, tailings reprocessing, and concession-based industrial mining-dominated by military, political, and mercantile elites. Artisanal mining, though widespread, remains weakly regulated and environmentally hazardous, while elite-controlled tailing operations, especially those linked to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), function outside governance structures, exploiting over 100,000 miners.

The tax asymmetry-18% on formal miners versus 30% on artisanal producers-reinforces inequality, incentivizes informalization, and sustains elite rent-seeking through UAE-linked trade networks. This transnational nexus embeds Sudan's extractive sector in informal economies stretching through Central and North Africa.

Broader discussions interrogated political will, governance inertia, and regional instability, with insights connecting Sudan's fragility to Nile geopolitics and external influence. Comparative cases from Burkina Faso and Ghana highlighted divergent pathways: Burkina Faso's mining fund and recovered illicit gold exemplify reform, while Ghana faces persistent revenue opacity and weak enforcement.

KEY POINTS

Political economy insights

Resource extraction in West and Central Africa expands revenue but fails to reduce inequality because weak governance, fiscal gaps, and militarized control distort outcomes. Regional discussions stressed the need for stronger regulation, spatial equity, and long-term planning to shift from extractive growth to real development.

Elite capture patterns

Military, political, and traditional elites dominate profits in gold, lithium, and other minerals, while communities absorb the risks and losses. Informal networks, opaque fiscal regimes, and weak enforcement keep revenues away from local stakeholders.

Environmental trade-offs

Mining zones face degraded land, polluted water, and shrinking livelihoods, especially where climate pressures push workers from agriculture into risky extraction. Artisanal and illegal mining intensify ecological damage due to poor regulation and unsafe tailing practices.

Gender impacts

Women face exclusion from compensation, decision-making, and livelihood support in mining communities. Their economic vulnerability increases as land, environmental assets, and local services deteriorate.

Key recommendations

Strengthen research-policy linkages, transparent fiscal systems, and equitable benefit-sharing to improve governance. Expand alternative livelihoods, engage traditional leaders responsibly, and adopt regional best practices to support community rights and environmental protection

Debates on royalty distribution exposed structural inequities: less than 10% reaching affected communities-and the marginalization of traditional leaders in decision-making. Participants called for inclusive governance, transparent fiscal regimes, and integration of chiefs and civil society in monitoring frameworks.

The dialogue concluded that Africa's extractive transformation hinges on ethical education, civic mobilization, and leadership accountability, requiring systemic reforms beyond technical fixes to realize equitable and sustainable resource governance.



RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

Panel 1 - The Political Economy of Resource Governance

The first Panel critically examined the structural and political dynamics shaping natural resource governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, emphasizing how macroeconomic frameworks, elite capture, and weak institutional systems perpetuate inequality despite extractive-led growth.

Dr. Bishop Akolgo's presentation revealed Ghana's "growth without development" paradox, showing that extractive industries have limited employment generation, poor local linkages, and high financial leakages dominated by elite interests. His data-driven analysis called for progressive fiscal reforms, spatial equity, and stronger regulation of illicit financial flows to ensure redistributive justice.

Mohamed Salah Abdelrahman's paper on Sudan's gold economy exposed how decentralized, militarized mining systems sustain conflict and exploitation. He demonstrated that artisanal miners-comprising 13% of the population bear economic and environmental costs, while military and foreign actors control profits. His analysis underscored the link between resource militarization, governance fragility, and regional insecurity.

The plenary discussions reinforced key regional concerns: policy incoherence, elite capture, external dependency, and weak community benefit-sharing frameworks. Participants emphasized the need for continental policy harmonization under Agenda 2063, equitable fiscal mechanisms, and civic empowerment to reclaim African agency in global extractive governance.

The session emphasized and highlighted that resource extraction deepens inequality when governance and fiscal systems privilege elites, weak industrial



linkages and gender inequities hinder inclusive growth, and transparency, regional cooperation, and long-term planning are essential for equitable and sustainable resource governance.

Experience Sharing, Panel 2, and Interactive Session

Experience Sharing:

Mr. Richard A. J. Poku of *Livelihood and Environment Ghana (LEG)* delivered a compelling field-based account from Kenyasi, highlighting over two decades of advocacy for environmental justice and community rights in mining zones. His narrative revealed persistent structural inequalities: unfair compensation systems, weak legal enforcement, gender exclusion, and elite capture by traditional authorities. LEG's evidence-based research across seven mining regions documented severe environmental degradation, livelihood loss, and human rights abuses, underscoring the urgent need for governance reform and equitable compensation frameworks.

Panel 2 - Critical Minerals, Climate Justice, and the Just Transition:

The panel analyzed how Africa's growing role in global mineral supply chains intersects with climate transitions and socio-economic inequality.

Lagercrantz and Mithöfer (Humboldt University) presented data on the *cocoa - gold nexus* in Western North Ghana, showing how economic decline in cocoa and climate stress drive labor shifts into illegal mining, deepening environmental degradation and income volatility. They called for institutional reform, alternative livelihoods, and equitable land access.

Abraham Ename Minko (Istanbul University) examined *lithium extraction and inequality in Mali*, revealing governance gaps, displacement, and elite capture in critical mineral economies. He advocated for customary land recognition, transparent benefit-sharing, and community participation to achieve just transitions.





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DAY TWO

15 October 2025

Subnational Governance and Local Communities

SUBNATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Day 2 of the conference focused on **subnational resource governance**, examining the interaction between **traditional authority, local institutions, and community participation** in achieving equitable and sustainable extractive governance. The panel presentations and discussions critically assessed how power, accountability, and inclusion shape governance outcomes at the local level.

Panel Highlights:

Three technical papers were presented:

1. *Chiefs and ASM Governance in Ghana* (Agbesinyale) - explored the enduring authority of chiefs in land and mining governance, advocating for hybrid governance models that integrate traditional and State systems.
2. *Governing the Shift: Lessons from Subnational Climate Policy for a Just Transition* (Akinjiola) - drew on Nigerian case studies to demonstrate how localized climate policies can bridge awareness gaps and foster inclusive energy transition planning.
3. *Bridging the Gap in Community Development Agreements (CDAs)* (Egwim *et al.*) - identified systemic weaknesses in the transparency and enforcement of CDAs, calling for documentation, monitoring, and public disclosure mechanisms.



Analytical Insights and Key Findings:

Discussions revealed that elite capture and weak accountability undermine equitable development at the subnational level. Chiefs, as custodians of land, offer continuity and legitimacy in governance, yet are often excluded from licensing processes. Participants recommended formalizing their role in hybrid models to strengthen trust and reduce disputes.

CDAs were criticized for failing to improve livelihoods due to data opacity, exclusion of small-scale miners, and limited oversight. Participants emphasized community-led monitoring and institutional transparency. Additionally, climate literacy gaps persist in mining areas, constraining adaptation and policy participation.

