Planning for Mining Regions: Building Local Government's Capacity in a Multi-stakeholder Collaboration Scenario

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1. Introduction

In recent years there has been increasing emphasis across the world on decentralisation of planning processes[1]. The old form of regulatory planning by the state agencies is being replaced by more inclusionary practices through co-option of the non-state actors in the civil society and the market in the decision making process. Such inclusionary processes are considered particularly vital under the rubrics of sustainable livelihood approach, adapted by the international funding agencies, to ensure that developmental outcomes meet the needs of the local communities in developing countries. However, emergence of bottom-up planning does not lead to erosion in the role of the state agencies in the planning process. Rather, newer demands are being placed on the state agencies, in coordinating and balancing competing claims between multiple stakeholders. However,, the role of the planning government agencies in mitigating the conflicting demands of the global economy and local livelihood, are under investigated – particularly in the context of the natural resource rich regions in the developing countries.

This paper compares and contrasts the role of the local government planning agencies in two mining regions of Colombia. Heightened global demand for natural resources is leading to escalation of mining operations in Colombia, by multinational and local mining companies. However, there are growing discontents amongst the local communities, who feel left out of this economic boom, and are stuck in poverty. Under these circumstances, the need for greater involvement of the mining companies to carry out developmental works at the local level, are recognized by the higher levels of the Colombian government; by local civil society activists as well as by the mining companies. However, operationalisation of this concept, this research shows, is to a large degree, handicapped due to capacity constraints of the local planning agencies. The local governments are unable to respond to demands regarding infrastructure development, employment generation, land-use regulation and social and environmental impacts of mining. The research draws attention to specific institutional deficiencies, in political and technological terms, which come in the way of the local agencies playing stronger role in a multi-stakeholder scenario in planning for mining regions and suggests certain remedial measures. The research is based on qualitative research

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involving, field observations and interviews of local government officials, mining company executives and community activists.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section-2 provides a literature review about capacity building in planning at the local government level in the context of multi-stakeholder governance framework. Section-3 then provides a brief overview about the two case study areas. Following that, Section-4 compares and contrasts the role of the local governments in each of the case study areas, about their engagement with the mining industry. Section-5 concludes the paper through a summary.

2. Capacity Building in Planning and Multi-stake holder Governance

This research demonstrates how greater planning capacity at the local government level can empower the local communities to engage more effectively with powerful external stake holders, (like global mining companies) and gain from the extraction of mineral resources in remote natural-resource dependent regions in developing countries. Conversely, inadequate planning capacities, disadvantages the local communities in the local economic development process.

This is an area of research that had remained relatively less explored. Rather, most of the literatures dealing with planning issues in mining regions explore the decline of local governments' accountability (to respond to community's demands) after the arrival of global mining companies - a situation that intensified after the implementation of the state decentralisation processes (Fiszbein, 1997). Since 1980, decentralisation of the national-state in Latin America increased the responsibilities of local public administrations. However, this increased administrative responsibility had not translated into building capacities at the local level on planning issues.

Capacity-building is an evolving term that has been subject to multiple definitions. The term was first coined by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1990 and defined as a "long-term process by which individuals, organisations, networks, and societies increase their abilities to solve problems and achieve objectives" (UNDP, 1997). Since then it began to be introduced in developing countries as part of technical assistance programs to help communities cope with the changes caused by globalisation and economic restructuring (Amin & Thrift, 1992).

As defined by the United Nations, capacity-building is a long-term process that involves the commitment of multiple actors. Veiga et al (2001), for instance, state that "the first step to community sustainability ... may relate to local capacity-building and local governance". Similarly, the Institute for Environment and Development (IED, (2001) argues that capacity-building needs to be understood as a multi-stakeholder collaboration process that lasts before and after mining operations, intended to enhance existing skills in local communities. In addition, Loza (2004) defines capacity-building as an ongoing process that improves existing conditions in local communities and that requires the building of partnerships between corporations and communities. Indeed, capacity-building cannot be considered as a reactive response from mining corporations to tackle community problems but as a long-term process that takes into consideration community aspirations (Alizar & Scott, 2009).

