

44



Gold Fields hands over completed projects to host communities

From E. Selorm Gbogbey,
HUNI-VALLEY

GOLD Fields Ghana Limited, a mining firm based in Tarkwa and Damang in the Western Region, has handed over projects it undertook in Huni Valley, Tarkwa and Damang to the communities in fulfilment of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The projects, known as 'Gold Fields 11-legacy projects', altogether cost GHe8 million and included a clinic for the people of Huni Valley and Tarkwa Nsuaem, a road that links Tarkwa and Damang, a library at Aboso and a community park also at Tarkwa.

At the ceremony to hand over the facilities, the First Lady, Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo, reminded the corporate world that CSR had evolved beyond giving handouts or to charity.

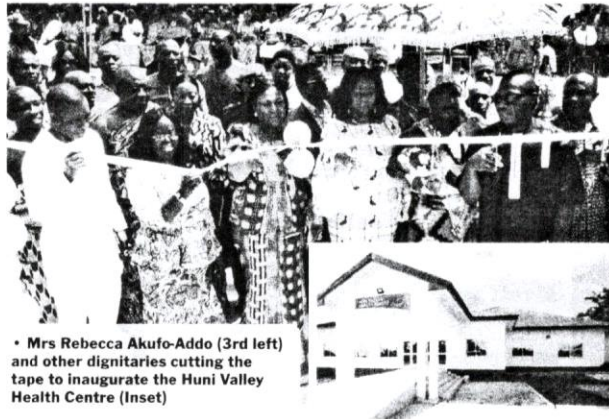
She said it was about time businesses carrying out their CSR programmes placed emphasis on sustainability and how the programmes impacted the environment.

The chiefs and people of the beneficiary communities turned out in their numbers to receive the facilities and expressed their joy and gratitude to Gold Fields Ghana Limited for the gesture.

Projects

Mrs Akufo-Addo commended Gold Fields Ghana for its support and described the company as a pacesetter in terms of delivering high-impact projects.

She said with its interventions, the company had effected positive change in the lives of the residents of the



• Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo (3rd left) and other dignitaries cutting the tape to inaugurate the Huni Valley Health Centre (Inset)

communities it was operating from.

"It is good to know that Gold Fields is now focusing more on shared value projects that have high impact on society. The 33-km Tarkwa-Damang road that you have re-constructed will certainly boost economic activities in the communities along the road," she said.

She urged the company to continue putting into effect strategies that would reduce the impact of mining activities on host communities, saying: "Protecting the environment is also a key component of corporate social responsibility."

The First Lady said Gold Fields' CSR programme was aligned with that of the Rebecca Foundation and was hopeful that an opportunity would come for the two bodies to address key issues in health, education and economic empowerment for women in the two municipalities of Prestea Huni-Valley and Tarkwa-Nsuaem.

"I say this because the Rebecca Foundation, which was established in 2017, shares a common vision with Gold Fields. The foundation has since 2017 supported the government's efforts aimed at improving the health needs of women and children, literacy among children and empowering women economically," she said.

She urged other corporate bodies to also identify the needs of their host communities and pool resources to assist in providing them, saying: "National development does not rest with the government alone. We must all play our part towards a healthy and prosperous nation."

Upgraded health centre

Mr Alfred Baku, the Executive Vice-President and Head of Goldfields-West Africa, said the company was focused on providing its host communities with

excellent facilities, adding that "the Huni-Valley Health Centre that we are commissioning had only six beds previously".

"Currently, we have upgraded the health centre to a 26-bed facility. The clinic is also well equipped now with a child health centre and two consulting rooms for doctors," he stated.

Mr Baku said the clinic had a good ventilation system and beautiful surroundings. In Gold Fields, we say "our employees' health is our wealth", and same goes for our host communities. We value the health of residents of our host communities and will continue to invest in them".

Gold Fields Foundation

Mr Baku also said as a responsible corporate citizen, the company, through its Gold Fields Ghana Foundation, had funded programmes and activities intended to fast-track development in host communities.

"The foundation is focused on key areas such as health, education, water, sanitation and infrastructure and agriculture", he said.

He said since the foundation's establishment in 2005, it had invested more than \$66.5 million in infrastructural development and livelihood enhancement programmes in the host communities.

He said further that the mining company had previously refurbished the clinic and nurses' quarters at New Atubo and the maternity block and nurses' quarters at the Tarkwa Government Hospital, as well as invested in education, water and sanitation and livelihood enhancement programmes in the communities it was operating from.