

A study of women's agency and mining-induced displacement and resettlement in Sierra Leone



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ABSTRACT

Mining-induced displacement and resettlement (MIDR) is a phenomenon associated with large-scale commercial mining, and is particularly prominent in low-income countries (Owen and Kemp, 2015). The extractive industries literature tends to present rural indigenous women as homogenously vulnerable to the negative effects of mining (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). This literature provides an extensive list of the detrimental effects of MIDR that specifically disadvantage women, including loss of natural water sources, sacred spaces and the degradation of land (Bhanumathi, 2002; Downing, 2002). Rarely considered, is how the specific and unique sociocultural context of mining-affected communities influences women's agency, that is, the way women experience and react to MIDR and its effects.

By drawing on ethnographic data from three villages relocated for iron ore mining in the north of Sierra Leone, this thesis seeks to show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR, as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change. The main findings are, first that different women perform different aspects - economic, sociocultural and political - of their agency in different ways in a post-MIDR context. Second, that resources and physical structures associated with nature embodied women's agency pre-MIDR and MIDR initiates a critical juncture through a rapid change in access to these resources. Third, this change in resources and physical structures – informed by exogenous international and national systems - threatens women's agency and the continuity of local economic, sociocultural and political systems. Fourth, that different women react to the effect of the change in resources and physical structures in myriad ways, including adaptation, avoidance, passive and active resistance. Women are therefore found to be agents in preserving and transforming different aspects of their agency and local systems in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Mining-induced displacement and resettlement (MIDR) is a phenomenon associated with large-scale commercial mining and is particularly prominent in low-income countries (Owen and Kemp, 2015). The negative consequences of commercial extraction and MIDR on rural indigenous people include inter alia inadequate remuneration (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Idemudia, 2010; Hilson, 2012; Zulu and Wilson, 2012; Maconachie, 2014; Wilson, 2015) and environmental degradation (Akiwumi, 2012; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013a; Jenkins, 2014). There is also an extensive list of negative physical impacts caused by MIDR that affect women in particular, such as the loss of natural water sources, sacred spaces and the degradation of land (Bhanumathi, 2002; Downing, 2002; Owen and Kemp, 2015). While the negative economic, sociocultural and political effects of these impacts have been noted to varying extents, the complexity and culturally specific shape of these effects and how women respond to them, particularly in the Sub-Saharan African context, remains underexplored in the academic debate.

In this thesis, I go beyond existing scholarship on MIDR to examine the complex economic, sociocultural and political effects MIDR has had on women in three villages in the north of Sierra Leone - Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria - that all have been relocated for the large-scale extraction of iron ore to take place on their ancestral land. At the core of this thesis is the ontological exploration of how local women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context.

The main aim of this thesis is:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

To achieve this, I examine how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency in turn shapes MIDR and its effects as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. In this thesis, wellbeing is defined as a measure of happiness and satisfaction with life, as measured by the individual living it (McGregor *et al.*, 2009). Wellbeing is viewed as subjective; as factors that influence wellbeing including health, prosperity and happiness are likely to be perceived differently by different people within and across cultures (Diener and Suh, 2003; Gough *et al.*, 2007; McGregor *et al.*, 2009). Wellbeing is, at least in part, enabled by a person's ability to perform their economic, sociocultural and political agency in the way that they choose to and therefore their access to the necessary resources (Sen, 1993; White and Ellison, 2007). Wellbeing is situated in the sense that the socio-cultural context and local beliefs and relationships influence people's perceptions of individual and collective life satisfaction (Rao, 2017).

Individual and collective wellbeing are interrelated (White, 2010). In Kuranko society, an individual's ability to act and maintain their wellbeing, for example a woman providing food for her family, enhances happiness for the family and the society (collective wellbeing) (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Kuranko women's caretaking role in society means they are largely responsible for collective wellbeing, achieving this enables them to fulfil their role and therefore enhances their individual wellbeing. In this thesis, I examine how women respond to the rapid change in resources that MIDR causes in order to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing (cf. Gough *et al.*, 2007).

In this thesis, different women are distinguished on the grounds of life phase in particular, which – as the empirical observations in my three field sites will show –

tends to be interrelated with status (such as position of wife in polygamous marriages), cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience.

To achieve my aim I have three key objectives:

- 1) to demonstrate the *specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change* by examining how *women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and in physical structures it causes*, specifically the structure of the village and the house and access to land and water. A non-organic trigger of social change differs from an organic trigger, such as the gradual growth of a local industry that would allow slower adaptation over time (addressed particularly in chapter 5).
- 2) to examine the ways in which *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems shape MIDR* and the *conflicts and impacts this has on local economic, sociocultural and political systems* (addressed particularly in chapter 4).
- 3) to examine the diverse nature of *women's reactions, which includes adaptation, avoidance, passive and active resistance (including involvement in mining-related social movements) to MIDR* and its effects. Moreover, to explore how these reactions differ on the grounds of life phase, interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience (addressed particularly in chapter 6).

The main findings of my research are, first that different women perform different aspects - economic, sociocultural and political - of their agency in different ways in order to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing for themselves and their community in a post-MIDR context. Second, that resources and physical structures associated with nature (the structure of the village and the house, land and water) embodied women's agency pre-MIDR, in the sense that they were drawn upon in the enactment of women's agency and symbolized women's reproductive responsibilities. MIDR initiates a critical juncture and opportunity for change at the local level through the rapid change - loss, degradation and provision - in access to these resources and physical structures, which influences how women perform their agency post-MIDR. Third, this change in access to resources and physical structures

– informed by exogenous international and national capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems - threatens ‘customary’ forms of women’s agency and the continuity of local economic, sociocultural and political systems. Fourth, that different categories of women, (outlined above) react to the effect of the change in resources and physical structures in a diversity of ways, including *adaptation*, *avoidance*, *passive* and *active resistance*. As such, women are active agents in the preservation and transformation of different aspects of their agency and local economic, sociocultural and political systems, in their efforts to maintain and transform individual and collective wellbeing.

Significantly, women’s different reactions to the effects of MIDR illustrate two key points. The first is that, depending in particular on their life phase, women tend to have differing values for different resources and physical structures, thereby emphasising the heterogeneity of women. For example, when considering the sociocultural effects of MIDR, my research shows that *mamas* (women in the Kuranko ‘grandmother’ life phase, see appendix 1 for Kuranko definitions) react to the loss of certain resources and physical structures such as the change in the structure of the house, differently to *musubas* (women in the Kuranko ‘young’ life phase). The second is that although different women react differently to MIDR and its effects, when considering the outcome of these reactions, there are clear differences depending on whether they relate to economic, sociocultural or political spheres of their agency. For example, women preserved their sociocultural agency and the local sociocultural system through their reactions. In contrast, women are enacting their post-MIDR economic agency in a new way and have transformed the post-MIDR economic system(s). This illustrates that the sociocultural aspect of women’s agency is most valuable and therefore resistant to change and at the same time, critical to individual and collective wellbeing.

MIDR

Due to the magnitude of large-scale mining in developing countries and on the African continent more specifically¹, many people face relocation so that mining can

¹ Natural resource extraction plays a dominant social, economic, and political role in 81 countries and accounts for a quarter of global GDP. 30% of the world’s mineral reserves,

take place on their land² (Perks, 2012; Owen and Kemp, 2015). This is particularly prevalent in resource-rich post-conflict countries, where there is a growing trend for governments to prioritise large-scale extraction as a national economic recovery strategy. Examples of this can be seen in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sierra Leone (Obidegwu, 2004; Grundel, 2010; Perks, 2012), where extraction of natural resources has been incorporated into post-conflict economic development strategies with the aim of boosting the national economy and reducing post-war unemployment (Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Grundel, 2010; Maconachie and Hilson, 2011; Perks, 2012). However, evidence suggests that a small number of elite males reap the economic benefits of mining and the extraction of other natural resources, while the majority of rural indigenous communities, particularly women, suffer from the most detrimental impacts (Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; Wilson, 2015). Particularly in post-conflict Sub-Saharan African states, male government officials are accused of taking financial kickbacks from extractive corporations in exchange for unconstrained access to natural resources (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Idemudia, 2010). The way in which women react to this at the local level is understudied.

The distinct nature of MIDR and the context in which it frequently takes place has a unique influence on the way women's agency is performed in the post-MIDR context, including the temporary, capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal nature of international commercial mining; the post-conflict context in which it is being prioritised; the patriarchal nature of Sub-Saharan African society; and the distinct and varied structures of indigenous communities.

It is worth noting here that both the mining industry and some indigenous societies, including Kuranko, are categorised as patriarchal (Jackson, 1977a) in the sense that the structures support male domination and resource control (Rao, 2017); however, the ways in which patriarchal systems can differ, interact with each other and conflict goes largely unrecognised (though see, Kabeer and Van Anh, 2002). For

10% of the world's oil and 8% of the world's natural gases are found on the African continent (World Bank, 2018a).

² The exact number of people relocated for mining is unknown. However, the amount of people that are displaced for development initiatives (including mining) is estimated to be 10 million a year (Forced Migration Online, 2011).

example, while Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria are patriarchal in the sense that men are considered *fisa*³ (higher) than women and have greater decision-making power, women are decision-makers in certain aspects of life such as cooking and feeding the family (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Large-scale commercial mining is defined as patriarchal because men are the primary decision-makers and at the international, national and local level, make up the greater proportion of financial benefactors (Jenkins, 2014). In contrast, women reap limited financial benefits and are disproportionately affected by the detrimental aspects (Jenkins, 2014).

In line with patriarchal norms that men are the decision-makers, the mining company, previously African Minerals Ltd. (referred to as AML from here on)⁴ and now Shandong Iron and Steel Group (referred to as Shandong from here on)⁵, provides food to male heads of households. This conflicts with local norms according to which women are the decision-makers when it comes to food. Additionally, the way in which food is allocated does not take into consideration local sociocultural realities, including polygamous family units having more people to feed or female headed households (prevalent as a result of the civil war), the latter of whom do not receive a provision. The way in which food is allocated by the international mining company according to patriarchal norms is therefore shown to threaten local women's agency in patriarchal society.

The 'Western modern' nature of MIDR refers to the prioritisation of colonial notions of efficiency, individualism and the rejection of tradition (Mignolo, 2011), that stands in contrast to customary Kuranko society, including maintaining *namui* (custom) or 'what went before' (see subsection 1.3.1 for detail). Describing MIDR as being bound in 'Western modern' systems refers in part to some of the physical structures and corresponding actions and systems that have been provisioned as part

³ '*Fisa mantiye*' is central to understanding social hierarchies within Kuranko society. The concept connotes relative superiority between males and females, as well as between other categories of people, expressed as 'men are *fisa* than women' (Jackson, 1977a).

⁴ AML is an iron ore mining firm with its headquarters in London, England (Human Rights Watch, 2014; (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015).

⁵ Shandong is a Chinese steel company with its headquarters in Jinan, China (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015; Shandong Iron and Steel; Group Co., Ltd., 2019).

of the MIDR agreement, including the provision of ‘Western modern’ houses and the lifestyle they represent (see chapter 5 for detail). It is worth noting, that although this agreement was made between a ‘Western’ company (AML) and the ‘non-Western’ national government and a ‘non-Western’ company (Shandong) has since taken over the agreement, ‘Western modern’ structures were built for the relocated communities, adverse to their customary structures, that still stand and influence the way people live in the relocated communities today. In this thesis, I show how the various exogenous - capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal - systems that MIDR is bound in interact with local systems and therefore how MIDR causes conflict between international, national and local systems and agents.

The interaction between international, national and local systems and agents is enhanced in the context of globalisation⁶ because there is greater communication, trade and interaction between different countries (Lechner and Boli, 2012), often to the greatest benefit to so-called ‘core’ or ‘developed’ nations and detrimental to ‘peripheral’ countries (Wallerstein, 1974; Akiwumi, 2011). In the context of globalisation and development, so-called ‘developing countries’ in particular experience interjections of ‘development initiatives’ that are decided and governed by more so-called ‘developed nations’. For example, in the extraction of natural resources by multinational mining companies in a number of ‘developing countries’ including Sierra Leone, Peru and Papua New Guinea, Multinational Corporations (MNCs) reap the lion’s share of the financial rewards, often to the detriment of local communities (Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015). Because MIDR represents international and national capitalist and patriarchal systems being imposed on local customary and subsistence-based systems, the post-MIDR context provides an ideal research site for examining how international and national systems interact with local systems and how people experience and respond to this at the local level.

⁶ There is a multitude of varying definitions of the term globalisation. Most relevant for this thesis is Giddens’ (1991, p.64) definition: ‘Globalisation can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.’

Despite the magnitude of large-scale mining and the frequency of people being displaced and relocated from proposed mine sites in post-conflict states in Africa, there is limited research on the specific sociocultural effects of this (Perks, 2012), particularly for women (Owen and Kemp, 2015). In this thesis I address this gap by examining how women's agency is shaped by MIDR and how women's agency in turn shapes MIDR and its effects, as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing. In so doing, I contribute to discourse on the feminisation of mining theory and the mining literature more broadly. I do so firstly, by examining how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR, post-conflict Sub-Saharan African context, as the majority of feminisation of mining theory research has been conducted in Australia (Mayes and Pini, 2010; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b), Canada (Mercier, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b), Latin America (Jenkins, 2015), Asia (Lahiri-Dutt and Burke, 2011; Mahy, 2011) and Papua New Guinea (Macintyre, 2011).

Second, I consider MIDR as a unique phenomenon that requires its own area of research. MIDR and its effects have to date been synonymous with general development-induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR) (see Cernea, 1995), which masks the peculiarities of the phenomenon and the unique nature of the mining industry (Owen and Kemp, 2015). This includes, but is not limited to, mining being temporary and finite at a given site (due to the depletion of resources), which often makes the lives and livelihoods of those affected by mining and MIDR uncertain (Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012; Owen and Kemp, 2015; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016).