Although the notion of community capacity-building is widely acknowledged in the scholarship, there is lack of understanding of existing capacity-building gaps within government organizations to effectively plan developmental strategies and implement good planning practices in mining regions. Lack of governmental expertise to negotiate global economic pressures and their implications on local livelihoods has also resulted in critical

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poverty conditions of communities adjacent to mine-sites operating in the north of Colombia, the case study area.

In recent times, there are increasing thrusts on the mining companies to practice good corporate practices, which include building capacities of the local communities, in areas, where mining operations take place. Such practices are bracketed under corporate social responsibility. The Guidance on Social Responsibility, ISO 26000 (2010), defines capacity-building as a process that assists communities to achieve social and economic development standards. Moreover, it is stated that capacity-building is one of the most sustainable legacies that mining companies can deliver to local communities (International Council of Mining and Minerals ICMM, 2005). This notion is also regarded as a valuable legacy that fosters community development (Rio Tinto, 2011) and engagement (BHP Billiton, 2009) and forges sustainable communities (Barrick Peru, 2008).

Following global concerns regarding government capacity-building, a few scholars embarked on research that highlighted institutional capacity gaps. There is a general agreement amongst scholars from diverse streams like natural resource management and mining studies that governments need to strengthen their capacities in the development of policy frameworks for land-use and land-rehabilitation. Particularly, the need for up-skilling of the state agencies in areas such as mining projects monitoring and evaluation, transparency and mining revenues management are emphasised (Alizar & Scott, 2009; Bridge, 1999; Lahiri-Dutt et al, 2009; Mate, 2001). Inadequate expertise in planning issues had forced the local governments to secede leading role in the developmental agenda to the non-state actors in the corporate sector and civil society organizations, in a multi-stakeholder governance framework.

Discussions about of multi-stakeholder collaboration is frequently based on the assumption that governments, corporations and other stakeholders participate on an equal basis in decision-making processes and collaborate in the achievement of common goals (Clarkson, 1995; Gibson, 2000; Tracey et al, 2005). However, this simplistic multi-stakeholder collaboration approach can be challenged due to the idea that the relationships amongst actors are very often driven by factors such as unequal power relations, lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities, and tensions that limit the possibilities of effective collaboration. In Colombian mining regions, these multi-stakeholder relationships are becoming more complex as corporations are very often placed at the centre of development agendas (Cardenas, 2011).

These governance shifts have also allowed communities to become active rather than passive stakeholders and encouraged closer relationships between the community and other stakeholders like governments, NGOs and corporations. In the public sector recent public administration theories like new public management (Hood, 1991; 1995, pp. 3-4) gave more importance to citizens and their participation in public administration practices. The new public management approach led to the creation of participation mechanisms intended to legitimise public administration decisions and to help citizens make sure that public administration met social needs. Similarly, NGOs are gradually becoming integral to governance processes (Bell & Hindmoor, 2009, p. 5; Cashore, 2002, p. 503) which not only increased NGOs' responsibilities at the global and the local level in terms of public goods and services provision for community well-being but also in terms of assistance to governments to govern natural resources and to demand corporate accountability (Bell & Hindmoor, 2009, p. 5; Edwards et al, 1999).

Recent shifts in governance processes in mining regions have also led to a widening of the relationships between mining corporations and their stakeholders (Hamann et al, 2005, pp. 61-63; Mate, 2001, p. 18; Veiga, et al., 2001, p. 462). However, there are major challenges in practice. Scholars from schools of thought like corporate social responsibility, development

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and environmental management argue that in reality, corporations engage with their stakeholders to pursue their own interests rather than in an effort to achieve sustainable initiatives for communities (Bebbington et al, 2008, p. 900; Hilson, 2006, p. 44; Jenkins & Yakovleva, 2006, p. 272). And weak state agency capacity exacerbates the problem.