Q&A Highlights:

Two notable insights emerged:

- Involving chiefs in licensing and land allocation ensures social legitimacy and conflict prevention, reinforcing multi-level accountability.
- Liberia's progress in mineral governance demonstrates that political will and adherence to EITI principles are decisive in achieving transparency and reform.

Day 2 underscored that inclusive, accountable, and hybrid governance, anchored in traditional legitimacy, civil society engagement, and local ownership, is central to achieving equity in Africa's extractive and climate transition agendas.

Book Presentations and Thematic Discussions

Book Presentations: Elite Capture and Resource Governance

Two books were presented under the moderation of Prof. Abdulai Gafaru (UGBS):

1. *State Capture in the Militarized Fight against Illegal Small-scale Gold Mining in Ghana* - Jasper Ayelazuno & Maxwell Aziabah
2. *Extractive Industry Indigenisation in Zimbabwe* - Kennedy Maduna

The discussions revealed that elite capture, not regime type, is the defining constraint in resource governance across Ghana and Zimbabwe. Both democracies and authoritarian systems exhibit similar patterns of institutional co-optation, corruption, and inequality. Policies framed as nationalist or indigenisation efforts often reinforce elite interests and reproduce exclusionary power relations.

Key Q&A Insights:

- (Ghana) Militarised anti-mining interventions fail because they target miners rather than the elite financiers controlling operations.
- (Zimbabwe) Resource nationalism without governance reform reproduces rent-seeking and weakens State legitimacy.

Strategies for Addressing Illegal Mining and Elite Capture in Ghana

Participants identified a pervasive “shadow State” protecting politically connected mining actors. Military interventions were criticized as **ineffective and inequitable**, criminalizing poor miners while shielding elites.

Key Recommendations:

- Dismantle elite patronage networks through top-level accountability.
- Formalize artisanal miners into cooperatives for regulation, taxation, and data accuracy.
- Regulate fuel supply chains to disrupt illegal operations.
- Engage traditional authorities and youth in enforcement and monitoring.

Environmental Impacts and Policy Responses

Illegal mechanized mining was identified as the main cause of Ghana's ecological and public health crisis, contaminating water bodies with mercury and heavy metals.

Analytical Insight:

Sustainable reform must distinguish between subsistence artisanal mining and capital-intensive illegal mining. Community-based resistance and formalization efforts are key to achieving environmental justice and livelihood protection.

Government Efforts and Challenges

While current administration efforts to investigate illegal mining were acknowledged, selective enforcement, elite impunity, and weak follow-through persist.

Strategic Lessons:

- Institutional reform and transparent case tracking are critical.
- Strengthen monitoring of machinery imports and fuel supplies.
- Ensure consistent civil society oversight and political commitment.

Zimbabwe's Resource Nationalism and Governance Lessons

Zimbabwe's indigenisation and land reform policies, though aimed at economic sovereignty, were undermined by elite capture, capital flight, and weak institutional capacity. Sanctions further limited access to global finance, entrenching dependency.



Analytical Takeaway:

Resource nationalism without accountability and governance integrity cannot deliver inclusive development. Effective frameworks must manage elite influence and ensure equitable benefit sharing.

Governance Reflections and Strategic Lessons

Both Ghana and Zimbabwe illustrate that elite bargain, not regime type, shape governance outcomes. Structural reform demands confronting entrenched rent-seeking and promoting inclusive participation by youth, civil society, and artisanal miners.

Continuous monitoring, transparency, and advocacy are essential to prevent renewed State capture and ecological decline.

Panel 4: Transparency and Accountability in Resource Governance

Mineral Governance and Equity

Despite Africa's vast mineral wealth, **local benefits remain minimal** due to poor transparency and elite dominance. Participants cited the absence of model mining towns and persistent underdevelopment in host communities.

Key Q&A Insights:

- Embedding mining governance in political manifestos ensures policy continuity.
- Civil society unity is vital for sustained **accountability and enforcement**.

Post-Conflict Governance in Liberia

Liberia's reform under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, anchored on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), demonstrated how political will, institutional reform, and donor alignment can rebuild governance and investor confidence.

Lesson: Sustained transparency drives **citizen empowerment and equitable benefit sharing** in post-conflict contexts.

Indigenous Private Sector and FDI Challenges

African mining remains dominated by foreign capital, with weak domestic private sector participation. This dependency constrains economic sovereignty and inclusive growth.

Policy Implication:

Building indigenous capacity requires integrated reforms in finance, governance, and industrial policy.

Civil Society, Media, and Accountability

CSOs and media were identified as critical accountability actors, but credibility gaps persist. Collaboration, advocacy, and formalization of artisanal miners were proposed to strengthen local governance and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Rethinking Africa's Resource Dependency

Participants urged a paradigm shift from extraction-led development to diversified, sustainable economies based on agriculture, fisheries, and biodiversity. Transparency must be paired with justice, inclusion, and environmental stewardship to break cycles of dependency.

Overall Analytical Conclusion:

The deliberations converged on the need for elite accountability, institutional reform, community empowerment, and environmental justice as pillars of equitable resource governance in Africa. Transparency, political will, and inclusive participation remain the defining determinants of sustainable development in extractive economies.

KEY POINTS

Chiefs and land governance

Chiefs hold long-standing authority over land and play a central role in legitimizing mining activities, yet they are often sidelined in licensing processes. Bringing them formally into hybrid governance models strengthens accountability, reduces conflict, and ensures that decisions reflect local norms and expectations.

Transparency issues

Elite capture and limited disclosure of mining information continue to undermine justice and shared benefits at the subnational level. Weak oversight and inconsistent enforcement create space for corruption, selective accountability, and community distrust in both State and corporate actors.

Climate policy lessons

Local climate policies can help communities engage in the energy transition when they bridge awareness gaps and center local experiences. Failure to build climate literacy in mining areas limits participation, weakens adaptation efforts, and disconnects national transition goals from community realities.

Liberia example

Liberia's mineral governance shows how political commitment and adherence to EITI principles can rebuild public confidence after years of conflict. Reforms led under Ellen Johnson Sirleaf highlight that transparency, steady institutional strengthening, and donor coordination can shift a sector toward equity and improved citizen engagement.

CDA weaknesses

Community Development Agreements remain ineffective because they lack transparency, consistent documentation, and independent monitoring. Their exclusion of small-scale miners and inconsistent enforcement prevents them from improving livelihoods or shaping fair development outcomes.

DAY THREE

16 October 2025

Gender, Poverty, Livelihoods, and Industrial Politics

GENDER, POVERTY, LIVELIHOODS, AND INDUSTRIAL POLITICS



Panel 5: Gender, Poverty, and Livelihoods

Moderated by Mrs. Charlotte Kpogli-Dzadey, the panel examined the intersection of gender, extraction, and livelihood systems. Presentations revealed that extractive economies perpetuate gendered inequalities through energy poverty, limited access to finance, exclusion from formalized mining, and exposure to occupational and environmental hazards.