Third, while scholarly attention concerned with the gendered nature of mining has grown over the last decade (see Mayes and Pini, 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015), this has largely focused on women being employed by mining companies in the Global North (see Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Mayes, 2014) and the detrimental impact mining has on women (see Delgado *et al.*, 2011; Jenkins, 2015). This includes women's involvement in mining-associated commercial sex work (see Macdonald, 2002; 2006; Delgado *et al.*, 2011), women being vulnerable to high rates of domestic violence in mining communities (see Delgado *et al.*, 2011; Kelly *et al.*, 2014), the environmental problems associated with mining that women are particularly

vulnerable to (see Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2015) and the detrimental impact MIDR has on women in particular (see Bhanumathi, 2002; Downing, 2002; Owen and Kemp, 2015), though the latter has received comparatively little attention. I contribute to the broader literature on the gendered nature of mining by shifting away from the notion of female victim/male perpetrator and structural violence dichotomies that dominate the literature, to emphasise women's agency as critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing in mining affected communities.

Fourth, beyond the small body of literature dedicated to the feminisation of mining theory, the majority of mining discourse when it does consider gender, tends to assume women are a homogenous group that suffer from the negative consequences of the capitalist industry that mining is a part of (Mahy, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015, see for example Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). I highlight the need for the diversity of women's agency to be recognised as a variable in understanding prominent themes in the literature, including the resource curse, the relationship between mining and local wellbeing and mining-related resistance (see section 1.4).

Fifth, I contribute to the literature on mining-related social movements by exploring these in a Sub-Sahara African context, as the majority of research on mining-related resistance has focused on Latin America (see Muradian *et al.*, 2003; Bebbington, 2007; Jenkins, 2015).

I contribute to the limited research concerned with how women's agency is affected in mining affected communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by examining how women enact their agency in three post-MIDR villages in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone is rich in natural resources and has a history of international mineral extraction being promoted as a development strategy, however it remains one of the least developed countries in the world both economically and socially, including in terms of gender equality (African Economic Outlook, 2018; UNDP, 2018). Sierra Leone is therefore an ideal case study for examining how international mining and MIDR as a development initiative affects women at the local level. In the next section I present the background to large-scale commercial mining and MIDR in Sierra Leone,

including the national economy, the history of mining in the country and the commonality of non-organic triggers of social change.

1.2 Brief background

1.2.1 Sierra Leone economy

Sierra Leone is rich in fertile land and water and boasts an abundance⁷ of natural resources, including diamonds, rutile, gold, bauxite, iron ore and recently discovered oil and gas (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013; African Economic Outlook, 2014). Agriculture is the largest economic contributor, being responsible for over 50% of the country's GDP, with over 60% of the population being involved in agricultural-related occupations, mainly at the subsistence level (African Economic Outlook, 2014). Sierra Leone has a complex land law system, with land in Freetown being allowed to be privately owned, compared to land in the provinces which is governed by customary law and is classed as a communal land system in which no individual owns land (Action Aid, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2014). Within the provinces, 83% of the land in all districts is family-owned and the rest is community-owned. Land is held for the benefit of the family and granted access to by an older male family member; however, there are exceptions to this in the east and south of the country where women enjoy greater rights compared to in the north, where my field sites are located (Action Aid, 2013). The Paramount Chief is the custodian of the community land and, in consultation with the Chiefdom Council (consisting of the Paramount Chief, Chiefdom Councillors and elders of land-holding lineages, formerly known as Tribal Authorities), manages and grants access to this land (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014; Action Aid, 2013). Under the Provinces Land Act Cap. 122, the Chiefdom council is responsible for granting access to land to both 'natives' and 'non-natives' (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014; Action Aid, 2013).

After agriculture and agriculture-related occupations, including hunting, forestry and fishing, mining was the second largest contributor to GDP (approximately 11.6%) in

⁷ 'Abundance' refers to absolute amount of resource rents available in per capita terms. In comparison to 'dependence' which means that rents from resources are the most important source of income relative to other value adding activities (Basedau and Lay, 2009).

2013 (African Economic Outlook, 2014). In 2014, approximately 14,000 jobs were provided by large-scale mining, 300,000 people were directly employed in the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector and 1.8 million were involved in associated service industries and markets (Hilson and McQuilken, 2014; Rickard *et al.*, 2017). While agriculture is the largest contributor to the country's national economy, mining has been predicted by African Economic Outlook (2014) to be the main driver of GDP growth⁸, with iron ore making the most significant contribution to this. In Sierra Leone, industrial large-scale iron ore extraction has been a popular development strategy for nearly a century and has been promoted as a post-war reconstruction strategy for over a decade (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). Sierra Leone's eleven-year civil war (March, 1991 to January, 2002) left the country's economy, infrastructure and society badly damaged and in need of reconstruction (Gberie, 2005). Commercial large-scale extraction is an important part of the national economic development strategy to transform the largely subsistence-based economy to a capitalist market-driven one (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013).

1.2.2 History of mining

Prior to the civil war in Sierra Leone, diamonds, rutile, gold, iron ore and bauxite exports contributed approximately 20% of the country's GDP and 15% of its fiscal revenues (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). Mining provided livelihoods to an estimated 250,000 people (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). During the war, large-scale mining stopped and mines were closed (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013); however, informal small-scale mining is argued to have contributed to the duration of the civil war (Davies, 2000; Ross, 2002). After the war, commercial large-scale mining was thought to be essential to the (re)growth of the economy that had been badly damaged by the civil war (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). Jalloh *et al.* (2013) explain that closed mines were re-established and previously proven reserves were revisited, but argues that foreign investment is the key to economic (re)growth in the post-conflict era. In order to attract foreign investment, new mining policies were incorporated into the Mines and Minerals Act (2007).

⁸ Sierra Leone's GDP was growing at a rate of 13.3%, which was one of the fastest growing in the world until 2013. The country's GDP peaked at 15.2% in 2012 (compared to an average growth of 4.6% between 2008 and 2011). Sierra Leone's rapid economic growth was largely driven by the iron ore industry, which was spurred on by China's economic growth and demand for iron ore (Steinweg and Römgen, 2015).

Iron ore extraction has been an economic contributor to the national economy since 1933, when Sierra Leone Development Committee (DELCO) began iron ore production at the Marampa mine in the town of Lunsar, Port Loko District. Mining of iron ore has continued in different parts of the country on and off by different companies ever since (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). Iron ore was discovered in the Archean Sula Mountain-Kangari Hills greenstone belt, close to Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria villages prior to 1931 and extraction has continued at this site, known as the Tonkolili mine, although not continuously, to this day. Relevant to this thesis, AML began the physical aspect of mining in 2011, including relocating three communities, subsequently going into liquidation and being bought out by Shandong in 2015 (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015).

Tonkolili is estimated to have an iron ore deposit of between 5 billion and 12.8 billion tons, making it one of the largest deposits of magnetite in Africa (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). Despite this, the impact of large-scale mining on the local populations is largely unknown, but is reported by a number of Human Rights reports to be in stark contrast to the positive effect it is promoted to have on the country's national economic development (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). People are reported to endure a multitude of negative effects from mining, such as forced relocation, loss of land, cultural sites and adequate clean water sources and a number of human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015).

1.2.3 Non-organic triggers of social change in Sierra Leone

I have categorised MIDR as a 'non-organic trigger of social change'. I define a ***non-organic*** trigger of social change as a process or event that causes social change that originates externally, i.e. based on exogenous economic, sociocultural and political systems, and is therefore not natural (organic) to the people and place experiencing it. This is a common attribute of many so-called 'development initiatives' that are externally designed and implemented by exogenous actors. 'Exogenous actors' refers to anyone involved in the implementation of the initiative that is not from the community it is being implemented in. This can include both international actors, such as international mining company employees, and domestic actors, such as national mining company employees and government representatives, who are not

from the community. Many ‘development initiatives’, such as hydro-electric dams and large-scale infrastructure (Hathaway and Pottinger, 2006; Taylor, 2006; Carmody, 2009; Weng *et al.*, 2017), NGO projects, including water wells, schools and health centres (Devereux, 2008) and the commercial extraction of natural resources (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014) are designed and initiated by exogenous actors. It is worth noting, that many non-organic triggers of social change, while designed and initiated by exogenous actors, are also encouraged and/or accepted by certain local actors. The non-organic aspect of MIDR is particularly pertinent, as mines are commonly located in remote rural locations in developing countries, in which local populations live ‘customary’ lives very different from the ‘Western modern’ and capitalist systems that large-scale commercial mining imposes through MIDR (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Owen and Kemp, 2015).

An event or process is a non-organic trigger of social change if, in addition to being non-organic, it generates the start (*trigger*) of a process of change. This is particularly relevant to MIDR, as mining and MIDR are not introduced gradually but imposed rapidly and can have a ‘shock effect’ on the people that experience it (Owen and Kemp, 2015). MIDR has the potential to *trigger* rapid social change, due to systems, infrastructure and people not having time to evolve to adjust to the change in resources it causes. Instead, people are confronted by MIDR and its effects and forced to react, for example, *adapting*, *avoiding* or *resisting*. I contribute to the literature by examining the ways in which the ‘non-organic’ aspect of MIDR and the speed at which this phenomenon is introduced acts to transform a society, as opposed to it being organically reproduced. ‘*Organic*’ change is domestically introduced and happens gradually, enabling systems and infrastructures to develop and *adapt to* the change in resources at the same pace as the change. For example, deindustrialisation in the UK was instigated largely by the state (the Conservative governing party at the time). While changes in the global economy were influencing the industrial sector in the UK, they were not being imposed by an external force and de-industrialisation within the country was taking place at the same time as changes to the industrial sectors at the global level (Rose *et al.*, 1984; Pacione, 1990).

International commercial large-scale mining initiates a critical juncture, in being a moment of flux that has the potential to trigger national economic, sociocultural

and/or political change (Mahoney, 2000). The concept of critical junctures is that during a short period of instability where previous rules of the (social, political or economic) game become vulnerable due to internal or external pressures, actors have the opportunity to make decisions about potential changes to institutions, which influences path dependencies and the course of long-term national development (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015). In this thesis, I draw on the concepts of critical junctures and path dependency in my analysis of how MIDR creates a critical juncture at the local level and how women, through their response to MIDR, influence the post-MIDR economic, sociocultural and political systems at the local level. The unique nature of mining, namely it being inherently temporary and finite, raises questions about whether MIDR and its effects, including changes to agency and economic, sociocultural and/or political systems, will last beyond the life of mining (Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012; Owen and Kemp, 2015; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016).

The majority of literature that considers non-organic triggers of social change focuses on the role of international agents (see Cerny, 2000; Newell, 2005; Akiwumi 2011; 2012). My analysis goes beyond the role that international agents play in non-organic triggers of social change at the global level, by also considering the international and national capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems and rules that are involved and how this is experienced at the local level. In my research I do this by examining how international and national systems that MIDR is bound in, influences the local economic, sociocultural and political systems it is interacting with and how this affects individual women’s agency.

The term ‘non-organic trigger of social change’ can be applied to a number of other phenomena that bring about social change. In addition to commercial extraction of natural resources, other examples of non-organic triggers include so-called ‘development initiatives’, such as building hydro-electric dams and large-scale infrastructure and NGO projects, including water wells, schools and health centres. Triggers such as these share a number of common factors that are likely to result in similar social consequences and/or reactions at the local level. Yet thus far the commonalities of these diverse triggers have gone largely unrecognised. For example, the aforementioned triggers are often promoted as national development

strategies (Aryee, 2012; Jalloh *et al.*, 2013); marginalised people are frequently included in the list of target beneficiaries but in reality have been shown to reap limited rewards (see allAfrica, 2018; WaterAid, 2018); and people have reacted in the form of protests when projects have fallen short of their development promises (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Maconachie, 2014).

These ‘development initiatives’ are also often exogenously imposed and the actors orchestrating them are often from outside of the society in which the project is being implemented or designed to benefit (Devereux, 2008; Akiwumi, 2014). While it should be noted that these ‘development initiatives’ are frequently in collaboration with domestic actors, these actors are not necessarily from the community in which the project is to be implemented and are therefore also exogenous. For example, AML worked with the state government and the Paramount Chief, both of whom are non-indigenous to the three communities, to plan and orchestrate the relocation of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. When implementers do not understand the local cultural values of a society, this can result in decisions being made that are at odds with sociocultural norms; projects then have unintended consequences and at the most extreme, fail (Dedu *et al.*, 2011; Ika, 2012; Akiwumi, 2014).

My findings demonstrate the damaging effects of implementing ‘development initiatives’ without considering sociocultural beliefs. For example, Western toilets have been provided and promoted as beneficial for my case study communities. From a Western perspective, providing Western toilets for a community would be seen as an appropriate strategy in contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation (UN, 2019). However, as my findings show, if the strategy is inappropriate in terms of sociocultural norms and beliefs or for practical reasons, the project is unlikely to succeed and may have unforeseen negative consequences (see chapter 5).

Throughout this thesis, I examine how MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change both shapes and is shaped by women’s agency. Additionally, I argue that women’s agency is (re)shaped by social systems and social norms that are influenced by other organic and non-organic triggers of social change that have taken and continue to take place in the country. In this subsection, I outline a number

of non-organic triggers of social change and to some extent the effect these have on women's agency in Sierra Leone. However, it should be noted, that this is only a brief review of the limited literature and is in need of a more thorough empirical exploration. Sierra Leone has experienced a range of non-organic triggers of social change, including colonialism and exogenous so-called 'development initiatives', such as missionary work, NGO and foreign-invested projects, including large-scale commercial extraction of natural resources, that have transformed the way women's (and men's) agency is performed. Although large-scale commercial extraction of natural resources is an example of a national 'development initiative', in this section it is examined separately due to its unique nature, i.e. it being finite and temporary and it being the focus of this thesis.

Below, I outline a number of non-organic triggers of social change that have significantly influenced and continue to influence how women's agency is performed in Sierra Leone today. Thus, in addition to MIDR, these non-organic triggers of social change are presented as additional factors influencing how women's agency is performed in the post-MIDR context.

Extraction of natural resources

International, large-scale mining is presented as a non-organic trigger of social change, due to its exogenous nature and the speed at which it is introduced, that influences local mining-affected communities and women in particular in specific ways.

Despite Sierra Leone being rich in extractive resources, the country remains poor and local people that live/lived on or close to a mining site are reported to reap few benefits and suffer the most detrimental consequences of mining (see section 1.2). While large-scale commercial extraction is presented as an economic development strategy for Sierra Leone (see Jalloh *et al.*, 2018), there is a tendency, for local communities and local women in particular to be disadvantaged by large-scale extraction (Mason, 2014; Talbot, 2019). The mineral governance framework is also criticised for its lack of attention to women's involvement at any level of the mining industry, including women experiencing the effects of mining, women small-scale and large-scale miners and women in managerial positions (Rickard *et al.*, 2017).