Moreover, collaboration is posited as a win-win relationship based on permanent consensus. However, the tensions that might arise amongst stakeholders in governance scenarios have not been seriously explored. In the Colombian context, these tensions are manifested in lack of communication between mining corporations and their external stakeholders; low levels of trust amongst stakeholders; knowledge gap about stakeholders' roles and responsibilities; and lack of infrastructure and financial resources that prevent stakeholders, particularly governments from negotiating the developmental processes (Fiszbein, 1997).

This existing scenario in which the mining company is the 'star' and the stakeholders are the 'supporting cast' (Minnery, 2007) not only reveals the potential for collaboration but also the possibilities of resistance and conflict. Following Healey (2006, p. 314) and Minnery (2007, p. 341) the notion of conflict in this analysis does not necessarily imply a negative connotation. On the contrary, it is seen here as a resistance to change rather than an explicit confrontation between the parties. The following section discusses the lack of planning capacity of state agencies in a multi-stakeholder scenario and associated conflicting factors.

3. Case Study Areas

This section discuses the role of the state agencies in planning for mining regions through case studies in Antioquia and Risaralda, two mining districts of Colombia.

The state of Antioquia is located on the north Pacific coast of Colombia. It holds the largest reserves of gold, silver, coal, platinum and construction materials in Colombia. (Camara de Comercio de Medellin para Antioquia, 2010, p. 14; Sistema de Informacion Minero Energetico Colombiano, 2010, pp. 16-17). The region is going through a mining boom in recent years, which has increased the responsibilities of state agencies at the local level to deal with mining impacts.

Antioquia is also one of the largest administrative regions in Colombia. Census shows that Antioquia had an urban population of 4.340.744 inhabitants and 1.260.763 people inhabiting non-urban areas in 2005. Despite Antioquia's state agencies' active engagement in planning mining regions, there is a lack of capacity to deal with some of the most critical issues in this arena, such as employment generation, social and environmental impacts and land-use regulation. The local government's weak institutional capacity comes in the way to actively collaborate with other stakeholders to compensate locals for natural resource extraction and forge sustainable livelihood options.

The second case study area, Risaralda is a State located in the Colombian Andes mountain range. With the escalation of mining operations state agencies along with mining companies and civil society actors have collaborated to maximise social benefits in the mining boom. . Strong institutional capacity of the state agencies and active involvement of the local communities had enabled successful implementation of good planning practices in Risaralda's mining regions.

Although mining and exploration projects operating in Risaralda have major impacts on local communities, strong planning practices at the state level have helped communities benefit from mining and forge alternative and more sustainable livelihoods. According to census Risaralda has a population of 859.666 people by 2005. Out of the total population 665.104 people inhabited urban areas whereas 194.562 were located in peri-urban and rural areas. Evidence indicates that Risaralda's local public administrations hold stronger institutional

capacity than Antioquia's local governments. This situation has allowed Risaralda's government agencies to mitigate and better respond to mining impacts. The crucial differences between both case studies are shown in Table-1 below.

Table.1: Comparison of the Case Study Areas

	Risaralda Case Study	Antioquia Case Study
Population	859.666 inhabitants by 2005	4.340.744 inhabitants by 2005
Institutional Capacity	Strong institutional capacity	Weak institutional capacity
Developmental Outcomes	Strong planning practices that have led to: - Active community engagement - Active state agencies engagement	Poor planning practices that have led to: - Lack of articulation between corporate and government agendas - Gaps between corporate agendas and regional development aspirations
		Capacity-building gaps: Multi-stakeholder collaboration (Corporate-government) Community engagement

4. Discussion

Empirical observations indicate that certain key factors have prevented the government from implementing effective planning practices, particularly in Antioquia case study. These limitations include lack of articulation between corporate and government agendas, gaps between corporate agendas and regional development aspirations and lack of governments' capacity to foster community engagement.. However, other aspects such as effective communication and information governance are aspects that have to an extent enabled successful government's interventions in planning for mining regions.