- **Paper 1** (Fuko *et al.*) demonstrated that income and education shape fuel choices in mining communities, with women-headed households disproportionately dependent on unclean fuels. Policy options include gender-sensitive finance, tax reform, carbon credits, and clustered sensitization to promote equitable energy transition.
- **Paper 2** (Amadichukwu) highlighted structural inequalities and gender-based discrimination in West African critical mineral value chains, urging gender-transformative frameworks, inclusive access to resources, and multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms.
- **Paper 3** (Torvikey *et al.*) used the *Commons Theory* to analyze the Ada Songor salt conflict, revealing the erosion of communal rights under State-backed capitalist interventions and the emergence of women-led resistance movements advocating resource justice.

The panel concluded that gender exclusion entrenches poverty and called for transformative-not token-approaches to inclusion.

Panel 6: The Politics of Infrastructure and Industrial Development

Chaired by Prof. Agyepomaa Gyeke-Darko, this session linked extraction-driven infrastructure to industrialization, political power, and energy transition.

- **Paper 4** (Hamed) analyzed the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam's (GERD) regional political economy, underscoring water-energy-security trade-offs in the Horn of Africa and advocating data transparency, regional cooperation, and depoliticized energy governance.
- **Paper 5** (Asiama) proposed a new industrial policy

paradigm for Africa, anchored in sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation, to realign extractive growth with AfCFTA and climate goals.

Key insights emphasized the necessity of Africa's resource sovereignty, climate-conscious industrial planning, and policy coherence to overcome dependency and inequality.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

The ISODEC Board Chair concluded by stressing that equitable extraction is a moral and developmental imperative, not merely a technical exercise. She urged regional solidarity, gender-responsive governance, and participatory monitoring as pathways to transform Africa's natural wealth into inclusive and sustainable development.

KEY FINDINGS AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The conference generated evidence-based insights highlighting persistent governance, equity, and climate challenges in West Africa's extractive sector. Presentations, panel discussions, and case studies revealed systemic patterns that link resource exploitation to social inequalities, environmental degradation, and weak institutional accountability.

Major Findings

- 1. Unequal Benefit Sharing and Elite Capture:**
Across Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, participants noted that less than 10% of mining revenues reach host communities (NRGI, 2023). Fiscal decentralization mechanisms remain opaque, with local governments lacking control over resource royalties.
- 2. Weak Community Consultation and Social License Deficits:**
Civil society representatives from Burkina Faso and Liberia observed that Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) often occur post-licensing, sidelining community voices. This fuels mistrust and recurrent land disputes, undermining project legitimacy.
- 3. Gendered Impacts and Exclusion:**
Data presented by WIMOWA (Women in Mining, West Africa) showed women constitute under 15% of formal mining jobs and are disproportionately exposed to unsafe, informal labor conditions. Climate-induced livelihood loss further deepens gender poverty traps.
- 4. Climate Vulnerability of Mining Communities:**
Evidence from UNEP and IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report highlighted increasing droughts, water contamination, and biodiversity loss around mining belts. Artisanal miners face intensified livelihood insecurity due to erratic rainfall and degraded ecosystems.
- 5. Regulatory Gaps and Contract Opacity:**
Experts cited inconsistent enforcement of EITI standards and limited disclosure of beneficial ownership data. Participants underscored the fiscal risks posed by stabilization clauses that lock countries into unfavorable tax regimes.
- 6. Limited Integration of Climate and Energy Transition Planning:**
Policy analysts from Ghana and Senegal noted that national mining laws remain misaligned with **Paris Agreement** and **Africa Mining Vision (AMV)** principles, lacking climate-aligned decommissioning and land reclamation strategies.
- 7. Civil Society as Accountability Bridge:**
Case studies presented by IDEAs Network demonstrated that local CSO-led monitoring frameworks improve compliance and public trust, but require institutionalized funding and legal protection.

Cross-Cutting Themes

- Persistent structural inequality in revenue distribution and access to mining benefits.
- Gender and climate justice gaps across policy, practice, and participation.
- Fragmented governance and weak coordination between ministries and traditional authorities.
- Environmental and fiscal risks due to poor contract transparency and lack of decommissioning plans.
- Community disempowerment driven by weak consultation mechanisms and top-down decision-making.

Strategic Messages for Policymakers

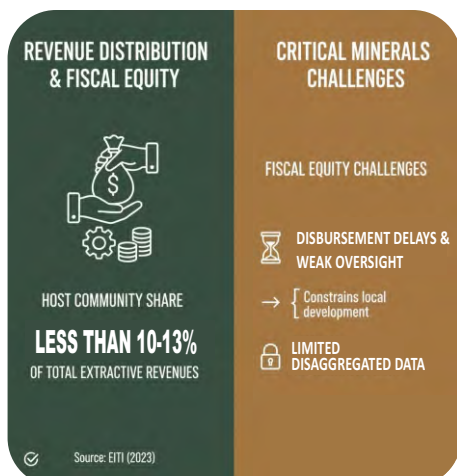
1. Reframe extractive governance around equity, transparency, and climate resilience.
2. Institutionalize Community Development Agreements (CDAs) with legally binding revenue-sharing mechanisms.
3. Mainstream gender and climate equity in all extractive sector policies and licensing frameworks.
4. Mandate public disclosure of contracts and beneficial ownership to deter corruption and fiscal leakages.
5. Align national resource policies with Paris Agreement, AMV, and AfCFTA commitments.
6. Support CSO - government partnerships for community monitoring, grievance redress, and transparency.
7. Establish climate-aligned mine closure and land reclamation frameworks by 2026.
8. Promote regional policy harmonization to manage cross-border mineral trade and environmental risks.

Suggested Visual

Thematic Issue	Affected Groups	Severity (1 - 5)	Policy Response Needed
Unequal benefit sharing	Local communities, youth	5	Fiscal decentralization, CDA enforcement
Gender exclusion	Women in ASM, rural poor	4	Gender quotas, financing for women miners
Climate vulnerability	Artisanal miners, farmers	5	Climate adaptation funds, mine restoration
Regulatory opacity	CSOs, media, citizens	4	Open contracting, EITI compliance
Weak participation	Chiefs, local councils	3	Hybrid governance, inclusive consultations

DATA AND EVIDENCE PRESENTED

The three-day *Equity in Extraction* Conference featured empirical evidence and case data drawn from government reports, international databases, academic research, and field-based CSO monitoring. The data illuminated structural inequalities, environmental degradation, and governance deficits within West Africa's extractive sector - especially in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso.



Summary of Key Evidence

1. Revenue Distribution and Fiscal Equity

- According to the EITI (2023), host communities across Ghana and Nigeria receive less than 10 - 13% of total extractive revenues.
- Disbursement delays and weak oversight of Mineral Development Funds have constrained local-level development impacts.
- Caveat: Disaggregated district-level data remain inconsistent and limited in coverage.



2. Employment and Gender Gaps in Mining

- WIMOWA (2024) reported that women constitute only 12 - 15% of formal mining employment, largely confined to lower-paid, non-technical roles.
- Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) employs an estimated 6 - 8 million people regionally, with 40 - 45% female participation, primarily informal and unregulated.