Mining in Sierra Leone is practiced in numerous ways, including large-scale, artisanal and small-scale, all of which are found to increase the vulnerability of women and girls (Talbot, 2019). For example, in mining-affected communities, domestic violence towards women, rape and teenage pregnancies are found to be higher than in non-mining affected communities (Talbot, 2019). Additionally, in the south of Sierra Leone, local women's resource-based livelihoods are shown to be negatively affected by large-scale rutile mining (Akiwumi, 2011). This highlights how mining in Sierra Leone has the potential to reduce women's agency.

Women are estimated to make up only 10% of the large-scale mining workforce in Sierra Leone (Rickard *et al.*, 2017). Koidu Ltd., a diamond mining company operating in the north of the country, also actively promoted the participation of women in education and sport through its CSR strategy (Rickard *et al.*, 2017). This demonstrates the ways in which mining has enhanced women's agency in Sierra Leone.

Colonialism

The beginning of the colonial period in Sierra Leone⁹ in 1896 marks a non-organic trigger of change in political, social and economic values, systems and structures (Harvey, 1971). This includes the rapid introduction of exogenous systems including: a new governing system; a British monetary system; a British education system and international large-scale commercial mining (Harvey, 1971). Despite Sierra Leone gaining independence from Britain on 27th April 1961, colonial influences continue to affect people's lives and women's and men's agency in Sierra Leone (Harvey, 1971). However the empirical evidence to support this remains limited.

In the colonial era in Sierra Leone, a British governing style was imposed. As part of this, the country was split up into Freetown, the capital, and the rest of the country, which became known as the periphery (Day, 2015). Freetown was home to the

⁹ European contact with Sierra Leone began in 1447, when Portuguese explorers arrived in the country. However, the beginning of what became known as a British Crown Colony was established in 1792 by The Sierra Leone Company (Njoh and Akiwumi, 2012).

national government and subject to British laws in contrast to the peripheral areas where a form of customary rule existed (Day, 2015). These peripheral areas were, and continue to be, governed by Paramount Chiefs. A Paramount Chief, whether a woman or a man, must come from a ruling family, originally recognised by colonial authorities (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2014; Day, 2015). Under the Paramount Chief system, the Paramount Chief rules the local population and maintains the pre-existing political systems (Day, 2015) (see section 1.3).

In northern regions of Sierra Leone, customary practices allow only men to occupy the Paramount Chief position, although women sub-chiefs and Mammy-Queens (female leader who represent women) are common (Day, 2015). In comparison, in southern regions of the country, women are allowed to be Paramount Chiefs (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Customary law and governance is particularly strong in the rural north and is often discriminatory towards women (Baker, 2007). For example, in the 1991 Constitution women and men are equal, but under customary law, women are often treated as legal minors to men (Coulter, 2009).

Today, Sierra Leone is a constitutional republic with a directly elected president and a unicameral legislature. Parliament is made up of representatives from each of the 14 districts and 12 Paramount Chiefs from the 12 rural districts. During the time of the research, the All People's Congress party (APC) had been in power since 2007. All women gained the vote in 1961 in the same year Sierra Leone became independent, just 4 years after the majority of men were able to vote (Adams, 2014).

During the colonial period, cash crops were introduced into Sierra Leone and resulted in a shift in gender roles (Leach, 1994; Coulter, 2009). As a result of farming cash crops, women's opportunities and ability to continue subsistence farming were restricted by new regulations pertaining to marriage and land ownerships, thereby increasing women's dependence on men (Leach, 1994; Coulter, 2009). Coulter (2009) argues that these restrictions carried on long after the colonial period and for some women, have lasted up to the present day. During the colonial times, men were forced into the capitalist labour market and wage earning surpassed food production in terms of contributing to the survival of the household; women's non-financial contribution to the household became less valued and their social

status deteriorated (Schmidt, 1991). It should be noted that in some remote rural areas, such as my case study villages, the colonially imposed capitalist market-driven economic system had not infiltrated pre-MIDR, and they retained a largely subsistence-based economy (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

During the colonial period, a European education system was introduced by Christian missionaries in many African countries, within this, formal education of boys was prioritised and girls were educated in domestic duties (Mianda, 2002). This is believed to be a method of imposing the European family ideal of the time, in which women took care of the home and were subordinate to men (Schmidt, 1991; Mianda, 2002). Girls' education still lags behind boys' in many African countries, including Sierra Leone, which is argued to be as a result of colonial ideals and education structures (Mianda, 2002; TRC, 2004).

The literature concerned with colonialism in Sierra Leone has been critiqued as being overly androcentric, on the whole ignoring the role women played during the colonial period (Geiger, 1996; Bangura, 2012). White (1984), Coquery-Vidrovitch (1997) and Bangura (2001; 2012) argue that where women are discussed in the literature, their economic and political agency is overlooked. By contrast, White (1984) and Coquery-Vidrovitch (1997) describe how Creole women during the colonial period took on a number of roles including trading in the 'big market' in Freetown, acting as judges and establishing a number of women's political organisations (that are still in existence today) and how this enabled their economic, social and political agency. The difference between women from different ethnic groups and thus the heterogeneity of women in Sierra Leone, is demonstrated by Creole women being described as being dominant over Temne and Mende women (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1997).

Bangura (2012) critiques the literature for largely ignoring the agency of non-Creole women in colonial society. Bangura (2012) describes Creole women sharing commercial institutions such as markets with non-Creole women including Temne women, therefore demonstrating how women from other ethnic groups also played a role in the economic and social growth of the colony.

In contrast, some of the colonial literature more broadly (Schmidt, 1991) argues that colonisation was not the only factor influencing women's agency during the colonial period and that customary patriarchal beliefs were also a factor. For example, pre-existing indigenous and newly imposed European structures of patriarchal control both reinforced and transformed each other, evolving into new forms of domination over women that benefited both African men, particularly Chiefs, and colonial rulers.

'Development initiatives'

The third type of non-organic trigger of social change that affects women's agency is so-called 'development initiatives', a type that Sierra Leone has experienced in abundance. As previously mentioned these are often exogenous in nature, being planned outside of the community they are designed for, and orchestrated by actors non-indigenous to the community.

Sierra Leone has been a 'beneficiary' of international 'assistance' since the colonial period. Providers of this 'assistance' include missionary groups, international development organisations and international investors into the development of the country's infrastructure (Miller, 2019). A major influx of international assistance was triggered by the country's civil war. Various international organisations played roles in post-conflict assistance, including supplying services and goods at the end of the war and then shifting efforts to so-called 'development activities' (Miller, 2019).

In 2015, approximately half of the government budget was provided by foreign assistance, with international organisations having a decision-making role in how this money is spent (Miller, 2019). Internationally funded development initiatives frequently have as one of their aims the 'empowerment of women'; however, what the achievement of this looks like, who measures this and how it is achieved is unclear (see Oxfam, 2019; USAID, 2019). A complex relationship exists between international organisations and local Sierra Leone community members, created at least in part by the former planning and initiating interventions with a Western lens, at times adverse to local sociocultural norms (Kaplan, 2013; Miller, 2019). This includes some development initiatives that have ignored the specific needs of local women (Miller, 2019).

I have highlighted that there remains limited research into how the aforementioned non-organic triggers of social change influence different women's agency in different ways. However, in reviewing the limited literature, I shed light on how these triggers can influence women's agency and identify the need for a more thorough exploration of this to understand the role women play in maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing during and after a trigger of non-organic social change. I contribute to this gap through my research into how different women's economic, social and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the process of national economic development; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level.

1.3 Case Study

The case study for this research includes three villages: Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. They are located in Kolansogoia chiefdom, Tonkolili district, in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone. These villages were forcibly displaced in their entirety by the government, acting through the Paramount Chief and AML for large-scale extraction of iron ore to take place on their land in 2011 (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The large-scale extraction of iron ore was the main cause of MIDR for people living in Old Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria.

1.3.1 Kuranko culture

The majority of people living in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria are members of the Kuranko ethnic group. Kuranko are patriarchal, with a male Paramount Chief (*nyeman' tigi*) as the head and custodian of the land in the chiefdom¹⁰. The *nyeman' tigi* oversees the chiefdom councillors, ward leaders and the male village chief (*sutigi*), the latter of whom is the ruling figurehead of each village (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Day, 2015). The Paramount Chief of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria is Chief of Kolansogoia chiefdom, which had a population of 35,864 in the 2015 population census (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2017). At the village level, in addition to

¹⁰ While Kuranko refer to the Paramount Chief as *nyeman' tigi*, it should be noted that other indigenous groups in the district and Chiefdom will have another term.

the *sutigi*, there is a female leader known as the ‘*dimusukuntigi*’ (or Mammy Queen) whose role it is to represent the needs of the women in the village (Jackson, 1977a; Baker, 2007; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This position is commonly filled by a respected elderly woman, who is trusted to represent the needs of the women within the community. Respect for elders is an essential part of Kuranko belief and lifestyle, which correlates with the value that is placed on maintaining *namui* (custom) or ‘what went before’ (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). In this way, Kuranko society is maintained through connection to the past (Jackson, 1977a).

My empirical observations show that the majority of people in the three relocated villages are Muslim and a number of people practice polygamy, with many men having at least two wives and five or more children. According to customary Kuranko culture, women’s and men’s actions are dictated by sex-defined and symbiotic reproductive responsibilities that maintain their lifeworlds and thus social structure (Jackson, 1977a; Giddens, 1984; Habermas, 1987; Butler, 1990; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Women’s reproductive responsibilities include giving birth and culturally prescribed domestic duties, such as taking care of the children, cooking and feeding the family, while men are responsible for providing the house for the family to live in and providing the staple food, including rice, cassava and potatoes. In Kuranko culture, physical spaces are also divided by sex, referred to as *musu dugu* (‘female place/domain’) and *ke dugu* (‘male place/domain’) (Jackson, 1977a). For example, every Kuranko village is sited near a river, one part of which is reserved for men only and one part is reserved for women only (Jackson, 1977a). According to my participants, this was true in their pre-MIDR villages; however, this has changed as a result of being relocated. Access to the river is particularly important for women as it is central to many of their reproductive roles, including fetching water, bathing their children and laundering (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Respecting and fulfilling their sex-defined and symbiotic reproductive responsibilities are important for both women and men to gain status in the community and enable individual and collective wellbeing (Jackson, 1977a; Coulter, 2009; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

Kuranko society is also governed by men's and women's secret societies, referred to generally as '*sumafen*'. Due to the inherently secret nature of *sumafen*, it is unclear what the exact purpose and functioning of it is (Jackson, 1977a). However, one acknowledged purpose of *sumafen* is to maintain distance between men and women, to inspire fear and respect for each other (Jackson, 1977a). The most important women's *sumafen* is called '*Segere*'. The main function of *Segere* is to support and defend the rights and privileges of women, including maintaining the boundaries of the *musu dugu* (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). For example, *Segere* protects the female part of the river by 'cursing it', so that if a man invades this part of the river he will be afflicted by a disease, such as elephantiasis of the testicles (Jackson, 1977a). *Segere* rituals may also be performed to rid the entire community of some kind of misfortune they are suffering from, such as an epidemic or extreme weather conditions (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

Dimusu biriye (initiation into *Segere*) is an important milestone in women's lives as it marks their entrance into *musubaye* (womanhood) and becoming a maintainer of social rules (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). *Dimusu biriye* is an expensive and elaborate event that each girl initiate's (*bire muse*) family has to raise money and pay for. *Dimusu biriye* is organized in each village by the *dimusukuntigi*. The female part of the village river is an important site in *dimusu biriye*, because this is where the *bire muse* are washed and prepared for their operation¹¹ that is performed by the *biriyela* (initiator) at the *fule* (operation site). Only after being cleansed in the river are neophytes able to assume their new '*musuba*' (newly initiated) identity. The significance of the river in *dimusu biriye* is demonstrated by *dimusu biriye* sometimes being referred to as '*koiyige*' which translates as 'crossing the water' or 'going down the riverside'¹² (Jackson, 1977a). After their operation, the neophytes are taken to the *fafei* house, where they receive

¹¹ 'Operation' here refers to female circumcision (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

¹² Traditionally male and female Kuranko initiation rituals (*biriye*), although took place separately, were very similar. However, boys are now more commonly circumcised at a Western medical facility, therefore the stream is not as vital to the male initiation ritual as it is to the female initiation ritual (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

instruction on sexual knowledge, marital duties, values of *musubaye* and in the secret lore of women's secret societies, including *Segere* (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This training is an essential aspect of *dimusu biriye*. Only after being initiated are women considered worthy and ready for marriage (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Access to water for initiation is therefore critical to entering *musubaye*, gaining status in society and maintaining individual and collective wellbeing.

Women's position within *Segere* also dictates their status outside of secret society. For example, until a girl has been initiated, she is not considered to have entered into *musubaye* and cannot be called a *musuba* ('woman big'), cannot get married and cannot have children, therefore restricting her status in society that is dependent on marrying and raising children (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Additionally, the *biriyela* (older women that perform the female initiation rituals) are granted a high social status because they enable *dimusus* (girls) to enter *musubaye* and are therefore critical to maintaining society (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Older *musubannu* (initiated women), who are involved in training the neophytes during *dimusu biriye*, are also granted a high status as they are, in addition to the *biriyela*, important agents in the transformation process from *dimusu* to *musubaye* and therefore, in the maintenance of the structure of society (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

1.3.2 MIDR process for Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria

The process of MIDR in my field sites, New Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, began in 2005 when African Minerals Limited (AML) started its exploratory phase in Kolansogoia chiefdom. Physical relocation of the three communities took place in 2011 (see below). The villages were relocated in their entirety and kept their original names, with the prefix of 'New' added and the prefix of 'Old' added when referring to the previous locations of these communities. In the same year (2011), the extraction of iron ore commenced at the Tonkolili mine, after being granted a 65 year mining licence by the President at the time (Ernest Bai Koroma) and the All People's Congress (APC) government (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

In 2009, Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria were informed by the *nyeman' tigi* that they were to be relocated and in 2011, the displacement and resettlement process for the three villages began (Human Rights Watch, 2014). These villages were relocated from their ancestral land and from the rivers in the Loma mountains to three new locations, approximately 15 kilometres from their old villages and 5 kilometres from the nearest town, Bumbuna (Human Rights Watch, 2014) (see Figure 1). Bumbuna is located in the centre of the Tonkolili District in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone. Bumbuna and the surrounding area is renowned for its abundance of iron ore and the Bumbuna Dam, the largest hydro-electric dam in the country.

