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THE GREATEST GOOD OF THE GREATEST NUMBER?MINERAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN TANZANIA

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Abstract
Tanzania is gifted with significant wealth of minerals including gold, tanzanite, diamonds and other minerals which are essential to the nation's development plan. Nevertheless, the paradox of such wealth from the minerals co-exist with the persistent poverty in Tanzanian community raising utility concern on the effectiveness of resources governance. Tracing from moral and political aspects of Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian philosophy, specifically on his dictum "greatest good of the greatest number", this article dives to explicate the degree to which Tanzania's mineral wealth complies the public good. The article examines the dual impact of mining activities in their effect to employment, infrastructure, Gross Domestic Product and foreign exchange, and its negative effects such as environmental degradation, displacement and inequitable benefit distribution. Using utilitarian philosophy, the article assesses the mining policies and acts on how they serve the greatest good of the greatest number. The critique of TunduLissu is integrated on transparency and resource nationalism as explicated in his work *In Gold We Trust: The Political Economy of Law*. It is found that the existing structures do not comply with utilitarian ideal because the benefits are concentrated among the few actors, leaving local communities marginalized. The article makes a conclusion by recommending legal and policy reforms aiming at equitable benefit sharing and moral governance to ensure that mineral wealth brings the greatest good of the greatest number of Tanzanians.
Key words:development, hedonic calculus, utilitarianism, and utility

Introduction

Tanzania is among the countries with massive mineral wealth in Africa and in the world. It is approximately having more than 45 tons of Gold, Diamonds, Nikel, Tanzanite which is only found in Mererani Tanzania, Coal and other jewelleries.[1]Since the inception of mineral sector in 1998, the sector has become the most significant in contributing to the national income, foreign currency and creating employment for over one million Tanzanians.[2] The government has made some legal considerations in order to increase revenues from this sector. An example is enactment of 2017 mining act which increased the tax from minerals. This shows the zeal to ensure that the mineral wealth available yields national development.

Nevertheless, the real picture in village level is distinct. Most of localities in districts of Geita, Tarime, Shinyanga, Manyara and Kahama where there are massive mining sites are suffering from poverty, poor infrastructure, lack of clean water and sanitation, poor schools and poor healthcare

1. United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Energy and Minerals, *Database on Mineral Resources* (Dar es Salaam: 2008), 6–7.

2.Mark Curtis and TunduLissu, *A Golden Opportunity: How Tanzania is Failing to Benefit from Gold Mine,* (Dar es Salaam: Christian Counsel of Tanzania, 2008), 2.

services.[3]Moreover, there are increasing number of land disputes, displacement with inadequate compensation and environmental destruction.[4]

The fundamental question is: does the current governance of mineral wealth yield the greatest good of the greatest number? In order to answer this question, this article employs the philosophy of utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham. Bentham holds that, laws and public policies are morally right insofar as they promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people.[5] By applying his philosophical framework, this study evaluates whether the revenues from mining sector outweigh the pain experienced by local communities, and whether existing policies are designed to maximize the collective well-being.

To deepen analysis, the article also engages the contemporary thoughts of Tundu Lissu, a prominent figure in Tanzanian politics who has researched and written on natural resources management, contract transparency, and resource nationalism. Through his works, particularly his *In Gold We Trust: The political Economy of Law*, he criticizes on how laws, policies and mineral contracts have been used to protect both the foreigners and sovereigns' interests instead of public interests.

The central aim of this article is to identify that the management of natural resources in Tanzania is not yet to correlate enough with the greatest good of the greatest number of citizensdespite the increase of economic growth. Thus the management requires fundamental changes so that mineral resources may bring sustainable development.