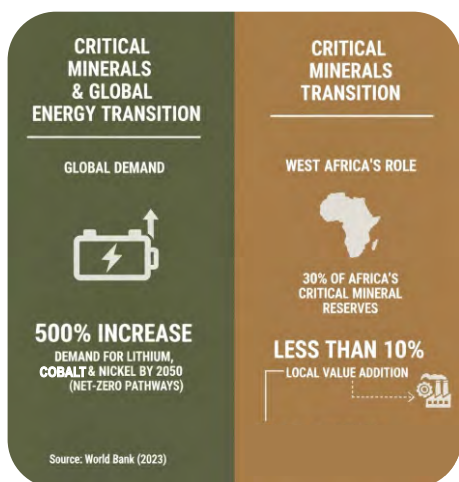
3. Environmental and Climate Impacts

- UNEP (2023) and IPCC AR6 regional data show that mining activities contribute to 8 - 11% of total national GHG emissions in resource-dependent economies like Ghana and Nigeria.
- Between 2010 - 2023, an estimated 135,000 hectares of forest were cleared for surface mining in Ghana (EPA Ghana, 2024).
- Caveat: Emissions data exclude artisanal operations, which remain unrecorded in national inventories.



4. Community Displacement and Livelihood Loss

- Case evidence from ISODEC and IDEAs Network (2024) documented over 15,000 displaced households in mining zones across Northern Ghana and Zamfara State, Nigeria.
- Compensation frameworks remain inconsistent, and less than 25% of displaced households report receiving full restitution.



5. Critical Minerals and Global Energy Transition

- World Bank (2023) projects a 500% increase in demand for lithium, cobalt, and nickel by 2050 under net-zero pathways.
- West Africa holds approximately 30% of Africa's critical mineral reserves, but less than 10% of value addition occurs locally.



6. Governance and Transparency Indicators

- NRGi Resource Governance Index (2023) scores Ghana (68/100), Nigeria (54/100), and Burkina Faso (49/100) - reflecting moderate to weak governance.
- Persistent contract opacity and elite capture were cited as barriers to accountability.

Priority Data Indicators Table

Indicator	Value / Range	Source	Geographic Scope	Year	Caveat / Notes
Revenue share to host communities	10 - 13%	EITI	Ghana, Nigeria	2023	Delayed disbursements; incomplete subnational data
Female employment in mining	12 - 15% (formal); 40 - 45% (ASM)	WIMOWA	West Africa	2024	Informal sector undercounted
ASM workforce	6 - 8 million	ILO / NRG	Regional	2023	No harmonized regional data
Forest area cleared by mining	135,000 ha	EPA Ghana	Ghana	2010 - 2023	Based on Landsat imagery
Mining-related GHG emissions	8 - 11% of national total	UNEP / IPCC	Ghana, Nigeria	2023	Excludes informal ASM
Households displaced by mining	~15,000	ISODEC / IDEAs	Ghana, Nigeria	2024	Limited independent verification
Critical mineral demand growth	500% by 2050	World Bank	Global / Africa	2023	Scenario-dependent projections
Resource Governance Index	49 - 68 / 100	NRGI	Ghana, Nigeria, Burkina Faso	2023	Comparative governance metric

OBSERVATIONS

- Data highlight persistent fiscal asymmetry between national and local benefits despite extractive growth.
- Evidence confirms gendered and ecological inequities - women and rural communities remain most exposed to climate and livelihood risks.
- Environmental data gaps impede integration of climate targets into mining regulation.
- The need for harmonized regional datasets and open-access data platforms (aligned with EITI+Climate and AfCFTA frameworks) emerged as a shared recommendation.

CASE STUDIES AND COUNTRY VIGNETTES

The conference showcased several country-based experiences highlighting both successful and challenging aspects of equity, gender inclusion, and climate-sensitive resource governance in West Africa. The vignettes below distill key lessons, analytical insights, and replicable practices across the region.

Ghana: The Ada Songor Salt Commons and the Struggle for Livelihoods

What Happened:

The Ada Songor Lagoon in Ghana has historically served as a communal livelihood hub for over 30,000 women engaged in artisanal salt harvesting. However, the State-backed concession to a private company (Electrochem Ghana Ltd) disrupted the traditional *commons* system, displacing women's cooperatives and igniting community resistance.

Why It Matters:

The case underscores tensions between State-driven industrialization and customary resource rights, particularly for women. It illustrates how privatization can erode local ownership, deepen gender inequality, and threaten livelihoods in resource-dependent communities.

Lessons Learned:

- Community resource governance models can be undermined when concessions ignore *customary tenure* and gendered labor patterns.
- Legal reforms must integrate commons-based frameworks into national mining and land laws.
- Women's associations such as the *Ada Songor Salt Women Association* demonstrate the power of organized local resistance for social accountability.

Quote:

“Salt is all we know - when access is taken away, our survival is taken too.” [Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey, Presenter, University of Ghana]

Replicability:

The *commons model* remains a viable pathway for equitable natural resource governance if formally recognized under local land-use and environmental frameworks.

Nigeria: Gendered Impacts of Energy Poverty in Mining Communities

What Happened:

Research presented by Maud Gracious Fuko and colleagues revealed sharp gender disparities in access to clean cooking energy in Nigerian mining communities. Female-headed households relied predominantly on biomass due to lower income and education levels, while men were more likely to use LPG or kerosene.

Why It Matters:

This case highlights how energy poverty reinforces gender inequality, environmental degradation, and health risks. It also demonstrates the interlinkages between extractive economies, energy transition, and gender justice.

Lessons Learned:

- Targeted financial instruments (gendered credit schemes, LPG subsidies) can bridge the clean energy access gap.
- Clustered community sensitization and tax incentives can promote equitable energy transition.
- Linking carbon credits to local women's fuel innovation (e.g., ethanol stoves) can ensure sustainability.

Quote:

“Cleaner fuel is not just a climate issue - it is a matter of dignity and opportunity for rural women.” [Patience Ohegwu Ogbode, Researcher, University of Abuja]

Replicability:

The framework is replicable in other mining zones through gender-responsive energy policies that integrate carbon finance and inclusive energy access mechanisms.

Burkina Faso: Resource Sovereignty and Industrial Self-Determination

What Happened:

Burkina Faso's 2024 mining code established a sovereign resource management model, granting 45% ownership of mining assets to the government and private citizens. The government initiated domestic infrastructure for mineral processing and trained national technicians abroad (in Turkey, China, and Russia).

Why It Matters:

The initiative reflects an emerging model of resource sovereignty that prioritizes national value addition, citizen ownership, and industrial transformation - positioning Burkina Faso as a reform leader in West Africa's extractive landscape

Lessons Learned:

- Public-private ownership models enhance fiscal retention and curb capital flight.
- Building local industrial capacity is critical for translating mineral wealth into inclusive development.
- Political will and technical partnerships are prerequisites for structural reform.