Prior to being relocated, people had subsistence-based lifestyles. The majority of women and men were subsistence farmers and some women were also involved in ASM (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Prior to being relocated, people had access to fertile, family owned land and each village had a river running through it (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The river was an important resource for women in particular. For example, the river was central to women's reproductive responsibilities, including bathing their children and laundering clothes and used for *Segere* rituals, including *dimusu biriye*, as discussed above. The river was also a source of income for women. Here, women panned for gold, the money from which enabled them to pay their children's school fees.

As part of the resettlement agreement, the three villages were promised a better quality of life by AML, acting through the *nyeman' tigi*, as a result of MIDR (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römegens, 2015). However, in reality people are described as having less than before (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römegens, 2015). Local livelihoods are reported to have been negatively affected in a number of ways. This includes: receiving less compensation than they were initially promised¹³; a reduction in food, related to the lack of adequate land provided; and reduced access to water (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römegens, 2015). In addition to people's access to resources, such as

¹³ According to Human Rights Watch (2014) the relocated people received a one-time payment of between 25,000Le and 200, 000Le (£2.50-£20) for their crops and 600, 000 (£60) per family for the inconvenience of being relocated. The smaller payments lasted one week and the larger ones were paid over three months.

reduced access to land and water, physical structures, including the structure of the village and houses, have changed as a result of being relocated. For example, my participants explained that in their pre-resettlement locations they lived in mud-thatch houses that were conducive to their customary lifestyle. In contrast, in the new villages, ‘Western modern’ houses have been provided.

It is reported that residents of the three villages were not involved in the formal MIDR decision-making process and the *nyeman’ tigi* did not represent the needs and preferences of the three villages adequately (Steinweg and Römegens, 2015). The relocation of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria is described as one of the worst aspects of AML’s operations in the Tonkolili district (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römegens, 2015).

In March 2015, Shandong took over iron ore extraction at the Tonkolili mine, after AML defaulted on its loans (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). One factor contributing to AML’s downfall was its production costs being too high to compete in the global market. The global market had seen falling prices since the start of 2014, caused by a decrease in Chinese demand and an increase in iron production in Australia and Brazil (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). Additionally, the outbreak of Ebola also reduced the company’s operating capacity due to international employees being evacuated from Sierra Leone (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). According to my participants, when Shandong took over they agreed to continue fulfilling the resettlement promises that had been made by AML, including providing money, rice and water (see chapter 2 for detail). While participants reported that promises were broken by both AML and Shandong, it was also explained by many that Shandong cares less about the three communities than AML did. For example, AML was reported to give the communities gifts for religious occasions, whereas Shandong does not.

1.3.3 MIDR-related social movements

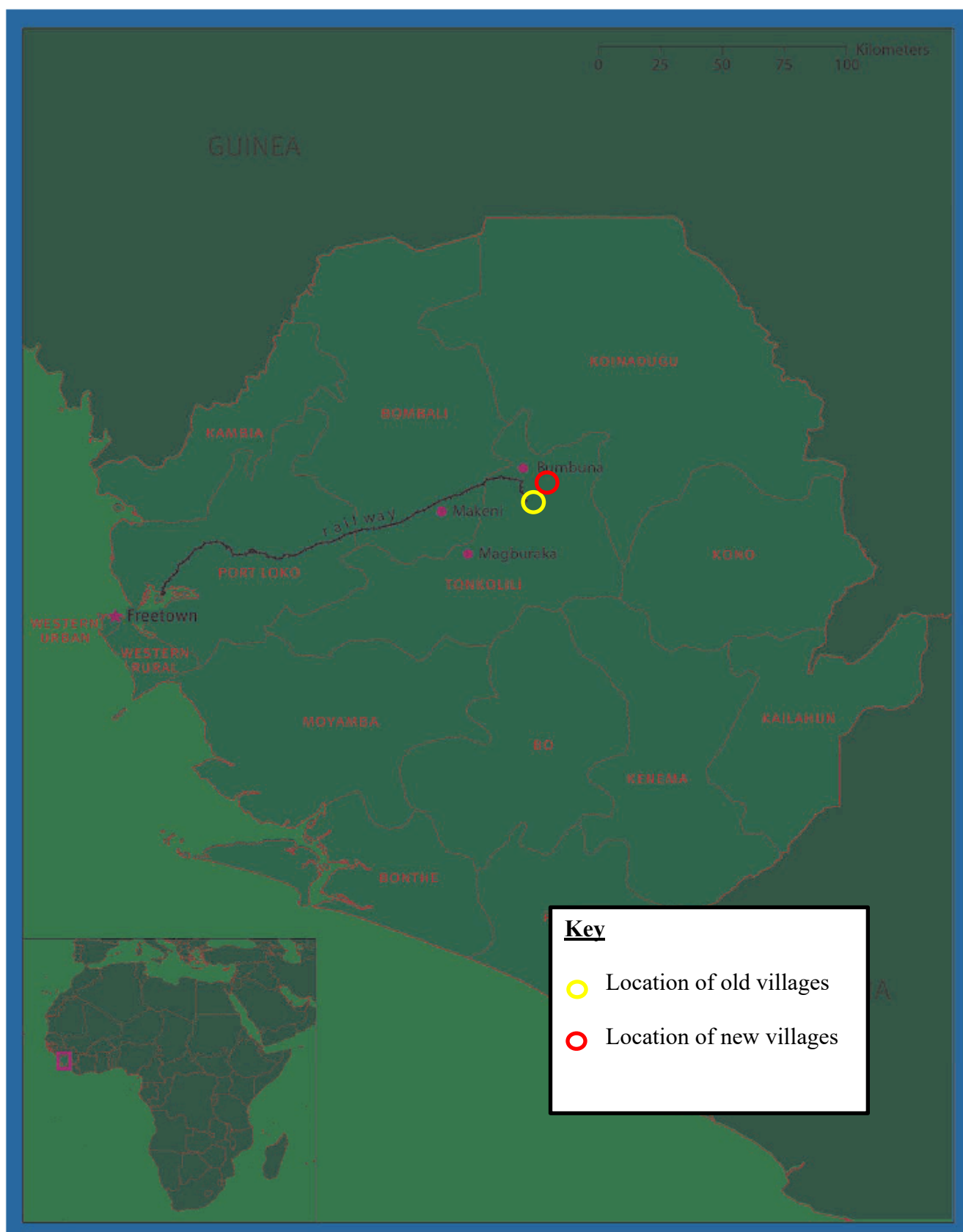
People in the three villages have protested about the relocation and its effects on a number of occasions (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Men and women have been involved in separate protests in which they have voiced their gender disparate grievances. Protests are taken to mean here individual events involving people

collectively acting to voice their shared grievance, with the aim of pursuing or preventing changes in institutional power relations (Taylor and Van Dyke, 2004; Della Porta and Diani, 2009; Pabón, 2017). These protests are part of a broader social movement concerned with the extraction of iron ore at the Tonkolili mine in the Kolansogoia chiefdom. For the purpose of this thesis, social movements are defined as a series of contentious performances, displays and/or campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims about perceived injustices on others (Escobar & Alvarez, 1992; Escobar, 1995; Tilly, 2004; Bebbington *et al.*, 2008).

There are a variety of different groups of people beyond those that have been relocated (such as employees of the mine, mine employees' relatives and disgruntled people from Bumbuna town) that have their own grievances about the Tonkolili mine (Human Rights Watch, 2014). This has led to a number of different modes of social *resistance* with differing outcomes (see chapter 6). For example, non-relocated women and men from Bumbuna took to the streets of Bumbuna in 2012 to protest about poor working conditions and inadequate pay for mine employees (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römogens, 2015). This protest in Bumbuna was joined by relocated men from Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria protesting about the loss of land and broken promises, including poor remuneration, made by the company (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The protest in Bumbuna resulted in violence between the protestors, state police and military, that has been described as reminiscent of the civil war (Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone (HRCSL), 2012). This is reported to have been caused by state police using unnecessary force to quash protests in Bumbuna (HRCSL 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014).

In contrast, the relocated women's protests in 2013 were non-violent (see chapter 6). The relocated women's protests were triggered by the loss of an adequate water supply. Relocated women protested by performing *Segere* rituals on the trainline that transports iron ore for exportation. This protest was perceived to be successful as the women's demands for water provision were subsequently met, at least in the immediate aftermath of the protest, by AML (active until 2015) supplying the three relocated villages with water.

Figure 1 Old and new locations of relocated villages



Source: Human Rights Watch (2014)

1.4 Literature Review

Mineral extraction and the economic, sociocultural and/or political change it instigates, has received considerable scholarly attention across the globe. However, the role local women play in this, beyond being presented as a homogenous group of passive victims of the negative effects, is underexplored (Lahiri-Dutt, 2011; 2015). In this section, I examine the relationship between mining and economic, sociocultural and political change, under the following themes: the resource curse (Auty, 1993; Ross, 1999; Le Billon, 2003; Collier and Hoeffler, 2005; Basedau and Lay, 2009); mining and local wellbeing (Kirsch, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; Hilson, 2012; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016); social movements concerned with natural resource extraction (Harvey, 2003; Bebbington, 2007; Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013a; Jenkins 2015); and the gendered nature of mining (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; Mayes and Pini, 2014; Jenkins, 2015). Within the last theme is the feminisation of mining theory, that is a response to the lack of attention women receive in the broader extractive industries literature, which argues that women play valuable roles and have unique experiences in the mining industry that remain largely hidden and deserve further attention. In this thesis I make a significant contribution to the feminisation of mining theory by illustrating the diversity of ways different women perform their economic, sociocultural and political agency in a post-MIDR context in order to maintain and enable individual and collective agency.

In the following subsections I outline the literature concerned with the resource curse, the relationship between mining and local wellbeing, mining-related social movements and the gendered nature of mining, including how it relates to my case study, to demonstrate the need for more recognition of the critical role women play in mining and mining-affected communities.

1.4.1 The resource curse

The resource curse refers to the paradox that countries abundant in – and dependent on – non-renewable natural resources tend to have less economic development, less democracy and more violent conflict than countries with fewer non-renewable natural resources (Auty, 1993; 2007; Sachs and Warner, 1997; Ross, 1999;

Duruigbo, 2005). There has been much academic debate about the reasons for, and exceptions to, these adverse outcomes. While natural resources are seen to be a blessing for some countries, such as Botswana, Chile and Norway that have used mineral revenue to aid the country's economic development (Larsen, 2004; Rosser, 2006; Basedau and Lay, 2009), many African countries rich in natural resources such as Nigeria, the DRC and Sierra Leone are said to be cursed as they reap limited rewards from mining and other natural resource extraction (Sachs and Warner, 1996; Ross, 1999; 2004). Most experts believe that the resource curse is not universal or inevitable and certain countries or regions fail and others succeed, due to a variety of diverse contributing factors, such as the manner in which resource income is spent, the system of government, institutional quality, the type of natural resources and how the economic development of the extractives sectors affects other economic sectors within the country (for example, the 'Dutch disease') (Karl, 1997; Ross, 2004; Le Billon, 2006; Basedau and Lay, 2009).

At the local level, the resource curse theory is said to be limiting in capturing the complex and diverse experiences of the extractive industry (Weszkalnys, 2010; Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis, 2015). Anthropologists and micro-economists have been calling for a better understanding of how the resource curse plays out at the micro, meso and macro level and highlight the advantage of an anthropological/micro-level study of the 'top level' of the extractive industry (Gilberthorpe and Papyrakis, 2015; Gilberthorpe and Rajak, 2017). This thesis responds to this by investigating how *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems shape MIDR* and how these systems interact and influence the local customary, subsistence-based systems of the relocated villages. My findings show the role women play in navigating the international and national systems that MIDR imposes and in preserving and transforming the local systems.

The key dimensions of the resource curse argument, including economic development (Sachs and Warner, 1997), political regime type (Karl, 1997; Jensen and Wantchekon, 2004; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Basedau and Lay, 2009), (re)colonisation (Hall, 2013; Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016; Anthias, 2018), the risk of civil war (Campbell, 2002; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2002; Le Billon, 2003; Collier and

Hoeffler, 2004; 2006; Ross, 2006; Basedau and Lay, 2009), peace building (Le Billon, 2003; Basedau, 2005; Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Maconachie, 2008; Grundel, 2010) and how natural resources directly or indirectly influence these dimensions, are outlined below.

Extraction and economic development

Natural resource production typically generates high economic rents but as stated above, this does not translate into economic growth for all natural resource abundant countries and regions (Sachs and Warner, 1997). For example, many countries rich in natural resources such as Sierra Leone, Peru and Papua New Guinea, remain economically poor (Sachs and Warner, 1997). Sachs and Warner (1997) outline a number of theories that explain why some resource-rich countries have slow-growing economies, suggesting that it is not the resources *per se* but indirect factors of natural resource wealth. Theories include: rentier state theory that claims high rents distract governments from investing in growth supporting public goods, such as infrastructure and legal codes (Sachs and Warner, 1997; Jensen and Wantchekon, 2004); natural resource abundance leads to greater corruption and inefficient bureaucracies (Karl, 1997; Sachs and Warner, 1997); governments have a tendency to inappropriately consume resource rents (Sachs and Warner, 1997); and natural resources tend to have volatile world prices (Sachs and Warner, 1997).

In relation to the extractive industries, ‘Dutch disease’ refers to economic development in the extractive sector and a decline in other sectors of the nation’s economy, such as agriculture and manufacturing (Auty, 2007; Nchor *et al.*, 2015; Estrades *et al.*, 2016). This is because increased revenues and/or related inflows of foreign investment related to the extractive sector, strengthens the nation’s currency, thereby increasing the exchange rate (Nchor *et al.*, 2015; Estrades *et al.*, 2016). This results in the nation’s exports becoming more expensive for other countries to buy, imports becoming cheaper and other sectors of the economy becoming less competitive, as seen in the Netherlands in the 1960s and Mauritania in 2003 (Auty, 2007; Nchor *et al.*, 2015). The result of this weakens the future economic development potential of the country (Auty, 2007). In Sierra Leone, the extraction of non-renewable natural resources, including iron ore, is promoted as a primary economic development strategy (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013). The growth of the non-

renewable extractive sector runs the risk of causing Dutch disease in Sierra Leone if other sectors, such as agriculture, become less competitive as a result of non-renewable exports, increasing the strength of the currency and increasing the exchange rate (Jackson, 2016).