1. Utilitarianism

The 18th century philosopher Jeremy Bentham invented the notion of utilitarianism. What is it? Utilitarianism is the moral and political theory that evaluates the quality of moral and political actions on the basis of their consequences to the greatest good of the greatest number. The actions are purely right insofar as they yield more good outcomes, totally wrong as they yield the reverse of that good.[6]

1.1.Principle of utility

The principle of utility assesses each deed in accordance to the inclination which increases happiness. Serving the greatest good of the greatest number is the only right and proper end. Human actions, policies, laws and legal systems are to be tested by their coherence, or lack of coherence with this principle of utility. The principle which enables us to differentiate between good actions, laws and policies from those which are bad; and it is the only source of political obligation.[7]In the light of Bentham, the political leadership should weigh each and every policy on the basis that policy should produce majority well-being than harm.

1.2.Hedonic Calculus and Public Policies

Hedonic calculus or Bentham' Algorithm is the mathematical operation that Bentham used for calculating pleasure and pain. It aims to determine which actions maximize overall happiness or well-being by considering the intensity, propinquity duration, purity, fecundity, certainty and extent of pain and pleasure. In the view of Bentham, each individual and legislator in a political authority is concerned with avoiding pain

3. Alfred Kitula, "The Environmental and Socio-Economic Impacts of Mining on Local Livelihoods in Tanzania" Vol. 14, (Dar es Salaam: Elsevier Limited, 2006), 405–414.

4. Siri Lange, "Gold and Governance: Legal Injustice and Lost Opportunities in Tanzania" Vol. 110 No. 439, (London: Oxford University Press), 233–252.

5. Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1789), 2–3.

6. Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation,* 4.

7. Kenny, *A Brief History of Western Philosophy,* 284.

and achieving pleasure. In his mathematical calculations, he acknowledges that pleasure and pain differ from each and have different values.[8] He speaks of the mathematical units which he calls lots of pleasure and pain holding that before we act we should calculate the values of these lots. They will be greater or less depending on pleasure's intensity, duration, certainty and propinquity.

When considering not only pleasure by itself, but what consequences it can lead to, other circumstances can be calculated, such as pleasure's fecundity or richness in the sense of number of persons it extends to or who are affected by it. With these calculations, Bentham is much interested in the quantitative aspect of pleasure. He advocates for the greatest pleasure to the greatest number of people. This pleasure comes from choosing an action that can lead to pleasure that is extended to the majority.[9]

2. Mining Sector: Dual Impact on Development

The mining sector can be referred as all activities relating to examination, extraction, processing, handling, transportation and selling of mineral resources. This includes both small scale mining conducted by local miners and large scale mining conducted by international companies such as Barrick, Anglo gold and others.

The sector is the one of the significant contributors to Tanzania's economic growth. Since the economic liberalization during late 1880's and during the 1990's the mining sector has been playing a vital role in the Tanzania economy. Today through mining, government revenues have increased, employment opportunities have increased and foreign exchange earnings. The sector has attracted substantial foreign direct investment that leads to export earnings. The sector has also contributed to the Tanzania's Gross Domestic Products. However, despite these benefits, the mining sector has a number of numerous social, economic and environmental shortcomings. Thus, the mining sector has a dual impact on Tanzania's development as it has both positive and negative outcomes.

2.1.Positive Impacts on Mining Sector

The positive impacts of mining sector on Tanzania's development shows the extent to which mineral wealth are contributing to the economic growth.Mining contributes hugely to Tanzania's national income by increasing Gross Development Product, rising from 9.1% in 2023 to 10.1% and averagely 11.9%in 2025. The sector inspires the activities through production, exports and investments. For instance, currently Tanzania has remained as a major leading country in mineral exports. It produces a significant number of ounces for the export making the country one of Africa's major gold producers.[10]

Source of Government Revenues. The government of Tanzania makes collection through taxes, royalties, mining license fees, dividends as well as through other payments from mining companies. The support to provision of significant social services like healthcare, education, infrastructures, electricity is enabled by the revenues collected by the government.[11]Evidence show that revenue has become an important part in funding government budgets. Government revenue from mining grew from Tanzanian shillings 576 billion in 2020/2021 to 753.82 billion in 2023/2024 and further over 1.07 trillion in 2024/2025, before reaching 1.394 trillion in

8. Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre*, 340.

9. Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre*, 340.

10. Curtis, and Lissu, *A Golden Opportunity*, 8.

11. Siri Lange, "Benefit Streams from Mining in Tanzania: Case Studies from Geita and Mererani", (Bergen: Michelsen Institute, 2006), 45–47.

2025/2026 surpassing the annual target by 16.13%.[12]

Foreign exchange earnings. Mineral exports across the world enables Tanzania to import machinery, fuel, medicines, and any other equipment that would help the country in its development activities and provision of quality social services. The good example is exportation of gold that account for the substantial shares of Tanzania's export earnings.[13]

The creation of employment opportunities. The mining sector in Tanzania indeed creates direct employment opportunities to engineers, geologists, accountants, lawyers, machine operators, environmental experts, security personnel as well as administrators.Furthermore, this sector creates some other indirect employment in catering, banking and mobile transactions, transportations, retail trade and other supporting industries employments.[14] Evidence indicates a significant increase in employment of Tanzanians in mining projects from 6,668 out7,003 jobs equivalent to 95% in 2018 to 18,853 out of 19,356 jobs, equivalent to 97% of total employment by December 2024. As of current, the data of government shows 20,421 jobs had been created in mines across the country, with Tanzanians occupying 19,690 positions equivalent to 94%.[15]

Infrastructure development, technology and skill transfer. International mining companies regularly develop the infrastructures around mining regions. The companies invest in roads, bridges, electric supply, airports, water systems and communication facilities. These infrastructure developments benefit the surrounding communities by improving access to markets and other essential services like schools and hospitals.International mining companies tend to introduce more advanced technologies, modern equipment, and management practices for the mining activities.[16] All these are taken by Tanzanian workers who gain such technical and managerial skills through their employments thus improving country's human capital growth.

Foreign direct investment. Mining activities attract foreign investments in terms of expertise and capitals for operations. This investment contributes to strengthening international business partnership.[17]Moreover, the investment supports industrial development. Industrialization is being promoted as mining provides the raw materials that support the makeup industrial construction and aesthetical goods such as cements, steels and jewelleries.

2.2. Negative Impacts on Mining Sector

Despite the benefits resulted from mining activities, they contribute to environmental deformation. Land degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, water pollution as well as destruction of wildlife habitats are the aspects that destroy the environment. This environmental degradation affects negatively other activities that may impact Tanzania development. For instance, destruction of wildlife habitat reduces the sources of revenues from tourism activities. Open pit mining significantly alters landscapes and reduces

12. Antony Mavunde, *A Speech by the Minister for Minerals Presenting the Ministry of Minerals' Revenues and Expenditure Estimates for the Financial Year 2026/2027 to the National Assembly in Dodoma,* (Dodoma: Ministry of Minerals, 2026), 12-14.

13. Bank of Tanzania, *Annual Reports 2023/2024*, (Dar es Salaam: Bank of Tanzania), 32.

14. World Bank, *Tanzania Mining Sector Review*, (Washington: World Bank, 2010), 18-19.

15. Ministry of Minerals, *Mining Sector Local Content Implementation and Employment Status Report* (Dodoma: Mining Commission, 2024), 22-24.

16. Curtis and Lissu, *A Golden Opportunity*, 23-24.

17.United Republic of Tanzania, *Tanzania Mining Industry Investors Guide*, (Dodoma: Ministry of Minerals, 2023), 19-20.

agricultural activities which are dependable by Tanzania's economy.[18]

Water pollution alters fishing activities among the communities around water bodies. Mining chemicals such as mercury and cyanide contaminate rivers and groundwater threading aquatic life and exposing nearby communities to health risks.[19]Displacement of Communities. The discovery of new places with minerals forces the local communities to shift for mining activities to take place in their localities. Large scale mining projects sometimes requires communities to relocate from their ancestral productive lands. This may result to social conflicts since the communities have established their permanent settlements to be inherited throughout the generation. At times, inadequate compensation for resettlement causes economic hardship, a situation that may give birth to disputes among government against its citizens.[20]