Quote:

“We must mine for development, not for dependency.” [Conference Participant, Panel 6]

Replicability:

This model offers a replicable pathway for other resource-rich States seeking to align extractive governance with industrial policy and climate-smart infrastructure development.

Sierra Leone: Governance Gaps and Community Accountability**What Happened:**

Civil society monitors presented evidence from Sierra Leone's diamond fields where opaque licensing, environmental degradation, and revenue mismanagement persist despite EITI compliance.

Why It Matters:

This case exemplifies persistent governance deficits in transparency and social accountability across mineral economies. It shows that compliance alone is insufficient without participatory oversight.

Lessons Learned:

- Community Development Agreements (CDAs) must be transparent, legally enforceable, and monitored through citizen platforms.
- Hybrid governance - involving chiefs, local councils, and women's networks - enhances legitimacy.

Quote:

“Transparency without accountability is just paperwork.” [CSO Representative, Sierra Leone Network for the Extractive Sector (SLENEX)]

Replicability:

Can be adopted through CDA disclosure reforms and integration of citizen scorecards under national EITI frameworks.

Synthesis of Lessons Across Cases

Across countries, four analytical patterns emerged:

1. Power asymmetries persist between corporations, States, and local communities.
2. Gender inequities and livelihood vulnerabilities are central to extractive impacts.
3. Institutional capacity and policy coherence determine whether reforms succeed.
4. Community agency - through organized resistance or social accountability - remains the strongest determinant of equity in extraction.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONABLE COMMITMENTS

The conference concluded with a structured roadmap for implementing equitable, gender-responsive, and climate-aligned governance reforms in Africa's extractive sector. Recommendations were organized by stakeholder groups and aligned with SMART principles - *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound* - to ensure accountability and monitoring.

National Governments

Action Statement: Institutionalize *hybrid governance frameworks* that integrate traditional authorities, women leaders, and local councils in land and mining decisions.

- Lead Actors: Ministries of Lands, Mines & Energy; Houses of Chiefs; Local Government Authorities.
- Timeline: *Immediate (0 - 12 months)* - policy drafting; *Medium (1 - 3 years)* - district-level pilots.
- Indicators: Number of hybrid governance structures established; % of women/chiefs represented in mining boards.
- Resources: Domestic budgets and technical support from UNDP, AfDB.
- Rationale: Enhances legitimacy, reduces land conflict, and promotes inclusive decision-making.

Regional Bodies (ECOWAS & African Union)

Action Statement: Harmonize *extractive governance standards* and enforce regional frameworks on transparency, gender equality, and climate adaptation (aligned with the African Mining Vision).

- Lead Actors: ECOWAS Directorate for Energy & Mining, AU Commission, AMDC.
- Timeline: *Medium-term (1 - 3 years)* - regional review and policy harmonization.
- Indicators: Regional policy framework adopted; number of States aligned.
- Resources: ECOWAS Trust Fund; AU Climate Adaptation Facility.
- Rationale: Strengthens cross-border coordination and mitigates fiscal and ecological risks.

Industry Operators and Investors

Action Statement: Mandate *transparent Community Development Agreements (CDAs)* with participatory monitoring and local benefit-sharing clauses.

- Lead Actors: Extractive companies, Chambers of Mines, Industry Associations.
- Timeline: *Immediate (0 - 12 months)* - CDA disclosure; *Medium (1 - 3 years)* - monitoring integration.
- Indicators: % of companies publishing CDAs; independent verification reports produced annually.
- Resources: CSR budgets, ESG-linked financing.
- Rationale: Improves trust, compliance, and social license to operate.

Financiers and Development Partners

Action Statement: Establish *gender-responsive and climate-aligned financing* for clean energy access, women's cooperatives, and green infrastructure in resource zones.

- Lead Actors: World Bank, AfDB, IFAD, Climate Investment Funds.
- Timeline: *Medium-term (1 - 3 years)* - pilot projects; *Long-term (3+ years)* - scale-up through blended finance.
- Indicators: Number of gendered finance facilities launched; volume of climate finance deployed.
- Resources: Green Climate Fund, SDG financing frameworks.
- Rationale: Addresses gendered energy poverty and builds resilience in mining-affected communities.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Action Statement: Strengthen *citizen oversight* of extractive revenues through social accountability platforms, data transparency, and media engagement.

- Lead Actors: ISODEC, IDEAs Network, WACSO, Media Foundations.
- Timeline: *Immediate (0 - 12 months)* - citizen training; *Medium (1 - 3 years)* - advocacy campaigns.
- Indicators: Number of CSO-led budget tracking reports; frequency of policy dialogues with government.
- Resources: Donor-funded governance grants; participatory data platforms.
- Rationale: Ensures accountability and community participation in resource management.

Research and Academia

Action Statement: Develop *evidence-based policy studies* linking extractives, climate vulnerability, and gender equity; create open-access data repositories for regional use.

- Lead Actors: Universities, Policy Institutes, NRI, UNDP Africa Hub.
- Timeline: *Medium (1 - 3 years)* - publication and dissemination; *Long-term (3+ years)* - integration into academic curricula.
- Indicators: Number of peer-reviewed studies; policy briefs cited in national reforms.
- Resources: Research endowments; data-sharing partnerships with EITI and AMV.
- Rationale: Strengthens the knowledge base for policy innovation and monitoring.

Donors and International Partners

Action Statement: Support *multi-stakeholder platforms* and policy dialogues that advance the nexus of equity, extraction, and climate change.

- Lead Actors: Ford Foundation, EU Delegations, USAID, DFID, UN agencies.
- Timeline: *Immediate (0 - 12 months)* - funding alignment; *Medium (1 - 3 years)* - technical assistance deployment.
- Indicators: Number of supported national dialogues; percentage of donor portfolios aligned with climate-equitable governance.
- Resources: Multi-Donor Trust Funds and thematic grants.
- Rationale: Encourages coherence across global and regional initiatives.

Monitoring and Next Steps

- Quarterly progress reviews coordinated by ISODEC and IDEAs Network (starting Q1 2026).
- Annual accountability scorecards to track gender inclusion, community benefit flows, and environmental compliance.

Conference follow-up platform to document and share policy updates, to be hosted by IDEAs Network and disseminated through ECOWAS channels.

ROADMAP AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Purpose

The roadmap provides a structured path for implementing the conference's resolutions on equity, accountability, gender, and climate alignment in resource extraction. It defines key milestones, responsible entities, and a monitoring framework designed to guide coordination and learning among governments, CSOs, private sector, and development partners. The framework also aligns with ISODEC's BUILD Grant objectives on governance, inclusion, and resilience in extractive economies.

