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Strengthening Civil Society Capacities to Negotiate with Multinational Companies in the Extractive Industries: BCS seeks to maximize community benefits from extractive industries

*“Our experience with corporate-community relationships in the extractive industries demonstrates a few key lessons. Most importantly, a strong civil society and a capacity in host communities to negotiate with companies from a position of strength are crucial to sustainable local development. This is how communities and companies find **win-win solutions**. This project allows BCS to apply its expertise in strengthening the community side of corporate-community relationships.”*

A. Rani Parker, Business-Community Synergies President and Founder

BCS (Business-Community Synergies), in partnership with the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) Centre for Environmental Policy and Governance, has begun a new project focusing on the community impacts of resource extraction. The three year project will implement a **community-company assessment training programme** to enable host communities to better negotiate for net benefits from corporate operations.

Project Phase One: Local capacity building

The project will leverage BCS’s extensive experience in working with NGOs and in community-company engagement with LSE’s Sustainability Fellowship programme to test the training programme at five global sites. At each of the five sites, a team combining project, corporate and local representation will assess existing community-company relationships and deliver a training program that strengthens **host community capacity to negotiate with companies** on behalf of local interests and priorities.

BCS will share community-company practices and lessons learned so that NGO and community stakeholders can develop **strategies and plans to engage with companies** operating in their areas. Implementation of the training will be followed by publication of case studies for each site as well as a cross-country-analysis.

Project Phase Two: International results sharing

In addition, LSE will host an **international conference** for communities, NGOs and companies to share experiences using the strategies generated from the community-company assessment training programme. This event will disseminate the project’s research results and enable academics and practitioners to present relevant experiences.

James Van Alstine, LSE fellow and grant leader says: *“We are excited to develop and take forward **new ideas and tools about multidirectional accountability at the site of resource extraction**. In order to maximise local sustainable development benefits, it is important for communities to share in planning and monitoring throughout the lifecycle of extractive industry projects.”*

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