In the last 50 years, exploitation, drilling and extraction of a multitude of natural resources across the African continent has been increasing, which has led to economic gains for the countries involved, for example, gold in Ghana and Sierra Leone (Hilson, 2016), diamonds in Sierra Leone and the DRC (Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Perks, 2012;), rutile and bauxite in Sierra Leone (Akiwumi, 2011), iron ore in South Africa (Tarras-Wahlberg *et al.*, 2017) and gas and oil in Nigeria (Idemudia, 2010). However, the question remains whether this so-called ‘commodity boom’ will lead to broad economic and social development that will benefit all sectors of the population (Luvhengo, 2010). For example, although Sierra Leone extracts a number of natural resources, including gold, diamonds, rutile, bauxite and iron ore (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013), an improvement of living standards and wellbeing is yet to be realised for all sectors of the population (Jackson, 2016).

Political regime types and institutions

In conjunction with the limited, though not always, economic gains that resource-rich countries reap from extraction of their non-renewable resources, political regime types and institutions are believed to be contributing factors in the resource curse argument (Karl, 1997; Ross, 2004; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006). Theories of rentier states contend that natural resources are a source of economic rent, which in turn reduces the need for governments to levy domestic taxes who therefore become less accountable to the societies they govern (Basedau and Lay, 2009; Ross, 2012; Thorp *et al.*, 2012). A negative correlation exists between natural resource dependence and levels of democracy; this is found to be especially true of oil-rich countries that have a tendency of autocratic rule (Basedau and Lay, 2009; Ross, 2012) and natural resource dependent African nations, correlating with low levels of democracy (Jensen and Wantchekon, 2004).

Institutions are also believed to be a contributing factor to the resource curse (Karl, 1997; Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006). The resource

course is often described as a relationship of ‘winners and losers’, in which institutions facilitate a minority of people gaining from natural resource extraction, while the majority of the population lose out (Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006). One explanation of this is that rich economies can afford better institutions that enable production to the benefit of the country and population at large, whereas in poor economies, weak institutions fail to prevent looting of (certain) natural resources (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006). Of particular relevance to my research is that during the colonial period in resource-rich colonised African countries, with high mortality rates, European colonising powers would not settle but instead set up export structures and extractive institutions for their own benefit, structures and institutions that have remained in place (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001). In Sierra Leone, colonisation has left a legacy of extractive-related governing institutions and systems that benefit political elites and former political powers to the detriment of indigenous communities (Akiwumi, 2014). Sierra Leone’s dual system(s) governing extraction (i.e. customary and statutory law), introduced during the British colonial period, makes land rights ambiguous (Akiwumi, 2014). For example, customary law does not recognise the State’s right to land ownership; however, statutory law states that any mineral on or under the land belongs to the state (Akiwumi, 2014). The state and international mining companies have taken advantage of this ambiguity and used their power to extract resources that under customary law belong to indigenous communities (Akiwumi, 2014).

Extraction and ‘re’ and ‘de’ colonisation

In the so-called ‘post-colonial’ period, international large-scale extraction of natural resources has been described as a form of (re)colonisation (Hall, 2013; Nhemaehena *et al.*, 2016). Many resource-rich nations, including Sierra Leone, were once colonies exploited for their natural resources, amongst other things, by European colonisers (Harvey, 1971; Hall, 2013; Anthias, 2018). This relationship between exploiters and exploited can be seen today between international mining companies, many of which have their headquarters in former colonial powers (for example AML in Britain) or newly powerful countries (for example, Shandong in China), and remote mining locations in former colonies (for example, Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria in Sierra Leone). This elicits comparable exploitative relationships between powerful (‘core’) nations and indigenous communities (Hall, 2013), in often less

economically and politically strong nations (Anthias, 2018). This relationship can also be seen within countries, with political actors exploiting indigenous communities within the country (Hall, 2013).

Particularly relevant to this thesis is the argument Nhemachena *et al.* (2016) make that Africa is not only suffering from the resource curse, but also from the curse of Western collectors of Africa's material resources, cultural artefacts and knowledge, that African countries have received little benefit from. The extraction of natural resources by international players and also academic research is presented as an aspect of (re)colonisation and part of their argument and recommendation is that research itself conducted in African countries also needs to be decolonised (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016). My research, concerned with the effects of international large-scale mining in an indigenous community, being conducted by a white British researcher in an ex-British colony, is therefore shaped by decolonising methodologies, in an attempt to represent indigenous women's true experiences of MIDR and agency in the post-MIDR context (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016) (see chapter 2).

Risk of civil war

Low levels of democracy and autocracy in resource-rich countries are believed to be one of the prominent factors in the positive correlation between natural resource abundance and violent conflict¹⁴ (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998; 2004; 2005; Ross, 1999; 2006; Campbell, 2002; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2002; Le Billon, 2003; 2006; Jensen and Wantchekon, 2004). This is because low levels of democracy and autocracy can lead to feelings of economic, sociocultural, political and cultural inequality between different groups, causing people to rebel (Stewart, 2008; Keen, 2012). This is referred to as 'grievance' in the 'greed versus grievance' debate about how natural resources may fuel violent conflict (Collier, 2000; Le Billon, 2001; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). In contrast, 'greed' refers to natural resources being desired for private gain and as a source of financing violent conflict (Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Ross,

¹⁴ One third of armed conflicts has been financed by 'conflict commodities' such as diamonds and oil since the end of the Cold War (Le Billon, 2006; Ross, 2006).

2006). Specific ways in which mineral wealth is believed to contribute to violent conflict (outlined by Ross, 2006) include: funding rebel groups (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004); weakening state institutions (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Snyder and Bhavnani, 2005); making the state a more attractive target for rebels (Fearon and Laitin, 2003); facilitating trade shocks (Humphreys, 2005); and making separatism financially attractive in resource-rich regions¹⁵ (Collier and Hoeffler, 2005; Le Billon, 2005).

Natural resources seem to be a relevant factor in both the onset and duration of civil war (Collier and Hoeffler, 2005; Ross, 2006), as mineral wealth can both create motive and opportunity for war/violence and finance the continuation of it (Le Billon, 2001; Collier and Hoeffler, 2005). The type of natural resources has been found to influence the likelihood and length of civil conflict, with ‘lootable’ resources¹⁶ such as diamonds being used as ‘loot’ and ‘booty’ by rebel forces (Le Billon, 2001; 2006). The relationship between natural resources and war is found to be curvilinear by Collier and Hoeffler (1998), with an increase in natural resources increasing the risk of civil war, while a high level of natural resources starts to reduce the risk of civil war (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998). The latter is assumed to be caused by natural resource endowment increasing the financial capacity of the government, which enables military expenditure (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998). In the case of Sierra Leone, the onset of the civil war is believed to have been caused, at least in part¹⁷, by the population’s, in particular the unemployed youth’s, grievances with the corrupt and unpopular government (APC) at the time (Davies, 2000). Diamonds and the revenue gained from them are believed to have been a major contributing factor in funding the war and the duration of it (Davies, 2000; Ross, 2002).

¹⁵ Separatism here, referring to the separation of a region that is comparatively richer in resources than another region, for the maximum financial advantage of the resource-rich region (Ross, 2006).

¹⁶ It is worth noting here that ‘lootable’ resources stand in contrast to non-lootable resources that are at the centre of my analysis. Lootable means few people and little technical equipment is needed to acquire a certain resource (e.g. alluvial diamonds) whereas non-lootable means more, skilled labour and large technical equipment is needed for extraction (e.g. gas, oil, iron ore).

¹⁷ The multitude of cause(s) of Sierra Leone’s civil have been heavily debated (see for example Richards, 1996; Davies, 2000; Ross, 2004).

Peace-building

In contrast to the rentier state theory being used to predict the negative consequences of natural resource (primarily oil) dependence on the economy, institutions and democracy, rents also provide ruling elites with potentially beneficial financial resources (Lay and Basedau, 2009). Conventional economic thinking would suggest that providing governments allocate revenues in viable public investments that are needed (roads, schools, hospitals), employment growth would be stimulated and the population as a whole would benefit (Rosser, 2006; Basedau and Lay, 2009). In this vein, scholars have argued that resource extraction is a viable post-conflict state-rebuilding tool (Basedau, 2005; Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Grundel, 2010; Maconachie and Hilson, 2011). Some African countries are thought to have been able to economically recover from war due to the ‘third commodity boom’ that began in 2003 (Radetzki, 2006). Revenue from mining has been used to aid the bringing about of peace; for example it has been attributed to defeating The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Angola (Basedau, 2005). Resource extraction continues when the rest of the economy breaks down, making it a popular tool to rebuild state economies post-war. Examples of this include Nigeria, Cameroon, Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone (Ross, 1999). In Sierra Leone, both large-scale extraction and small-scale extraction are argued to be viable post-conflict economic development strategies. For example, large-scale extraction has been promoted as a post-conflict national economic recovery strategy (Jalloh *et al.*, 2013) and small-scale extraction has been argued to reduce post-conflict unemployment, particularly for marginalised groups, including women and ex-combatants (Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Maconachie and Hilson, 2011).

In contrast, in post-conflict states in particular, the way in which the state monitors resource extraction often falls short of protecting civil society and can be used to benefit those that already hold the power (Le Billon, 2003; Maconachie, 2008). This is due to shortages in human capacity and good governance and accountability being in their early stages (Maconachie, 2008). It is common for mining companies to avoid their corporate social responsibility (CSR) in post-conflict states. For example, in Sierra Leone mining companies have failed to comply with the Mining Act of 2009 that was created to ensure international mining companies operate responsibly (Mosselmans, 2014). The companies fail to pay adequate tax because they persuaded

the government that their unorthodox fiscal arrangements and opt-outs were justified by the risks of working in a post-conflict society, despite the war having ended 10 years previously and there being no evidence of unrest within the country (Mosselmans, 2014).

This combined literature on the resource curse has informed my analysis of MIDR and the systems it imposes at the local level, as MIDR and the systems it imposes represent the international and national capitalist nature of large-scale mining, the national political system, the exploitative (colonial) nature of mining and mining being promoted as an (post-conflict) economic development strategy. I examine how these international and national systems influence and interact with local economic, sociocultural and political systems and how this affects women's agency.

Additionally, I examine how women's agency shapes the effects of MIDR, including the preservation and transformation of the local systems, as part of women's efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing.

1.4.2 Mining and local wellbeing

There is a wide literature concerned with the relationship between mining and local development in mining affected communities, including the impacts of natural resource extraction on local people's human rights (Kemp *et al.*, 2010); 'sustainable mining' (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016); and how CSR is enacted and experienced at the local level (Banks, 2009; Akiwumi, 2011; 2014; Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012; Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015). While mining is promoted as a development strategy, both after civil war and unrelated to it, by many mining corporations and national governments, seen in Chile, Botswana, Norway, the DRC and Nigeria (Basedau and Lay, 2009; Idemudia, 2010; Tarras-Wahlberg *et al.*, 2017), scholars have questioned the sustainability of mining and whether it enhances local development and people's wellbeing as a part of this (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016). This has received considerable attention from anthropologists and social scientists in the form of qualitative and case-study based research.

Impacts of natural resource extraction on local people's human rights

A wide variety of detrimental social impacts and human rights abuses is associated with the extractive industry that pose a challenge to local people's wellbeing. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, loss of livelihoods, environmental degradation, land grabbing and forced relocation (Kemp *et al.*, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014). MIDR has been included within the literature, either as part of a list of the social impacts of mining (Adam *et al.*, 2015; Owen and Kemp, 2015) or by scholars such as Cernea (1995) as an example of general development-induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR). The specific effects of MIDR has received little attention, despite the unique nature of the mining industry and the magnitude of this phenomenon across the globe (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Owen and Kemp, 2015). Owen and Kemp (2015) have thus called for a more focused analysis and separate literature on MIDR to which this thesis responds.

What is known about MIDR is that it tends to result in a loss of resources (including physical and non-physical resources such as homes, communality, productive land, income-earning assets and cultural sites) for the relocated people (Owen and Kemp, 2015; Wilson, 2019). However, less is known about the impact and influence this has on individual agency. Agency requires resources to be drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action (Giddens, 1984). If resources are not there or have been changed, intended actions may be difficult to realise and people's agency is assumed to be reduced (Giddens, 1984). As Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt (2006) explain, whenever a community's environmental resources are lost or changed, women suffer the most. This is because in many indigenous communities (including Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria), women are often responsible for collecting the essentials for subsistence (or reproduction), including food, fodder, fuel and water (Agarwal, 1992; Coulter, 2009). If the resources women need to perform their intended tasks are lost or changed through MIDR, then their individual agency may be reduced or transformed (Giddens, 1984). The ways in which local women's agency is transformed by MIDR is largely unknown.

'Sustainable mining'

Many companies such as Rio Tinto, Barrick Gold and Anglo American claim to practice 'sustainable mining', professing to promote and develop a positive

relationship between mining, the use and preservation of natural resources and improving wellbeing at the local level, often highlighting the importance of including women (Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016). However, scholars such as Hilson (2006), Kirsch (2010) and Gilberthorpe (2013) reveal the sustainable mining concept to be an oxymoron. This is due to the character of the mining industry being short-term, as a result of the extractive industry being: ‘finite’; capital intensive; dependent on a specialist and mobile workforce; vulnerable to market fluctuations; having negative environmental impacts; and frequently interrupted by local grievances (Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016). Sustainable mining is often found to only be a promotional tool for the mining companies, as many countries rich in natural resources remain poor (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Wilson, 2015; Gilberthorpe *et al.*, 2016). Often the national economy does not benefit in the long-term due to governments failing to invest in sustainable economic initiatives and there being limited local-level economic and/or social benefits from mining that would enhance people’s wellbeing (Kirsch, 2010).