Implementation Roadmap and Milestones

Phase & Timeline	Key Milestones / Deliverables	Lead & Supporting Entities	Expected Outputs
Phase 1: Immediate (0 - 12 months)	- Establish Conference Follow-up Steering Committee - Develop national CDA transparency guidelines - Initiate gender and climate equity advocacy in mining policies	ISODEC, IDEAs Network, Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources, ECOWAS Gender Directorate	Steering Committee operational; CDA guidelines drafted; advocacy campaigns launched
Phase 2: Medium Term (1 - 3 years)	- Pilot hybrid governance frameworks in 3 - 5 mining districts - Implement gender-responsive and climate-aligned financing mechanisms - Create regional data repository on extractive governance	National Governments, AfDB, UNDP, CSOs, Academia	Pilots tested; women's financing facilities active; regional data hub functional
Phase 3: Long Term (3+ years)	- Institutionalize hybrid land and resource governance in national policy - Scale community monitoring and public scorecards - Review progress and hold second "Equity in Extraction" conference	AU, ECOWAS, ISODEC, IDEAs Network, Academia	Integrated national frameworks; annual public reporting; updated regional strategy

Governance and Coordination Structure

Steering Committee (Strategic Oversight):

- Composition: ISODEC (Chair), IDEAs Network (Co-chair), representatives from ECOWAS, Ministries of Lands/Energy, CSOs, private sector, academia, and donor observers.
- Function: Provide policy direction, approve workplans, oversee M&E, and mobilize partnerships.
- Frequency: Biannual strategy meetings and quarterly virtual reviews.

Secretariat (Operational Backbone):

- Host: ISODEC, under the Governance and Resource Justice Programme.
- Functions: Day-to-day coordination, documentation, knowledge sharing, financial tracking, and stakeholder engagement.
- Output: Quarterly progress briefs, annual conference reports, and digital dashboard updates.

Thematic Working Groups:

- *Gender and Inclusion, Transparency and Accountability, Climate and Energy Transition, and Community Empowerment.*
- Each co-led by CSO and research partners for evidence-informed implementation.

Monitoring Dashboard and Key Indicators

The monitoring dashboard provides a simplified, outcome-oriented tracking tool for partners and donors. It aligns with ISODEC's BUILD Grant results framework and emphasizes gender, governance, and climate justice metrics.

Indicator	Definition / Metric	Frequency	Responsible Entity
CDA Transparency Index	% of companies publicly disclosing CDAs and implementation reports	Annual	ISODEC, IDEAs Network, EITI Chapters
Gender Representation Rate	% of women in local mining governance committees and CDA monitoring teams	Biannual	National Gender Ministries, CSOs
Climate-Responsive Planning Adoption	# of mining districts integrating climate resilience in development plans	Annual	Local Governments, UNDP, EPA
Community Benefit Utilization Rate	% of extractive revenue allocated to local development priorities	Annual	Ministry of Finance, CSOs
Regional Policy Alignment Score	# of ECOWAS/AU member states adopting harmonized governance standards	Biennial	ECOWAS Secretariat, AU-AMDC

MONITORING TOOLS

- Digital dashboard hosted by ISODEC Secretariat.
- Participatory monitoring through CSOs and local community scorecards.
- Annual progress synthesis report shared with ECOWAS and AU.

Resource and Partnership Framework

Implementation will draw on BUILD Grant resources, supplemented by partnerships with ECOWAS, AfDB, and bilateral donors. ISODEC will coordinate technical assistance through IDEAs Network and engage the media for accountability communication.

Key Deliverables and Review Mechanism

- Q1 2026: Steering Committee and Secretariat established.
- Q4 2026: First annual “Equity in Extraction Scorecard” published.
- 2027: Mid-term review and adjustment of roadmap priorities.
- 2028: Second Equity in Extraction Conference for regional stocktaking.

Summary

This roadmap operationalizes the conference commitments through time-bound, data-driven, and institutionally grounded actions. Its design ensures that ISODEC's BUILD Grant supports tangible progress in equity, gender inclusion, and transparency across extractive governance systems - linking evidence, advocacy, and accountability into a coherent monitoring ecosystem.

CONCLUSIONS AND CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Synthesis and Strategic Takeaways

The *Equity in Extraction Conference (2025)* concluded with a unified call to reframe natural resource governance through equity, accountability, and climate justice. Across three days of dialogue, participants reaffirmed that extractive-led growth remains unsustainable without robust institutions, inclusive participation, and gender-sensitive benefit-sharing frameworks. Evidence presented from Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone demonstrated persistent asymmetries in power, information, and revenue flows that entrench poverty and exacerbate environmental vulnerability.

Speakers emphasized that addressing the political economy of extraction, particularly elite capture, regulatory fragmentation, and opacity in contract regimes, remains central to realizing equitable outcomes. The deliberations further highlighted the strategic role of critical minerals in the energy transition, urging proactive regional planning to prevent a “green resource curse” scenario. The conference positioned climate-aligned governance as both a moral and developmental imperative. Participants called for an integrated policy agenda linking gender equity, environmental stewardship, and industrial transformation as pillars of sustainable extraction.

Political Appeal and Commitments

In their closing remarks, high-level representatives from ISODEC, IDEAs Network, ECOWAS, and the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources collectively pledged to translate dialogue into actionable reforms. The conference's communique affirmed three major political commitments:

- Transparency and Accountability: Accelerate adoption of open data frameworks and enforce

public disclosure of Community Development Agreements (CDAs) by 2026.

- Gender and Climate Justice: Mainstream gender-responsive and climate-aligned measures across extractive governance systems at national and regional levels.
- Regional Cooperation: Advance ECOWAS-AU harmonization of mineral policies under the African Mining Vision to promote fair trade, domestic value addition, and fiscal justice.

Next Steps and Follow-Up Mechanisms

To sustain momentum and institutionalize outcomes, participants endorsed the following next steps and indicative timelines:

Action	Lead/Supporting Entities	Timeline
Publish full conference proceedings and executive summary report	ISODEC Secretariat, IDEAs Network	Q1 2026
Establish thematic working groups (Gender & Inclusion; Transparency & Accountability; Climate & Energy Transition)	Steering Committee under ISODEC	Q2 2026
Launch the “Equity in Extraction Dashboard” and data repository	ISODEC & ECOWAS Policy Observatory	Q4 2026
Organize mid-term policy review workshop	Regional Partners & CSOs	2027
Convene Second Equity in Extraction Conference	ISODEC, IDEAs, AU/ECOWAS	2028

These actions will anchor the conference resolutions into measurable institutional processes and regional policy dialogues.

Research and Data Gaps

Participants identified several critical data gaps requiring urgent attention by researchers and development partners:

- Lack of disaggregated data on gendered employment patterns and local content participation in mining.
- Insufficient emissions accounting and environmental cost valuation within national extractive datasets.
- Limited publicly accessible CDA impact data for performance benchmarking.
- Need for cross-country comparative studies on critical minerals governance and community resilience in climate-vulnerable zones.

Academic and policy institutions were encouraged to align their research agendas with these priorities, in partnership with the ISODEC-IDEAs Secretariat and regional data platforms.

Closing Reflection

The closing reflection captured a collective realization: equity in extraction is not merely a governance aspiration - it is a precondition for Africa's sustainable and just transition. The conference closed with a reaffirmed commitment to convert knowledge into institutional change, policy coherence, and social accountability. As one delegate aptly stated:

“The fairness of Africa's green future depends on how we govern what lies beneath our soil today.”