Child Labor. Child labor in some artisanal mining sites undermines Tanzanian children's right to education. Children are being involved local mining activities denying them the opportunity to attend school classes. Children become vulnerable to hazardous conditions relating to their unsafety such as exposed dusts, chemicals, dangerous working conditions due to limited safety equipment.[21]

Income inequality in mining sector. Despite the wealth generated by mining, yet the wealth is often unevenly distributed. The majority of Tanzanians continue to experience poverty, unable to meet basic life necessities steadily.[22] On the other hand, multinational companies and the minority enjoy the mineral cake. This raises a moral and political concern as to whether the mineral wealth yield the good for the majority.

3. Utilitarian Lens on Current Mining Policies

In this section, the article employs the principle of utility as an evaluative lens to assess whether the current mining policies yield the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Bentham qualifies the utility basing on intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity and extent.[23] This implies that we are obliged to access how significant mineral wealth is, for how long do they last and how far do they extend? Since 1998, Tanzania has passed through three tenures of major mining policies. The initial policy introduced 1998 attracted a number of foreign investors. There were amendments made in 2010, and the changes on 2017 which bring major changes in the Tanzanian mining sector. The evaluation that this article bases majorly on 2017 mining acts since are the ones in the practice up-to-date.

3.1. Mining Act 2017 in Utilitarian Lens

The 2017 Mining Act was voted in the Tanzania parliament under the Ministry of Energy and Minerals led by Professor Sospeter Muhongo. The report highlighted that Tanzania as a country has been in a constant loss of billions of mineral wealth caused by the exploitative bad contracts.[24] The objective of establishing the act was to add a

18. Gavin Hilson, *The Socio-Economic Impacts of Artisanal and Small Scale Mining in Developing Countries*, (Lisse: Balkema, 2003), 38–40.

19. Alyson Warhurst, *Mining and the Environment: A Case Study from Developing World*, (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1999), 112–114.

20. Lange, "Benefits Streams from Mining in Tanzania", 28–30.

21. Thomas Hentschel and Michael Priester, *Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining: Challenges and Opportunities* (London: 2002), 35-37.

22. Bonnie Campbell, ed. *Mining in Africa: Regulation and Development*, (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 46-48.

23.Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principle of Morals and Legislation*, 29-32.

24. United Republic of Tanzania, *Report of the Presidential Committee on Review of Mineral Concentrates and Diamond Sectors*, (Dodoma: Government Printer, 2017), 12–15.

portion of mineral wealth to government and its citizens. Towards that objective, some significant sections were regarded.

Increase in Loyalties and Taxes. The mining act was designated to add the loyalty in gold, gemstones and other minerals. In the light of utilitarianism, this is a positive step as it adds revenues to the country. The more revenues get in the national treasury can be utilized to finance development projects as well as provision of essential services that benefit the public.[25] Nevertheless, utilitarianism may still question: do these funds really serve the public good? if they are being misused, then the mineral wealth do not serve the majority of Tanzanians as designed.

In addition to that, the mining act prioritizes the right of the government to have free shares in any mining company operating in Tanzania. While the right is exercised, the mining allows the government to buy up to fifty percent of shares as it pleases. This ensures that the government directly benefits from companies' interests that will lead to economic freedom.[26] But, the challenge is always on implementation. The government has not yet gained a lot of profit as intended during the enactment of the laws regarding the benefit from mineral wealth. This is because there are mining companies like Barrick's report revealing of being yet not to get profits from their mining activities.[27]

Moreover, the mining act requires the mining companies to set priorities to Tanzanian goods and services as well as ensuring most of the workers in the companies are Tanzanians. The aim is to expand the opportunities to raise economy of Tanzania through goods, services and expertise.[28] Despite some of the companies deviates to meet this requirement, company like Geita Gold Mine has reportedly adjoined with the mining act to work with local Tanzanians.