Antioquia case shows that there is little or no relationship between existing development agendas and local aspirations. Neither, there is coordination amongst stakeholders in the implementation of regional initiatives. Weak state agencies' capacity to deal with mining related issues has major implications for Antioquia's community development. Local public administrations struggle to effectively allocate mining royalties to tackle local issues and address community's expectations. Similarly, they lack skills to formulate accurate community investment programs and development plans. This has resulted in a waste of resources and the implementation of initiatives that rarely meet community's development aspirations. Instead, the implementation of irrelevant initiatives at the local level has further exacerbated the problem, creating discontent amongst locals. A case in the point is artisanal mining in Colombia. Local governments have shown inexperience to handle artisanal mining-related issues which has also had adverse impacts on communities. A group of local miners informed that

 " We want the government to support local miners. However, the government is good at giving orders but unable to come up with sustainable solutions for us. At the present time there are critical issues around artisanal mining. The government has ordered artisanal mines' closure as part of the solution...but... What are the artisanal miners' families going to do after closure? In addition, the government has not been able to provide us with meaningful education so that we can sustain ourselves in the long-term. Governments implement mining safety training and other initiatives that do not take into account our expectations (Interview, October 26th, 2012 Focus Group Local Miners)

Employment generation and education are two key elements of Antioquia's development plan; however, due to lack of local governments' capacity, the implementation of education programs keeps experiencing major challenges. Former education and employment generation initiatives have failed due lack of coordination amongst stakeholders but mostly due to the gap between these initiatives and existing regional development plans. Hence,

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more articulation between these developmental agendas and existing regional needs is imperative to make them more effective. A prominent civil society activist informed when interviewed on 7 November 2012.

> Late in the 90s, we thought that there was a skill shortage in the region and we embarked on up-skilling communities in mining. Out of 60 students, just 2 of them are currently working in mining; the rest of them became taxi drivers and bartenders… Similarly, high school students can hardly access tertiary education due to lack of economic resources. Indeed, there is a proliferation of educational initiatives, however, the quality of these actions and their effectiveness to meet regional needs are aspects that need major attention..

The lack of connection between local aspirations and existing development agendas, government's lack of capacity to make companies more accountable, on account of factors such as the proliferation of informal mining are factors that have exceeded local state agencies' capacity. Increase in mining activities by multinational companies in the region is causing resentment amongst locals whose livelihood options are mining-oriented. For some community members mining is considered as cultural heritage whereas for those who depend on it, this activity is seen as the only employment opportunity and therefore the only livelihood option. Most of the interviewees at the community level, in both case studies, were somehow related to informal mining. They are active informal miners, former informal miners or informal miners' family members. Although informal mining is not the focus of this paper is a case in the point to underline Antioquia's administration's lack of expertise to deal with mining-related issues.

Some informal miners and community members in Antioquia perceive large scale mining and exploration projects as a threat. The expansion of mining operations and the opening of new projects have partially occupied land that previously belonged to folk miners. Inconformity coming from community members led the government and other stakeholders in the region to take part in this issue. Governments and corporations are joining efforts to formalise artisanal miners, either providing jobs at large scale mining projects or implementing initiatives intended to compensate communities for the loss of their traditional livelihoods.

According to the community relations practitioner of a multinational company operating in Antioquia, had engaged with countrymen and miners and have carried out several agreements with these groups. These have led to sustainable projects and other types of compensation" (Community relations practitioner, interview, October, 26th, 2012). Corporate policies also reinforce this statement:

> As we advance our activities in Colombia, with our joint venture partners and in some cases on our own, we look forward to engaging with legitimate activists and groups to visit our sites to form their opinions about what we are doing well and where we can do better. It is through such interventions that we can improve our interactions with the communities in which we work (AngloGold Ashanti, 2008).

The mining companies operating in the region and the state government are working in partnership to develop a community development initiative for artisanal miners. The strategy consists of four components, which are: employment generation, forging sustainable livelihoods, donations and other types of compensation. So far, 62 people have been trained in mining and have been offered a position at the mine. Others are currently participating in training initiatives in key areas relevant for the company. In accordance with the community relations practitioner this training might provide them with "alternative livelihoods and productive projects" (Community relations practitioner, interview, October, 26th, 2012). Additionally, the company is delivering money and/or negotiating other kind of compensation for natural resource exploration and extraction operations.