CSR

CSR is a self-regulating business model developed to enable a business to be socially accountable and enhance local people’s wellbeing by addressing environmental and community development issues through its actions, including commercial extraction (Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012). In reality, mining companies have been found to prioritise meeting global performance standards over addressing the needs of social contexts (Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013b). The contribution mining makes to economic, social and political development, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, is highly debated, with many examples of mining having the adverse effect on people’s wellbeing at the local community level (Hilson, 2006; 2012; Maconachie and Hilson, 2013).

CSR and related community development, including improving local people’s wellbeing, is argued to be unsuccessful in the extractive industry context for a multitude of reasons (Idemudia, 2010). On the African continent in particular, there are a number of factors that prevent the successful implementation of CSR initiatives, such as: structural inadequacies that mean the CSR framework cannot be implemented; evidence of rentier state theory, in which the government prioritises

the revenue from mining over enhancing local wellbeing (Warner and Sachs, 1997; Jensen and Wantchekon, 2004; Idemudia, 2010); corruption; and weak governments relinquishing responsibility of local services to the mining company (Idemudia, 2010). These factors are particularly common in post-conflict contexts (Perks, 2012). When the onus of providing local services, that would otherwise be provided by the state, is on the mining company (and its CSR department), benefits to local communities are often minimal (Hilson, 2012). There are two common reasons for this: first, corporations may prioritise financial profit over local wellbeing and are therefore unwilling to invest in enhancing local people's wellbeing (Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015); second, when companies have implemented 'community development' programmes they have often facilitated minimal and/or unsustainable community development, due to a lack of understanding of the sociocultural context (Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015). Such projects can have inadvertent negative effects on local people's wellbeing.

Chinese CSR

It is worth noting that there is a specific Chinese CSR literature given that Shandong, a Chinese company took over from AML at the Tonkolili mine. Scholars such as Li (2010), Kelley (2012) and Tan-Mullins (2014) argue that Chinese extractive companies lack CSR and give less regard to local development compared to Western companies. For example, Chinese companies are reported to employ Chinese staff over local staff and keep their Chinese staff separate (Li, 2010). As a result of this, Chinese staff do not integrate into society and are described as disregarding local cultural norms (Li, 2010). Chinese companies are also reported to provide infrastructure for their own capitalist gain, without concern for future maintenance and sustainability (Kelley, 2012).

The counter argument is that this negative perception of Chinese CSR is misconceived (Pegg, 2011). Pegg (2011) argues that Chinese CSR is not necessarily worse than Western companies, rather that Western companies' CSR successes have been exaggerated, in reality both Chinese and Western companies have fallen short of CSR goals. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to make a judgement on whether Western or Chinese companies take greater corporate responsibility because MIDR

was initiated by AML and Shandong's involvement is predominantly restricted to the operatorship of the mine.

CSR and women's agency and wellbeing

Within the extractive industries literature, mining and MIDR is argued to have a negative impact on the individual and collective wellbeing of those living in mining-affected communities, particularly women (see Caxaj *et al.*, 2012; Jenkins, 2014; Mactaggart *et al.*, 2018). While CSR is promoted as a method to reduce the negative social effects of extractive industries, as outlined above, it has been found to fall short, particularly in African countries (Hilson, 2006; 2012; Maconachie and Hilson, 2013). Beyond this, there is little consideration of the importance of CSR to women's agency and wellbeing, given the unique effects mining is reported to have on women.

Much of the policy and scholarly literature presents local people and women in particular that are affected by mining and MIDR, as homogenous vulnerable victims (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006) and the government and/or mining company as the powerful agents (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). As a result of this, local women's agency, including their social responsibility and the role they play in maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing when mining companies fall short of fulfilling their CSR goes largely unrecognised (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). O'Faircheallaigh (2013a; 2013b) highlights the need for research on local individual agents' experience of mining and their response to it.

This combined literature on the relationship between mining and local wellbeing, that tends to present large-scale mining as having an adverse effect on local women's wellbeing in particular, has informed my analysis of how MIDR threatens local women's wellbeing and how women have reacted to this (cf. Gough *et al.*, 2007). The literature that deals with the relationship between mining and local wellbeing tends to do this through the lens of CSR, whereas my own analysis offers another dimension by addressing this through the lens of critical junctures.

My analysis is located in the mixed and in part conflicting policy context, including: a number of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, gender equality, clean water and sanitation and reduced inequalities; the African Mining Vision, that puts development at the centre of mining related policies; and Sierra Leone's country strategy, which promotes large-scale commercial mining as essential to national economic growth (African Development Bank Group, 2013).

1.4.3 Mining-related social movements

Social movements led by local communities are a popular reaction to mining and its related effects, due to the nature of large-scale industrial mining resulting in large-scale capital gain at the national level and/or international level and dispossession at the local level (Harvey, 2003; Bebbington, 2007; Bebbington *et al.*, 2008). There are three prominent, related but distinct theories that are used to explain why people are believed to protest against mining. These theories are 'accumulation by exploitation' (Harvey, 2003), 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003) and 'colonisation of lifeworlds' (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995). These three theories of mining-related social movements will be explored in the case of social mobilisation related to iron ore extraction at the Tonkolili mine, to explain why the three relocated communities have engaged in protests.

Why people protest

Accumulation by exploitation is when people feel they are being exploited by the mining industry or company more specifically (Harvey, 2003). A prominent example is miners and others directly employed by the mining company, and sometimes their families on their behalf, protesting for better pay and working conditions (Bebbington, 2007). In contrast, the second cause of mining-related social movements is 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003) in which people contest the restrictions imposed by the mining industry to resources such as land, water and minority rights (Bebbington, 2007). Industrial large-scale mining and extraction of other natural resources cause environmental degradation, seen for instance in the pollution of land and water from oil extraction in the Niger Delta, that local populations bear the brunt of (Oshwofasa *et al.*, 2012). The third theory that is thought to lead to social mobilisation is the 'colonisation of lifeworlds' (Habermas,

1987). Drawing on this theory, Bebbington *et al.* (2008) argue that people's everyday lives and their ability to control them, are vulnerable to the effects of the mining industry, which causes them to protest. This encompasses cultural and psychological losses caused by mining-related livelihood disarticulation (Bebbington, 2004). Social resistance along these lines is understood by Bebbington *et al.* (2008) as people trying to defend their livelihoods and customary way of life. In this thesis, women's *resistance* to the colonisation of their lifeworlds is argued to demonstrate women's agency in processes of decolonisation, in this case, the decolonisation of their lifeworlds.

Women's involvement in mining-related social movements

Although limited, the role women play in mining-related social movements has received some attention (see Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015). Primarily, this has focused on the idea that women are protesting on behalf of their mining husbands or male relatives (Lahiri-Dutt, 2014, see for example Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009). This often takes the form of protesting for better wages for their husbands and/or better living standards, seen in women's involvement in the 1984-1985 British Miner's Strike (Spence and Stephenson, 2009).

Within the academic literature, there is a growing realisation that women are not only protesting on behalf of men but also have their own grievances with the mining industry that they protest about (Spence, 1998; Jenkins, 2015). Women's grievances usually centre around the negative environmental and social consequences of large-scale commercial mining, seen in women's anti-mining activism in the Andes (Jenkins, 2015). Within the literature it is argued that women protest to protect their customary gender roles, such as cooking and taking care of the family, that come under threat from mining. For example, the use of water is important to women's gendered roles in rural Latin America; when water deteriorates as a result of mining, women's domestic chores such as tending crops and feeding their family become more difficult (Bennett *et al.*, 2005). Three common themes in women's mining-related social movements are: water, mother nature and protection for future generations (Jenkins, 2015). Jenkins (2015) makes the point that using customary notions of gender roles goes against Western 'development', but women use their

gender roles to demonstrate how mining is harmful to their wellbeing by damaging their way of life.

Concurrently to women protesting to protect their customary gender roles, it is also argued that many women are challenging their customary gender roles through their political action (Jenkins, 2015). Women's involvement in anti-mining social movements has been interpreted as women resisting three things: mining; mining-related issues; and as a result of the first two types of resistance, women resisting their customary gender roles (Jenkins, 2015). When women are involved in social movements, they are frequently resisting the 'normal social roles and behaviours' of women that are dictated by society. For example, in traditional patriarchal societies, women do not 'normally' speak in public or participate in the public realm. When they do this, it is described as challenging their 'traditional' gender roles (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015). Women have led pickets, attacked "scabs" and 'employed tools of their domestic work, beating on pots and pans, carrying children to demonstrations, and leading "broom brigades" to gain public attention and achieve strike goals', and this can be seen in women's involvement in anti-mining protests in Bolivian tin communities (Mercier and Gier, 2007, p.999). As a result of this, women have been arrested on charges such as 'unladylike' and 'disorderly' conduct (Mercier and Gier, 2007). Mercier and Gier (2007) describe women's involvement in protests to be as much a protest against the patriarchal order of mining communities as against capitalism. In chapter 6, I challenge the assumption that within patriarchal mining-affected societies women lack pre-existing political agency and challenge the patriarchy through protesting. I do this by illustrating sociocultural nuances within patriarchal societies by showing how relocated women in a patriarchal society have drawn on pre-existing political agency in their protests. In so doing, I highlight the heterogeneity of patriarchal systems and norms existing in different rural mining-affected communities and between these communities and the mining industry.

Women's roles in social movements, even when in acceptable roles that are seen to be 'domestic' in nature, have provided a platform to challenge their 'traditional' roles and enhance their agency in the private domain (Mercier and Gier, 2007). Women's actions to improve their own or their families' lives, to enter the mining

workforce or gain autonomy, highlights a resistance to traditional gender hierarchies that exist in most mining communities, unions and families stretching across the globe, from the northern coal mining areas of England to the copper mines of Peru (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009; Jenkins, 2015). Limited research has shown that, despite women's proven role in labour actions or perhaps as a result of it, men have a tendency to reinforce the patriarchal structure of society outside of the social movement (Nash, 1979; Mercier and Gier, 2007). The ways in which women's involvement in social movements influences and is influenced by their agency and sociocultural and political systems, is under-researched. I explore women's involvement in the Kolansogoia chiefdom anti-mining social movement in the Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone, as an aspect of how women's political agency is performed in a post-MIDR context.

Social movement outcomes

Beyond the causes of mining-related social mobilisation, within social movement theory, the outcome of a social movement has been used to understand the power and agency of a number of involved players, the relationship between them and thus the systems and structure of mining societies (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Wood, 2012; Middeldorp *et al.*, 2016; Larmer and Laterza, 2017). For example, political mobilisation has the potential for rural indigenous people to challenge powerful resource company actors and state agencies and to affect policy (Tilly and Wood, 2012; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013a; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). The outcome of a mining-related social movement depends on a number of factors (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015): first, the strength of the social movement; second, the way in which the mining company responds, influenced by cost-benefit analysis (Ross, 1999; Luders, 2006); third, the position of the state, which often depends on the importance of mining to the national economy (Bebbington, *et al.*, 2008). For example, post-conflict, low-income countries are likely to prioritise mining, as it is seen as an economic rebuilding strategy. If a country is reliant on mining, it is likely that the state will side with the mining company in situations of social resistance and be willing to repress the movement by force (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). Less is known about the gendered nature of the outcome and whether for example, women's status and/or the customary cultural context influences their style of protest and the outcome of their social movement. I fill this gap in chapter 6

by considering how the style and outcome of the different mining protests in the Tonkolili district vary along gender lines.

Social movements have been defined as organizational structures and strategies that have the potential to empower oppressed populations to challenge and resist the more powerful ‘advantaged elites’ (Tilly, 2004; Glasberg and Shannon, 2011; Tilly and Wood, 2012; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013a; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). As a result of this, social movements are said to have the capacity to carry out, resist or undo a social change (Glasberg and Shannon, 2011). I explore relocated women’s involvement in social movements concerned with MIDR as an example of how women influence mining agreements and thus how women’s agency shapes and is shaped by MIDR.

Above, I have presented themes in the literature, including the ‘resource curse’, mining and sustainable development and resultant social movements, that consider the relationship between mineral extraction and economic, sociocultural and political change, highlighting in places the lack of consideration given to the gendered nature of this and women’s agency specifically. In the next subsection, I present the small body of literature that focuses on the gendered nature of mining, where I seek to make my main contribution.

1.4.4 Gendered nature of mining

Particularly relevant to this thesis is the literature concerned with the gendered nature of mining, that explores women’s involvement in the extractive industry across the globe. In most aspects and at all levels of society (local, national and global), mining is assumed to be masculine (Mercier, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). This not only affects women’s experiences of the industry, it also hides their involvement and devalues their agency (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; Jenkins, 2015). While masculine norms, practices and discourse are normalised and celebrated within the mining context (Mayes, 2014; Mayes and Pini, 2014; Jenkins, 2015), women are recognised as bearing the brunt of the detrimental aspects of the industry (Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). This includes being vulnerable to sexual harassment, seen for example in women’s experiences in working for mining companies in North America (Mercier, 2011); the increase in commercial sex work,

seen for example in mining communities in Chile (Delgado *et al.*, 2011); health risks, seen for example in women's disproportionate vulnerability to mercury poisoning related to ASM (Hinton *et al.*, 2003a); land grabs and social and family disruptions, seen for example in communities affected by large-scale diamond mining in Zimbabwe (Muchadenyika, 2015); and being left out of mining negotiations, as for example experienced by women in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and India (Gibson and Kemp, 2008). Women are also thought to be more likely to take on lower paid or non-paid (domestic) 'support roles' in mining communities, because of the belief that they are not capable of taking on the same roles as men, such as miners, as they are not seen as physically strong or skilled enough (Mayes and Pini, 2014). Within this area of the literature, mining is portrayed as the global or national agent of capital accumulation, dispossessing impoverished women (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015).

The literature concerned with the gendered nature of mining tends to portray women as lacking in agency before, during or after being affected by mining (see for example Mercier and Gier, 2007; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2015). The extractive industries literature therefore largely fails to acknowledge women's agency (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). Relevant to this thesis is literature that discusses gender relations and women's agency in West Africa (see Leach, 1992; 1994; Whitehead, 1999; Coulter, 2009). For example, the myriad ways different women (and men) perform economic agency in Zambia that contribute to family welfare (Whitehead, 1999); different Kuranko women's decision-making capacity in Sierra Leone (Coulter, 2009; Jackson, 1977a); and Mende women's agency in managing natural resources in the Gola forest in Sierra Leone (Leach, 1992; 1994). Like this literature, my research responds to the need to consider women's agency and the gendered nature of mining together, rather than assuming women to be passive victims of extractive industries. These form a key element of my analysis in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Feminisation of mining theory

In contrast to women being seen as homogenous victims of the extractive industry, scholars such as Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre (2006), Lahiri-Dutt (2011; 2012; 2015), Macintyre (2011), Mahy (2011) and Perks (2011), demonstrate the need for more research on how mining affects different women (for example, on the grounds of

age, education, ethnicity) and their agency in different ways. There is a growing recognition of women's existing and increasing involvement in the mining industry (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). This is demonstrated in terminology such as; The Feminine Revolution of Mining (Mayes and Pini, 2014) and the Feminisation of Mining (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015), which describe a shift from a purely masculine industry to one in which women are filling different positions and being recognised as valuable contributors.