Suggested Annexes

Overview and Purpose

The annexes are designed to provide technical documentation and traceability for the *Equity in Extraction Conference (2025)* proceedings. They serve as an evidence base, institutional memory, and accountability tool for follow-up actions under ISODEC's *BUILD* programme and allied regional initiatives. Collectively, they offer transparency, validation of findings, and a resource for continued learning and policy reference.

Recommended Annex Components

Annex	Description and Analytical Rationale	Key Content Elements
Annex 1: Full Programme and Session Agendas	Provides a chronological record of sessions and panel themes, enabling traceability of deliberations and thematic coverage. Useful for assessing agenda balance and inclusiveness.	Opening and keynote addresses, thematic sessions (Political Economy, Critical Minerals, Gender and Climate), workshops, and closing sessions with time allocations.
Annex 2: Participant List	Documents representation across stakeholder groups, ensuring diversity and multi-sectoral balance. Supports inclusion analysis for gender, geography, and institutional type.	Names, affiliations, designations, countries, and (where appropriate) contact details of all 160 participants (policy actors, CSOs, academia, media, industry, traditional leaders).
Annex 3: Speaker Profiles and Biographies	Enhances credibility and authorship traceability. Provides insights into the intellectual, professional, and sectoral expertise behind key presentations.	Short bios (100 - 150 words each) of keynote speakers, moderators, discussants, and panelists, including institutional affiliations and areas of specialization.
Annex 4: Presentations, Abstracts, and Recordings	Facilitates knowledge sharing and replication. Enables cross-referencing of empirical evidence and arguments used in presentations.	Slides, abstracts, and video links for each plenary and panel presentation (organized by session and topic).
Annex 5: Detailed Recommendation Tracking Table	Converts verbal commitments into actionable metrics. Enables ISODEC and partners to monitor progress on resolutions and follow-up actions.	SMART-tracking format (recommendation, lead actor, timeline, indicator, progress status, resource needs). To be updated quarterly.
Annex 6: Survey Results and Participant Feedback	Captures participant perceptions on conference relevance, structure, and outcomes. Supports adaptive learning for subsequent convenings.	Aggregated results from post-event survey (n=120 responses) on session quality, inclusivity, thematic relevance, and logistical satisfaction; includes qualitative quotes.
Annex 7: Media and Social Media Coverage Summary <i>(Optional but Recommended)</i>	Measures outreach, public visibility, and engagement with wider audiences beyond the conference venue.	Summary of press mentions, op-eds, TV/radio features, social media analytics (Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Facebook) - impressions, reach, and engagement rates.
Annex 8: Data Sources and References	Ensures methodological transparency and citation rigor across the report. Facilitates academic referencing and peer validation.	Full bibliographic details of all data sources, reports, and policy frameworks cited in the main report. Includes URLs and publication dates.

Source	Title / Indicator	Publisher / Year	URL / DOI
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)	2024 Progress Report and Country Data Sets	EITI International Secretariat, 2024	www.eiti.org
World Bank	<i>Resource Governance and Development Indicators (RGDI)</i>	World Bank, 2023	www.worldbank.org
African Development Bank (AfDB)	<i>African Natural Resource Management Policy Framework</i>	AfDB, 2022	www.afdb.org
Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI)	<i>Resource Governance Index (RGI)</i>	NRGI, 2023	www.resourcegovernance.org
UNDP & UNEP	<i>Africa Climate Change Outlook and Extractive Impacts</i>	UNDP/UNEP, 2023	www.undp.org
IPCC	<i>Sixth Assessment Report (Regional Chapter: Africa)</i>	IPCC, 2023	www.ipcc.ch
National Energy and Mineral Policies	<i>Mineral and Mining Policy Frameworks (Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone)</i>	Respective Ministries, 2022 - 2024	Government portals

IMPLEMENTATION AND ARCHIVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Lead Coordination:** ISODEC Secretariat and IDEAs Network Documentation Team
- **Format:** Digital PDF and interactive online repository (searchable and downloadable)
- **Frequency of Update:** Bi-annually (for recommendations and data annexes)
- **Accessibility:** Open access on ISODEC's and IDEAs' websites for public transparency and donor reporting
- **Archival Value:** Serves as a baseline for future *Equity in Extraction* conferences and related BUILD grant deliverables

Equity in Extraction Conference Communiqué Publications

<https://ghanaiantimes.com.gh/harness-critical-minerals-for-the-regions-development-isodec-urges-west-african-states/>

<https://businessweekghana.com/west-africa-leaders-urged-to-prioritize-equity-in-natural-resource-governance/>

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/ISODEC-urges-West-Africa-to-harness-rising-global-demand-for-critical-minerals-2012101>

<https://ghextractives.com/isodec-partners-demand-au-ecowas-develop-minerals-framework-within-2yrs/>

[West Africa CSOs demand fair share of critical mineral boom | News Ghana](#)



COMMUNIQUÉ

High-Level West Africa Conference on Equity in Extraction: Addressing Inequalities in Natural Resource Governance, Critical Mineral Resources and Climate Change

Preamble:

The equity in extraction: addressing inequalities in natural resource governance, critical mineral resources and climate change conference is the second of the series of such conference organised by Intergrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) and funded by Ford Foundation. This year conference was convened by the Integrated Social Development Centre in partnership with Ford Foundation, IDEAS and the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana deliberated discussion over 3 days. The conference was attended by leading researchers, policy makers, civil society actors, activists, and labor representatives from across Africa.

We, in the Civil Society Organizations, Community Leaders, Academia and Technical experts convened at the High-Level West Africa Conference on ***“Equity in Extraction: addressing inequalities in natural resource governance, critical minerals and climate change”*** between 14-16 October, 2025 at Alisa Hotel in Accra , reaffirm the sovereign rights of states to govern their natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations, and mindful of the urgent need for a just energy transition, climate change resilience, and sustainable development across the region:

Recognize

- That the rising global demand for critical minerals (cobalt, lithium, manganese, nickel and rear earth elements) essential to low-carbon technologies creates both opportunity and risk for West African States and communities;
- That long-standing inequalities in natural resource governance have produced uneven economic benefits, weakened environmental and social protection, exacerbated conflict and poverty, and eroded community trust; and
- That climate change increases vulnerability and interact with extractive activities, making integrated right-bases and climate-smart governance essential.

Adopt the following principles to guide each regionally and nationally

- Equity and intergenerational fairness: ensure communities; especially historically marginalized groups and communities, receive fair and sustainable benefits from extraction.
- Transparency and accountability: open information, public participation, and independent scrutiny across the extractive value chain.
- Rights- based governance: full respect for human rights, including Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for affected communities and the right to say NO to mining and meaningful safeguards for indigenous, rural women's and youth rights
- Environmental integrity and climate resilience: integrates rigorous environmental safeguards, restoration obligations and climate risk management into all stages of extraction.
- Regional cooperation and harmonization: strengthen collaboration across borders to manage shared resources, prevent illicit financial flows (IFFs) and maximize collective benefits.

