

Study on public involvement in social impact assessments  
in relation to the mining projects, Mongolia

(モンゴル鉱山開発プロジェクトにおける社会アセスメントへの住民参加に関する研究)

Abstract of the master's thesis

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**Introduction and objective**

The mining industry has significant role for economy in Mongolia, however negative impacts have been caused for natural environment as well as for local residents. A mining company has to predict and mitigate positive and negative impacts possibly caused by a mining project, accordingly it has responsibility for conducting Social Impact Assessment (SIA) under the collaboration with local residents. A company stimulates public to participate SIA, informing about the possible impacts due to the project, ways to mitigate the impacts, and negotiates with residents face to face. If a mining company is actively engaged in these public participations, residents can understand the companies' effort to mitigate impacts and would accept positively the project of mining company. Aim of the research is to study the states of public involvement in SIA in the field of the mining projects.

**Study area and method**

I have selected four mining companies, namely G in Selenge province, U and two small companies: L and A in Khentii province. Investments of the companies are: U company by the government of Mongolia and Russia, G, L and A companies are all by private companies from Canada, China and Mongolia, respectively. G company processes gold, U company processes fluorite and iron and two small companies process iron. Efforts for public participation and performance of SIA of these companies were evaluated by an interview to the company officials in charge of public relation. On the other hand, local residents' acceptance of the mining projects was investigated by questionnaire surveys. Three groups of questions were used to score quantitatively of the factors: "①Companies' effort for communication", "②Ability and motivation" and "③Residents' concern about impact on health", thereafter path diagrams among the factors of ①,② and ③ were drawn. Answers of a question "Is there any environmental pollution from this mining activity?" have been used to determine the highest rates of environmental pollution recognized by the residents.

**Results and discussion.**

According to the interviews, U company and 2 small companies do not provide any regular information and do not have communication system with residents. Also, these companies did not conduct SIAs and they are engaged in few public participation techniques such as workshop, meeting, public survey etc. In the path diagrams of U company and 2 small companies, the correlation between ①-③ and ②-③ were negative indicating that the participants strongly recognize negative impact on human and livestock health due to the mining operations. In addition, the highest rates of environmental pollution were indicated by 60% of herders nearby U company and 87.5% of herders nearby two small companies. On the other hand, G company has been providing regular information and has communication system with residents. Also this company conducted SIAs and engaged more public participation techniques than other companies. The path diagram of G company showed positive correlations among three factors. The highest rate of environmental pollution

about G company was indicated by the herders at 27%, that is lower than other three companies. These results show that, if a mining company implement the public participation actively, the residents tend to accept positively the mining company and then recognise environmental pollutions to be low.