For example, Lahiri-Dutt (2011) outlines some of the benefits women have derived from mining by gaining employment. Women that are employed indirectly in extractive support industries have increased their financial means; for example, women have benefited financially from the increased demand for commercial sex workers in Indonesia (Mahy, 2011). While women directly employed as miners, whether that be as small-scale artisanal miners in the Global South (for example in Guinea where they make up 75% of the workforce), or machine operators in large-scale industrial mining in the Global North (for example in North America) have (debatably) gained financially¹⁸ as well as reducing gender disparity¹⁹, as some women have proven their capability of being able to do the same jobs as men (Hinton *et al.*, 2003b; Yakovleva, 2007; Lahiri-Dutt, 2011; Mercier, 2011; Perks, 2011; Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2012; Kelly *et al.*, 2014).

Despite this, a gap remains in the feminisation of mining literature in terms of the gendered nature of large-scale mining in the Global South. Up to now, the literature concerned with women and mining has focused on small-scale mining (Perks, 2012; Bashwira *et al.*, 2014; Kelly *et al.*, 2014) and large-scale mining in the Global North (Mercier, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; 2013b; Mayes and Pini, 2014). While some of the conclusions - such as the advantages of being employed either directly or

¹⁸ Research by Mayes and Pini (2010; 2014) has found that women often engage in informal small-scale mining as a poverty alleviation strategy and a means to survive rather than as a chosen profession.

¹⁹ There are well documented limitations to how much women being employed in the extractive industry results in gender equality. In large-scale industrial mining women are often found to either have to be less feminine to succeed or are said to gain employment because they possess feminine qualities such as peacebuilding that are valuable in a masculine violent environment. The latter however has been found to have the potential to reduce gender equality (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014).

indirectly by large-scale mining companies - can be applied to the Global South, there are contextual differences that are likely to influence how mining affects women differently in developing countries. For example, Macintyre's (2011) investigation into mainstreaming gender in large-scale mining in Papua New Guinea, revealed that employing women led to an increase in domestic violence. There is therefore a need for a more in-depth investigation into how large-scale mining affects different women's agency in low-income countries (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012), particularly in the African context, as the majority of research thus far has been conducted in the Global North, in Papua New Guinea and Latin America.

Within this literature review, I have shown the gendered dimensions that exist, but are not always explored, within the mining-related literature. Overall, the roles women play in extractive industries are largely left out of the literature or when these are considered, there is a tendency for women to be presented as a homogenous group of passive victims of the most detrimental effects of mining (Mahy, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015, see for example Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). By examining how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context, I highlight the importance of women and women's agency being recognised in discourses that focus on the resource curse, the relationship between mining and local wellbeing and mining-related resistance. I demonstrate the importance of looking beyond the detrimental impacts that mining has on women, to the diversity of ways different women perform their agency in mining-affected communities. This illuminates the crucial role women play in maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing for themselves and their community, thereby contributing to the feminisation of mining theory.

1.5 Thesis outline

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters. Following this introduction to the topic, to the aim and objectives of the research, and to the three villages where the research took place, I move on to outline the methodology and framework for analysis. My empirical findings are presented in three chapters (4, 5 and 6) and chapter 7 presents my conclusions.

In chapter 2, I outline the methodological approach of the research as an ethnographic case study. In this chapter, I first present the fieldwork locations, Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. Second, I discuss the ontology, epistemology and methodology and how these articulate with my conceptual argument. My methodology is rooted in decolonising development ideology, which seeks to legitimise indigenous voices by drawing on both indigenous and feminist methodologies. The aim is to hear and represent as accurately as possible how different women's agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level, thus enabling me to contribute to feminisation of mining theory. Third, I explain the ethnographic case study methods I used, including participant observation, semi-structured interviews and a review of the secondary data. Within this section, I also introduce my participants, how they participated in the research and explain how these methods enabled me to fulfil the aim and objectives of the research. Following this, I explain how I analysed my research. Next, I present the challenges I faced while conducting my research and a reflection of my positionality. Last, I outline some of the ethical dilemmas related to this research.

In chapter 3, I outline my framework for analysis. I begin by outlining how my research aim of showing how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR, as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change, draws on and contributes to the feminisation of mining theory. To do this, I go beyond an examination of how mining affects women's economic agency and include an exploration of women's sociocultural and political agency. Furthermore, I examine how different women experience the effects of MIDR. Next, I explain how I fulfil my first objective to demonstrate the specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change. By drawing on the concept of lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987) and the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Ortner, 1974; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997) I examine how *women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and in physical structures it causes*. Next, I explain how I address my second research objective, which is to examine the ways in which *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and*

patriarchal systems shape MIDR and the resulting conflicts and the impacts on local economic, sociocultural and political systems, by drawing on the critical junctures concept (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015) and path dependency concept (Mahoney, 2000). Following this, I outline how I fulfil my third research objective of analysing different women's reactions to the loss of access to resources and physical structures, by drawing on theories of cultural *adaptation* and *passive and active resistance*.

In chapters 4, 5 and 6 I present the findings of this research that respond to the main research aim and three objectives. Chapter 4 contributes socio-economic data to feminisation of mining theory, by demonstrating how women's economic agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. In this chapter, I address my main aim and second research objective in particular, by showing how women have enabled three post-MIDR interconnected economic systems to exist at the local level. In so doing, women are shown to be agents in (re)shaping the post-MIDR economy.

Additionally, the findings presented in this chapter touch on objectives 1 and 3. For example, responding to objective 1, I show how different women enact their economic agency in different ways in response to the rapid change in access to certain (cash-economic) resources, namely land and water, caused by MIDR and the international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems it is shaped by. I demonstrate that a key differential is life phase, which is interrelated with status and existing social and financial capital. Responding to objective 3, I show that while some women have *adapted* and become agents of the capitalist market-driven economic system that MIDR has imposed, some have become dependents on it and others have *avoided* it, by leaving the village to continue with their subsistence-based lifestyles.

Chapter 5 offers sociocultural data to feminisation of mining theory by demonstrating how women's sociocultural agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. In this chapter, I address my main research aim and first research objective by showing how pre-MIDR, certain resources and physical structures associated with nature, namely the structure of the village and the house, access to food and an accessible water source, embodied women's reproductive responsibilities, including giving birth and domestic duties prescribed by culture. I show how a rapid change in

these resources and physical structures caused by MIDR and the international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems that influence it, threatens to colonise women's lifeworlds.

My findings in this chapter also touch on objectives 2 and 3. I contribute to objective 3 concerned with women's diverse modes of reactions to MIDR and its effects, by showing how all the women I observed and interviewed sought to preserve their cultural identity, but the way they did this varied on the grounds of life phase. For example, I found *musubas* were more likely to ***adapt to*** a change in physical structures, but to still perform the same domestic duties as they did pre-relocation. In contrast, I found *mamas* were more likely to ***passively resist*** the change to these structures, by building customary structures. Additionally, women from all life phases were found to ***passively resist*** the provision of 'Western' toilets and ***actively resist*** the loss of a natural water source. I contribute to objective 2 by arguing that due to all women – irrespective of their specific identity markers – continuing to perform their reproductive responsibilities, whether in the same way or different, they largely maintained the local pre-existing sociocultural system, in terms of women's sex-defined reproductive roles continuing to be performed by women. However, alterations in the ways in which *musubas* perform domestic duties, such as cooking inside, has also altered the post-MIDR sociocultural system to some extent.

Chapter 6 contributes political data to feminisation of mining theory by demonstrating how women's political agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. In this chapter, I contribute to the main research aim by showing how relocated women perform their political agency in the post-MIDR context by protesting the rapid loss of an adequate supply of water caused by MIDR in order to maintain individual and collective wellbeing. In this chapter, I contribute to my third research objective in particular by showing how women have ***actively resisted*** certain sociocultural effects of MIDR. I compare relocated women's anti-mining protests to relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's and in so doing, I show how the trigger, style and outcome of protests within the same anti-mining social movement, varies for different people. I highlight how relocated women draw on their pre-existing power bases, including *mamas*' decision-making capacity, related to their status and all *musubannu*'s (initiated women's) decision-making capacity as

members of *Segere*, in their method of protests. I argue that *musubas*' political agency has been enhanced as they did not speak out in public in front of men prior to MIDR. However, I argue on the whole that older and younger women's political agency as it existed pre-MIDR has not changed to a significant degree and the way in which they protested is largely in line with cultural norms. For example, the protest was in the style of *Segere* rituals.

In this chapter I also touch upon objectives 1 and 3. I address objective 1 by showing how the rapid loss of water caused by MIDR threatens women's agency and triggers women to react. Additionally, I respond to objective 2, by arguing that the local political system is largely unchanged by relocated women's active resistance; for example, outside of the social movement, women's decision-making capacity remains the same.

Chapter 7 offers a summary of the main empirical findings in relation to how women perform their women's agency in order to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing in a post-MIDR context. Next, I consider the main theoretical implications of my analysis, by discussing how my empirical findings contribute to feminisation of mining theory that seeks to expose women's agency within the mining industry. I go beyond the assumption within the extractive industries discourse more broadly, that women are a homogenous group of passive victims of the detrimental aspects of mining by re-emphasising the diversity of ways different women perform their economic, sociocultural and political agency in the post-MIDR, Sub-Saharan African context. I then outline the limitations and recommendations of my research, including areas in need of further study. Lastly, I make my concluding remarks.

Having introduced my topic of how women's agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing, in the following chapter, I explain the methodological approach I used to conduct this research.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

Having introduced the topic and research aim and objectives in the preceding chapter, the main purpose of this chapter is to discuss my methodology and research methods, and how these articulate with the aim and objectives and guide my research. Central to my thesis is showing *how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change*. To achieve this I examine how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. Thus, a primary concern when designing and conducting my methodology was hearing and representing the experiences and opinions of different local women as accurately as possible.

I take a decolonising epistemological stance, drawing on both indigenous and feminist ideologies to legitimise the voices of marginalised peoples, particularly local women, and to understand women's agency from the perspective of women (Barnes, 2018). In line with indigenous and feminist perspectives, indigenous women are considered and promoted as knowledgeable agents as opposed to passive members of patriarchal society to be spoken for (see Smith, 1999; Hesse-Biber, 2007). I avoid using an overly feminist methodology, as this tends to present women as victims and has as an objective: 'empowering' women through inciting change, which is discordant to my research aim. Given the inherently exploitative nature of research and my positionality (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016), in line with decolonising research methodologies, I was particularly concerned about choosing and conducting methods in ways that were in line with local sociocultural norms of communicating

that my participants were familiar with. I conducted an ethnographic case study, to examine how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context in three relocated Kuranko villages in the north of Sierra Leone, in which the culture is very different from my own. Essential to my research was reflecting on my positionality and preconceived beliefs related to the subject in order to understand local cultural norms and beliefs.

In this chapter I begin by introducing my case study field sites -Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria – and the relocation process. Next, I present my epistemological position and how my methodology articulates with my framework for analysis. My methodology is rooted in decolonising development ideology that seeks to legitimise indigenous voices by drawing on both indigenous and feminist methodologies. This addresses my aim to hear and represent as accurately as possible how different women's agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. Drawing on this ideology has enabled me to contribute to the feminisation of mining theory. Following on from this, I discuss the methods I used in relation to the aim and objectives of the research. I then explain the analysis of the data. After this I outline some of the challenges I encountered conducting research in the three relocated villages. Related to this, I then reflect on my positionality as a white, British, educated, woman conducting research, i.e. extracting data (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016) on the topic of extraction, in an ex-British colony. Finally, I discuss some of the ethical dilemmas related to the research.

2.2 Fieldwork locations

This research uses a case study of three post-MIDR villages in the north of Sierra Leone, to explore how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

2.2.1 Relocation process

Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria were relocated for commercial extraction of iron ore to take place on their ancestral land (Human Rights Watch, 2014). AML began the physical aspect of mining in 2011, including relocating three communities, subsequently going into liquidation and being bought out by Shandong in 2015 (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). According to my participants, Human Rights Watch (2014) and Steinweg and Römgens (2015) the relocated communities did not participate in the decision-making process regarding their relocation and when they said they did not want to be relocated, were ordered to by the *nyeman' tigi*. AML organised for vehicles to transport them and their belongings to the new villages, which resulted in people losing their belongings. As part of the mining agreement, AML (communicating through the *nyeman' tigi*) made a series of promises to the three communities, in short to improve their standard of living from what it was prior to being relocated. This included being provided with adequate remuneration for their land, better housing, better land, electricity and other assets as part of the formal MIDR agreement (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015).

In reality, according to my participants and Human Rights Watch (2014), since being relocated the majority of people living in the villages have less than they previously had. These (broken) promises are found to be a factor in how women experience MIDR and perform their post-MIDR agency. However, it proved difficult to find substantial evidence of what people's lives were like pre-MIDR (see section 2.5).