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The state government claims that the outcomes of this initiative, particularly those based on training and education for employment generation, are tangible and communities are already experiencing the benefits of these initiatives: "Small businesses around mining such as restaurants, laundries and transport agencies have been created… (The) purpose (of these initiatives) is to help community members get organised and stop working in the informal sector" (Senior State Government Representative from Antioquia, interview, October 24th, 2012). The community practitioner of a multinational mining company operating in Antioquia, however, states that these small businesses are part of a shared agenda but they have not materialised yet (Community relations practitioner, interview, October, 26th, 2012). Interestingly, corporate and government's statements regarding development plans implementation differs substantially.

Lack of coordination in multi-stakeholder agendas for planning mining regions is a persisting issue in most initiatives, at least in the Antioquia case. This is a factor that limits effective governance processes and prevents governments from meeting local expectations. This also demonstrates stakeholders' unawareness of their roles and responsibilities, particularly governments'. These factors diminish stakeholders' possibilities to better respond to issues relevant for the community. In addition, these barriers have resulted in a waste of resources when it comes to development plans implementation as governments not only lack the capacity but the resources to implement shared development agendas. Hence, multi-stakeholder agendas need to be developed on the basis of stronger governance practices and robust state agencies. On the contrary, existing limitations might not only compromise local development aspirations but also governments' role in forging sustainable livelihoods and meet global economic expectations.

As stated above it is not only governments' responsibility as there are contextual factors also associated with informal mining that have hindered governments capacity to meet stakeholders' expectations. Although folk mining formalisation is a key theme in government and corporate agendas, community's discontent remains which has resulted in major issues such as illegal groups involvement and therefore the escalation of armed conflict. These groups have permeated civil society organisations making difficult multi-stakeholder collaboration governance dynamics for planning mining regions. Although there are some governance arrangements in place, governments feel incapable to deal with and negotiate with these groups. A situation that has also compromised community engagement and local livelihoods.

Antioquia's communities have become passive actors and cannot actively engage with other stakeholders as they feel threatened by the influence of these illegal groups. This has not only exacerbated violence in remote mining areas, but has also diminished community's possibilities to benefit from corporate-government collaboration and therefore build sustainable livelihoods. "These illegal bands have found mining as a way to financially support their groups and are interested in controlling our territories rich in minerals and metals" (Community member from Antioquia, interview, October, 26th, 2012). Scarce community engagement mainly driven by global-local conflict dynamics and governments' lack of capacity to deal with local tensions have also become limiting factors for planning regions in a multi-stakeholder collaboration governance scenario.

Despite existing limitations and governments' lack of capacity to govern Antioquia mining region there are factors that could strengthen state agencies' capacities. Identifying these factors and assist governments to enhance them in the frame of multi-stakeholder collaboration processes could potentially help stakeholders but particularly governments to overcome aforementioned barriers. The State government is currently developing alliances with tertiary institutions to implement development plans. A case in the point is a recent employment generation and infrastructure initiative that have elicited positive reactions

amongst locals (Complejo Tecnologico Minero Agroempresarial, 2012). Governance arrangements in place, specifically regular communication between involved parties and information sharing procedures to implement of these initiatives have been elicited positive outcomes for the region:

> "The way we work is the following: We meet with 16 majors and formulate employment generation and infrastructure initiatives intended to respond to the region's development plan. In doing so, we work closely with governments, companies and mining communities to agree on the initiative's impact. We try to develop initiatives relevant for communities... However, all cases are different. There are times when those agreements are not very productive; however, when they take place, these initiatives have a positive impact on communities (Government Tertiary Institution Senior Representative, Interview, November 19th, 2012).

In fact, Antioquia's stakeholders have strategies in place to facilitate the effective implementation of development plans, however, good governance and planning practices need to be further developed so that governments can enhance their capacity and overcome the factors that limit effective multi-stakeholder engagement which at the moment is preventing communities from meaningfully benefiting from mining.

