

Publication date: Available online 30 September 2013

Source:Futures

Author(s): Roy Maconachie

The impacts that increased transnational extractive industry investments are having on local, populations in natural resource-rich regions of sub-Saharan Africa are diverse, far-reaching and, complex. A surge of recent investment has been variously met by resistance and rejection, by, acquiescence combined with demands for better labour conditions, and outright acceptance in, anticipation of gainful employment. Drawing on recent field-based research carried out in, diamondiferous Kono District in Sierra Leone, this paper critically explores these contrasting, responses to mining activities, by focusing on how youth perceive and respond to extractive industry, expansion. The analysis is particularly salient in the case of Sierra Leone, as Kono's prime alluvial, diamond areas are becoming 'mined out', and artisanal and small-scale operations are being replaced, by more capital intensive modes of mechanised extraction. In an environment where the demand for, unskilled labour is diminishing, and young people are facing pressing livelihood needs in an, employment-constrained economy, youth are playing important roles in rights-based mobilizations, around mining. The paper aims to broaden understanding of youth perceptions of mining investment, and illuminate the various factors underlying a diverse range of responses to the expansion of, extractive industries. It concludes by reflecting on how youth perceptions of extractive industry, expansion may also be influencing the ways in which mining companies understand and fashion their, business and social responsibility strategies.

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