Furthermore, corporate social responsibility and social development is another aspect the mining act demands. The regulation directs 0.3% of total income loyalty should be used to the corporate social responsibility projects in the mining councils. In line with that, all mining companies are prior required to submit their annual corporate social responsibility projects.[29] This requirement aligns with utilitarianism of Bentham since it directly serve the public good.

3.2. Tundu Lissu's Critique on Transparency and Public Interest

Lissu is one of the political thinkers who have contributed significantly in matters concerning the proper management of resources in Tanzania particularly mineral resources. Lissu exposes his referential contribution in his *In Gold We Trust: The Political Economy of Law.* Lissu tries to make analysis on how mining acts in Tanzania have been used to shun off majority interests and protect the minority interests notably foreign companies and sovereigns.[30]

Lissu specifies the details that for years the contracts between Tanzanian government with foreign mineral companies are characterized with total secrecy that the information is kept completely confidential and not disclosed to people. Citizens could not have a knowledge how much taxes are being paid, which shares are taken by those companies as well as contract clauses

25. Richard Musgrave, *Public Finance in Theory and Practice*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989), 3–5.

26. United Republic of Tanzania, *The Mining Act 2010 as Amended by the Written Laws Act 2017,* sec 10 (1) - (2).

27. Curtis and Lissu, *A Golden Opportunity*, 21-23.

28. United Republic of Tanzania, *Mining Act as Amended 2017* sec. 102(1) and sec. 103(1)-(4)

29. United Republic of Tanzania, *Mining Act as Amended 2017* sec. 105(1)-(2).

30. Tundu Antipas Lissu, *In Gold We Trust: The Political Economy of Law*, (Dar es Salaam: E&D Vision, 2013), 1-5.

and provisions.[31]In the light of Bentham's utilitarianism, such kind of secrecy is a challenge since it gives no room for the public to determine its utility in the sense that whether the advantage of mineral wealth yields the benefits to the majority. Lissu sees the difficult of responsibility in management of these resources to benefit the majority preceded by the lack of openness. Without responsibility in management, in the eyes of Lissu, resources will remain in favor of minority group.[32]

To clarify the analysis, Lissu suggests for resources nationalism. This suggestion does not mean to chase away the foreign investors. It means to ensure a Tanzanian is a primary beneficiary of the resources available.[33] He opposes the ancient system that allowed more profit getting outside the country while at the same time citizens are suffering from poverty. Lissu insists the government should have larger share in order to earn more revenues and pinning the companies to provide job opportunities to local Tanzanians.[34]This shows that the political framework of Lissu's resources nationalism aligns with Bentham's philosophical framework of utilitarianism for it aims at increasing the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Lissu's argument correlate with the principles of Bentham in three ways. The first one being result oriented. Lissu wants citizen to witness the fruits of their mineral resources through social services and improved quality of life. The second way is resistance to benefit the minority elites that affect the majority well-being. The third way is public participation. For him, the societies must participate in decisions regarding resources contracts and policies, the participation that legitimates resources utilization.

31. Lissu, *In Gold We Trust*, 42-48.
32. Lissu, *In Gold We Trust*, 67-71.
33. Lissu, *In Gold We Trust*, 89-93.
34. Lissu, *In Gold We Trust*, 106-111.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, this article has exposed that despite mining sector in Tanzania having significantly contributed to the economy growth of Tanzania, yet its contribution to the majority gain is minimal. By using utilitarian lens, it is shownthat national positive outcomes are there but they are not correspondent with greatest good for the greatest number of people. Lissu's contribution shows that with accountability and transparency, mineral wealth may turn as a curse instead as blessing. As a suggestion, there should be transparency concerning the management and utilization of resources. Far from that, before initiating the project, there should be analysis to weigh the greatest good for the majority over the harms that may be the case. The way forward is to embrace the attitude that mineral wealth is for the people. This requires moral governance, implementation of laws and policies as well as responsible citizens.

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