On the other hand, Risaralda's state agencies' capacity and multi-stakeholder collaboration governance processes in place for planning mining regions show better outcomes. This has resulted in more sustainable legacies and livelihoods for communities. Effective governance processes have been the key drivers for development plans implementation and shared agendas in Risaralda. Amongst the factors that are currently fostering local development include existing clear public policies in place that oblige corporations to take part in local development and active community engagement:

> "We do not want mining and exploration companies operating in Risaralda to extract our resources and leave the town without any legacies for the communities. We do not ask them for money apart from the royalties and taxes they are obliged to pay-. Instead, we want them to build communities' capacity so that they can export their local goods internationally. This does not cost much to the company but benefits substantially the community" (Risaralda's Senior State Government Representative (October 16th, 2012).

Indeed, the state government is playing a strong role in overseeing corporate social performance and supporting communities. This approach has become advantageous for locals as companies have become more accountable. Strong government's capacity to support local communities has also resulted in more active community engagement and participation in public decisions. This has made Risaralda's communities more capable to express their development expectations and demand corporate accountability:

> "I have been working in mining since I was 7 years old. The company has provided us with some resources to participate in employment generation initiatives. I asked the company for an initiative in which we women could get some knowledge to sustain ourselves in the long-term. The company in partnership with a government VET institution implemented an employment generation strategy for women. However, we need more of these actions in Risaralda. Hopefully there are more coming" (Risaralda's community leader, November, 23rd, 2013)

Active community engagement and stronger government capacity are factors that foster multi-stakeholder collaboration for Risaralda's development. More importantly these factors have mainly been driven by state agencies. Hence, corporations and governments need to engage more often in collaborative approaches to build state agencies' capacities, forge

sustainable communities and foster good planning practices in mining regions. Otherwise, existing limitations like lack of coordination amongst stakeholders, governments' capacity-building gaps to respond to local development aspirations and contextual factors will end up having adverse implications for planning mining regions impacting livelihoods of the local people.

5. Conclusions

This paper discussed the challenges of existing government capacity-building gaps and their implications for planning in Antioquia and Risaralda, two mining dependent regions of Colombia. Expansion of mining operations in natural resource-rich regions in Latin America has significantly stretched governments' capacity to respond to the demands of the local communities for sustainable livelihood opportunities by engaging with the multinational mining companies. Lack of skills in planning weakened the role of the local governments to negotiate effectively with the mining industry to shape the local developmental agenda. Shared agendas worked only for short-term due to the lack of coordination amongst stakeholders, but mostly due to weak institutional capacity at the government level.

In Antioquia case, government-led initiatives are irrelevant for locals, causing discontent and resentment. However, in regions like Risaralda in which local governments' capacity is stronger and there is evidence of good governance and planning practices those initiatives have elicited positive results for communities. This has increased the possibilities to forge sustainable livelihoods in the region.

Weak institutional capacity of the Antioquia government has come in the way to transform mining outcomes into sustainable livelihood opportunities. Inadequate infrastructure and and lack of employment generation is the fostering of discontent and resentment amongst communities. The compensation for natural resources has not meaningfully achieved mining communities' development aspirations in Antioquia case due to poor planning practices and procedures in place.

On the other hand, Risaralda case differs substantially from Antioquia. The state government and other stakeholders, including mining companies and civil society actors have been able to develop adequate planning approaches to tackle mining-related issues in the region. This multi-stakeholder scenario for planning mining towns has enhanced state agencies' role in forging sustainable livelihoods in local communities, delivering infrastructure and employment opportunities. Lessons from Risaralda highlight the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration to help governments extend the reach of its role and responsibilities. Governments alone cannot cope with existing mining impacts and mining companies and other civil society actors should provide them with support when necessary.

Finally, this paper showed the importance of planning in providing sustainable livelihood for local population in remote natural resource dependent regions of the developing countries. More than ever there is a need to take government capacity-building more seriously to adequately compensate communities for natural resource extraction and increase the possibilities to forge sustainable livelihoods for locals. Otherwise, the gains of administrative decentralization from centralized national agencies to the local government would not be able to translate into sustainable livelihood outcome at the local level.

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