- Value addition and local development: promote industrial policies that retain greater value within West Africa through local processing, skills development and technology transfer.
- Addressing Interlinked Inequality Drivers: Recognition that inequality in Africa's resource sectors stems from poverty, unequal terms of trade, price volatility, and governance failures calls for integrated policy responses and regional solidarity to negotiate fairer terms and resist exploitative models.
- The need to promote Resource Sovereignty with Inclusive Investment: The conference emphasized the need for clearer definitions and strategies around the question of resource sovereignty that balance external investment attraction with local empowerment and benefits.
- Strengthening State and Community Roles: It was broadly agreed that the state must assert stronger governance and regulatory oversight while enabling meaningful participation of local communities, youth, and women in resource decision-making processes.
- Ensuring Just Transition and Climate Justice: Participants urged governments and development partners to embed climate resilience and justice and social inclusion at the core of mineral extraction and energy transition policies and strategies.
- Reducing Marginalization: Reflecting on the rapid increase in demand for cobalt, lithium, nickel, and other critical minerals, discussions flagged environmental degradation risks and the importance of climate policies that ensure vulnerable populations are not further marginalized in the pursuit of renewable energy goals but rather investment in resilient, green economies that serve both people and planet.
- Enhancing Transparency and Accountability: The promotion of robust institutional frameworks for open governance remains critical to curb corruption, misuse of revenues, and reinforce socio-economic justice

Decisions and Calls to Action (Address to the Africa Union, ECOWAS and Member State Governments)

1. Regional Governance Framework and Legal Harmonization:
 - Call upon the Africa Union and ECOWAS to coordinate the development of the West Africa Minerals and Critical Elements Governance Framework that:
 - Harmonizes baseline standards for environmental and social impact assessment, licensing, monitoring, revenue transparency, artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) formalization, and conflict sensitive-approaches;
 - In consistent with the AU Agenda 2063, regional trade and investments objectives, and relevant international standards (including EITI, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and OECD responsible mineral supply chain guidance).
 - Timeline: ECOWAS and AU to present a draft framework for member consultations within 12 months and a final framework with 24 months.
2. National Mineral Strategies and Legislative Reform:
 - Urge Member States to update or adopt national mineral strategies that:
 - Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation planning;
 - Ensuring Just Transition and Climate Justice: Participants urged governments and

development partners to embed climate resilience and justice and social inclusion at the core of mineral extraction and energy transition policies and strategies.

- Reflecting on the rapid increase in demand for cobalt, lithium, nickel, and other critical minerals, discussions flagged environmental degradation risks and the importance of climate policies that ensure vulnerable populations are not further marginalized in the pursuit of renewable energy goals but rather investment in resilient, green economies that serve both people and planet.
- Set clear value-addition targets (refining, smelting, manufacturing);
- Define equitable fiscal regimes (including transparent revenue sharing with national governments and host communities), and establish stabilization and sovereign savings mechanisms to manage volatility;
- Incorporate ASM formalization pathways with social protection and enterprise support.
- Timeline: Member States to publish updated strategies or reform roadmaps within 12 months.

3. Transparency, Traceability and Illicit Flow Prevention:

- Request that ECOWAS, working with AU and partners, accelerate a regional traceability and chain-of-custody initiative for critical minerals, leveraging tools, harmonized documentation and regional customs cooperation to curb illicit trade.
- All Member States are urged to commit to enhanced extractive sector disclosure (join or strengthen EITI implementation where applicable), and to publish contracts, revenues, and environmental monitoring data.

4. Community Rights and Benefits Sharing and Grievance Mechanisms:

- Require that all extractive projects adopt legally enforceable community benefits agreements and ensure the value and spirit of FPIC.
- Establish accessible, independent grievance and remediation mechanisms at national and regional levels, with protection for complaints.
- Channel a defined share of extractive rents to locally managed development funds (focused on health, education, livelihoods diversification and health food systems, and climate resilience).

5. Environmental Protection, Rehabilitating and Climate-Smart Mining:

- Mandate robust environmental and social impact assessments (including cumulative and transboundary impacts) prior to licensing; require performance bonds, progressive rehabilitation plans and biodiversity sensitive siting.
- Integrate requirements for energy efficiency, low -carbon operations, water stewardship and climate-risk mitigation into mineral sector licenses and contracts.

6. Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM):

- Prioritize inclusive formalization of ASM: simplified licensing, access to finance and technical assistance, health and safety standards, and market access mechanisms that link responsible ASM to upstream supply chains
- Integrate gender-responsive programming to support women who participate in ASM

7. Local Content, Skills and Industrialization:
 - Adopt and implement local content policies that are realistic, time-bound and accompanied by capacity building, vocational training, technology transfer incentives and public procurement linkages to stimulate local value chains.
8. Finance, Investment and Partnership:
 - Invite the African Development Bank, regional development finance institutions, climate-funds and donor partners to scale concessional financing, risk guarantees and blended finance to support: local processing facilities, environmental remediation, ASM formalization, and Community Development Projects.
 - Encourage private sector actors and investors to adopt mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence consistent with international best practices.
9. Gender, Youth and Special Inclusion:
 - Integrate gender equality and youth employment targets across policies and projects, including quotas for training, employment and access to entrepreneurship support for marginalized groups.
10. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting:
 - Establish a West Africa Steering Committee on Equitable Mineral Governance (composed of representation from AU, ECOWAS, Member States, communities, CSOs, Industry and Technical partners to:
 - Oversee regional implementation, coordinate technical working groups (legal reform, environmental safeguards, traceability, ASM, local content, finance), and mobilize resources.
 - Produce an annual progress report to the ECOWAS Commission and the African Union Commission and make reports publicly available.
 - Create an independent multi-stakeholder monitoring and evaluation mechanism with CSO, to track compliance, socioeconomic outcomes, environmental impacts and grievance resolution.
 - Launch a regional open-data portal for extractives sector licensing, revenues, environmental monitoring and benefit-sharing and workforce development.
11. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:
 - Call on AU and ECOWAS to establish regional Centres of Excellence and technical assistance programmes to support, geological data management, contract negotiation, tax and royalty administration, environmental monitoring, ASM formalization, local supply chain development.
 - Promote South-South cooperation and partnerships with universities, research institutions and industry for technology transfer and workforce development.

In conclusion, we call upon the Africa Union, ECOWAS and Member State Governments to adopt and operationalize these commitments with urgency, recognizing that how West Africa governs its critical mineral endowments will determine not only economic trajectories but the regional contribution to a just global energy transition and a resilient future for its communities.

We further invite development partners, international financial institutions, the private sector and CSOs to support the region's path through finance, technology, capacity building and market-access conditioned on adherence to the principles and actions set out in this communique.

Adopted by participants at the High-Level West Africa Conference on Equity in Extraction and endorsed for transmission to the Africa Union, ECOWAS Commission and Member States Governments for immediate action and follow-up.

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