2.2.2 Pre-relocation

According to the respective *sutigi*, before being relocated Ferengbeya had a population of approximately 350 families, Wondugu had 250 families and Foria had 150 families. Human Rights Watch (2014) describes the three villages prior to being relocated as being situated at the top of a well-watered and lush hill, approximately 10 kilometres away from Bumbuna (where the Tonkolili mine is now located). However, it is important to note that the three villages had distinct locations and identities (although the exact distances between the villages are unknown) and people from the relocated villages described there being less communication between the three villages compared to now. One reason for Kuranko villages being

located a distance from each other is their need for vast land for agricultural activities (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). As a result of this, Kuranko villages are often isolated and village populations remain small, so that each person in the village has enough land (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

In their pre-resettlement villages, people had access to vast amounts of fertile land and fresh clean water from rivers on their land (Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). Women and men were involved in a variety of livelihoods, including a diverse number of agricultural activities ranging from large-scale farming to small-scale gardening as well as hunting, fishing; and ASM (Human Rights Watch, 2014). In chapter 4, I discuss how women's economic agency and economic systems have changed post-MIDR compared to before. According to my participants, in their ancestral villages families owned their land. On this land, men planted and harvested the staple crops for their family to eat. When the men's farming season was over, women farmed groundnuts on their family land and many women, who were physically fit enough, panned for gold in rivers. According to some of my participants, women made money in the pre-resettlement locations by selling the surplus agricultural produce around the local villages and gold to local buyers in town²⁰. With this money women were able to afford to send their children to school²¹ and pay for their family's healthcare (Human Rights Watch, 2014). According to the majority of my participants, prior to being relocated they did not have a lot of money²² but were independent and self-sufficient.

According to some of my participants, prior to being relocated people lived in round mud-thatch houses, conducive to Kuranko lifeworlds and women's reproductive roles in particular (Jackson, 1977a) (see chapter 5). The structure of the village was also conducive to their way of living. For example, kin groups built their houses

²⁰ Prior to being relocated, some women were able to make between \$40 and \$60 in a day from ASM (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

²¹ Although primary education is technically free in Sierra Leone, teachers often demand bribes from pupils and their parents (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

²² According to my participants, the majority of people living in the three villages survived on less than \$1.90 a day before being relocated, which is The World Bank's (2018b) poverty measure.

close together and space was created outside the houses, where women would conduct their domestic duties with other women.

2.2.3 *Post-relocation*

Since being relocated, it was explained to me by the *sutigi* of each village that the population size of all three villages has reduced and continues to do so. The three locations that were chosen by the government for the three villages to be relocated to are much closer together than they were prior to being relocated. Ferengbeya and Wondugu are now across the road from each other, approximately 20 meters apart. Foria is approximately 1.5 kilometres away from Ferengbeya and Wondugu. Significantly, prior to being relocated there was no road that trans-versed the Loma mountain area where the villages were situated and people rarely saw motor cars. In contrast, all three villages are now situated close to a main road (constructed for the commercial extraction of iron ore) and see and hear motor cars and commercial trucks pass regularly.

According to the residents of the three relocated villages and human rights reports, the land that has been allocated to the three villages to live and farm on is inferior to their ancestral land (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römogens, 2015). In the new villages the land is of poor quality for agriculture, people lack food to eat and sell, there is no natural water source, there are less available livelihood opportunities and people lack funds needed to pay school and medical fees (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römogens, 2015). In the new location there are less available employment opportunities for both women and men (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Farming is now the only available livelihood and the land is far from the villages and of poor quality, making it a more strenuous livelihood choice (Human Rights Watch, 2014), particularly for women. This is because women's mobility is restricted as a result of many of their reproductive responsibilities being centred around the domestic domain (see chapter 4). Due to the lack of food, available livelihood opportunities and water in the new villages, the three communities are dependent on the mining company for their survival (Human Rights Watch, 2014). This comes in the form of one bag of rice and 150,000Le (approximately £15) given to every male head of household for his family each month as part of the formal relocation agreement. In addition, water is transported by

truck from their ancestral land to their new location, by the mining company (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

The structure of the house and village that embodied Kuranko lifeworlds and women's agency and wellbeing in particular, have changed. My participants explained that 'Western modern' houses have been built to replace the mud-thatch houses and that the village is no longer structured around social lines, i.e. houses being built close to kin and friends, or a stream. Instead, the houses have been built in straight lines and people were allocated a house at random (see chapter 5).

2.2.4 Demographics

The majority of the people living in New Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria are from the Kuranko ethnic group, with the exception of a few Limba and Temne people who have moved into the villages, primarily for marriage and some for work, such as teaching in the school (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). The majority of women and men were subsistence farmers prior to relocation and many women were also involved in ASM (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römogens, 2015). Since being relocated, this has changed, due to a lack of accessible and adequate land and water (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römogens, 2015) (see chapter 5). However, the majority of people still distinguish themselves as farmers (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

Despite the aforementioned ethnic and occupational differences, the majority of people being involved in a largely homogenous livelihood and thus having similar lifestyles, made it difficult at first to decide how to differentiate people. Drawing on local cultural norms, I distinguish people within this study by gender and Kuranko defined life phase. For example, *musuba* ('woman big') and *kemine* (young man) are young women and men who have recently being initiated into *sumafen* (secret society) and adulthood. In this thesis, the terms '*musuba*' and '*kemine*' are used to refer to a young adult who is unmarried or recently married with no children or children below the school-attending age (4 years). *Na* (mother) and *fa* (father) are middle-age women and men with children of school-going age or older. *Mama* (grandmother) and *bimba* (grandfather) are older women and men with grown up children and possibly grandchildren. Additionally I identify the *dimusukuntigi*

(female village leader) and *sutigi* (village chief) of each village. As the research progressed, it became apparent that these life phase categories for women were interrelated to a number of other factors that influenced the way women experienced and react to MIDR and its effects. These factors include status, such as position of wife in polygamous marriages, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience.

A woman's status is defined by how many children she has and fulfilling her reproductive responsibilities, the most important of which is raising children (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Women in the 'mama' life phase are thus often granted more status due to having raised more children. Within polygamous family units, the first wife holds the highest status amongst wives and is commonly the eldest (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Therefore high social status is shown to be related to age. Local cultural beliefs, including women's position within *Segere* also dictates their status outside of secret society. For example, until a girl has been initiated, she is not considered to have entered into *musubaye* (womanhood) and cannot be called a *musuba* ('woman big'). Additionally, the *biriyela* (older women that perform the female initiation rituals) are granted high social status because they enable *dimusus* (girls) to enter *musubaye* and are therefore critical to maintaining society (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Higher levels of social and financial capital were found in the 'na' life phase group, as they were the most mobile and able to maintain relations and do business outside the villages (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Life experience also gained women status (and agency). *Mamas* who had lived longer had, on the whole, gained more life experience, including but not limited to living through the civil war. Thus life phase categories are signifiers of other factors that influence women's agency.

Patterns in the way women were found to perform their women's agency in the post-MIDR context were found to correlate with these factors (see chapters 4, 5 and 6). In the next section, I outline my epistemological position and my methodology.

2.3 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

The choice of method(s) in qualitative research is intrinsically linked to core assumptions about the object of study and how to understand it (Fumerton, 2006). In the social sciences, a combination of ontology (our views about what the social world is), epistemology (how a social phenomenon is understood), axiology (values and ethics), research methodologies (how we do research,) assumptions about human nature and paradigms (world-view about why something is the way it is) influences the way we explore and understand a social phenomenon (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Barnes, 2018). Thus qualitative research should be viewed as an approach to gaining knowledge, the appropriateness of which derives from the nature of the social phenomenon to be explored, rather than a simple set of methods (Morgan and Smircich, 1980).

2.3.1 Ontology

Social ontology (also referred to as the ‘philosophy of society’), understood as the nature of social reality (Ikäheimo and Laitinen, 2011), influences every aspect of research, including epistemology, axiology and the theories we relate our research to. Thus it is important to consider one’s ontological standpoint in relation to the phenomenon to be explored at the beginning of the research process. In my research I make three prominent ontological assumptions about the social phenomenon of how women’s agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change. First, that social reality is concrete, i.e. women are behaving in a way that can be physically observed (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Second, that reality is what Morgan and Smircich (1980) describe as being a realm of symbolic discourse. In line with social constructivism, within this ontological assumption, the social world is a pattern of symbolic relationships and meanings, which are constructed and maintained through the process of human action and interaction (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Kukla, 2000). People’s behaviour is wrapped up in symbolic meanings, related to individual and collective wellbeing, and specific to the context it is happening in. The path dependency of this social world is preserved through people repeatedly performing certain actions that are prescribed by the social norms and systems of society. These social norms and systems at the same

time, are maintained by people abiding by them and are thus always open to reaffirmation and change, for example at moments of critical junctures, through the actions of individuals (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Giddens, 1984; Ikäheimo and Laitinen, 2011). Together, individual agency and social systems influencing each other enable and maintain the structure of society (Giddens, 1984).

This ontological positioning is appropriate to my study of how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change. I sought to understand how MIDR, along with other factors, have influenced the way women perform their agency, and the reasons for this. This entailed (i) *observing* their *physical actions* and (ii) *understanding* the *social rules* that influence this and (iii) how this had been *influenced by MIDR* (and/or other factors). I thus sought to understand this social phenomenon as it is both physically experienced and socially perceived, i.e. people's beliefs in why they behave the way they do. This social phenomenon is, therefore, made up of multiple realities, due to people differently experiencing and perceiving the way women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context (DeVault, 1996).

In addition to social ontology being the study of the nature of social reality which is composed of agents, social systems and social rules, my third assumption is that, by studying a social reality we also influence its construction, in terms of how we report on it and how this social reality becomes understood by others (Gould, 1978; Ikäheimo and Laitinen, 2011). In the case of my research, the way in which I observed and understood perspectives, beliefs and women's agency was limited and biased by my positionality, including my 'outsider' status and my pre-existing beliefs (see section 2.6). Gould (1978) refers to this as 'ontology being socialised'. All ontology may be considered social because we (social beings) create criteria for 'things' (Gould, 1978). This raises issues of validity for my research, in regards to how to go about describing the reality of another person's social world, given that through the process of reporting on a social reality we influence it (Gould, 1978; Ikäheimo and Laitinen, 2011).

In response to this, my epistemological position and methodology draw on decolonising ideologies, including both feminist and indigenous theories. This includes viewing indigenous men, and women in particular, that have experienced MIDR as the most knowledgeable on the topic of local women's agency in a post-MIDR context, and prioritising the views of indigenous women and men by conducting research methods (participant observation and interviews) in culturally appropriate ways. The objective of decolonising ideologies reveals the voices and agency of those once marginalised and/or spoken for, who have previously been presented as vulnerable victims in need of saving by more powerful actors (Barnes, 2018). Drawing on decolonising ideologies enabled me to present someone else's social reality more accurately, i.e. in the way a person or community understands their own social reality (Mohanty, 1984; England, 1994; Gable, 1995; Sheyvens and Leslie, 2000; Hesse-Biber, 2007; Russell-Mundine, 2012; Barnes, 2018; Seehawer, 2018).

2.3.2 Epistemological position

Based on my ontological stance, that social reality is concrete, a symbolic discourse, and that we, as researchers, are part of its construction, different objectives are framed. The epistemology provides the analytical lens to examine how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR, in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways as part of their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing. Different views about social reality imply different theories of acquiring knowledge, both in terms of what knowledge is and whose knowledge is constituted as truth (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Fumerton, 2006). At one end of the epistemological spectrum is the objectivist view of the social world, which assumes reality is a concrete structure to be observed (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). At the other end of the spectrum is the subjectivist view, which sees reality as a projection of individual imagination (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). My epistemological position is informed by a combination of symbolic discourse and decolonising ideologies, in terms of women (and men) in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria being knowledgeable agents of how women's agency is shaped by, and then shapes MIDR, and its effects in women's efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing.

Symbolic discourse

Viewing social reality as a realm of symbolic discourse implies a set of epistemological requirements that enable an understanding of the nature and patterning of the symbols that are central to an individual's social reality (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Within this epistemological view, knowledge, understanding and explanations of social phenomenon must take into account how social order is fashioned by human beings in ways that are meaningful to them. Epistemologies, rooted in symbolic discourse, value the understanding of the roles that language, symbols and myths play in shaping social reality and generate an ethnographic account of a given context (Morgan and Smircich, 1980).

There are a number of critiques of this type of epistemology, particularly in terms of generalisability, reliability and validity, which my methodological position (outlined below) seeks to address. First, given that this type of epistemology is acknowledged to be specific to a given context, the findings are not universally generalisable (Crang and Cook, 2007; Gerring, 2017). Nonetheless, it provides significant knowledge about the nature of the social world (Crang and Cook, 2007; Gerring, 2017). It is then up to the reader to compare the findings to other similar phenomenon to find similarities and differences. Second, is the issue of reliability. Given that the researcher's role is to interpret the social phenomenon and, therefore, there is a low probability of someone else interpreting the phenomenon in the same way (due to the inherently subjective nature of this type of research), the research process needs to be transparent enough for the sources of data to be documented for public inspection, so as to evidence and justify the findings (Crang and Cook, 2007).

The third criticism is related to validity. Given that this type of epistemology is concerned with understanding a phenomenon where it naturally occurs, from the perspective of those that experience it, often in a different sociocultural context to the researcher's own, this raises questions of how accurately a researcher with an 'outsider' status is capable of doing this (Crang and Cook, 2007). In addition, the major part of the analysis, often taking place outside of this locale, can reduce the researcher's ability to represent the social phenomenon from those that experience it authentically (Crang and Cook, 2007). It is therefore imperative that the researcher has an accurate and clear understanding of all perspectives, values and beliefs related

to the subject of study while in the field and maintains this throughout the analysis and writing up stages (Crang and Cook, 2007). The role and power relations between the researcher and the participants need to be considered (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992), as this will influence the way a phenomenon is interpreted and represented (see section 2.5 for my own reflection on this).

Decolonising ideologies

My epistemological stance is also rooted in decolonising ideologies. In line with this, indigenous peoples' experiences constitute the data needed to understand the phenomenon, and indigenous peoples' voices are prioritised as the authority on this (Smith, 1999; Barnes, 2018; Seehawer, 2018). However, it should be noted that it was impossible for me to decolonise all aspects of my methodology, due to the nature of my research. The need to decolonise academic research is, in part, a reaction to the inherently colonial nature of research (Russell-Mundine, 2012; Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016). A disproportionate number of researchers conducting research in the Global South are from the Global North and their research is largely steeped in the Euro-North-America-centric worldview, thereby masking other viewpoints, including indigenous perspectives (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). I prioritised indigenous perspectives, including my participants, and wherever possible drew on literature that has an Afrocentric worldview.

Research in the Global South often entails the 'extraction' of (valuable) information from 'other' people (from another culture to the researcher), under the pretence that they will benefit from the research (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). In reality, related to the inherent power hierarchy that exists in research, the researcher is often the primary beneficiary of the research and, at times, the research process can have an inadvertent detrimental effect on the researched (Smith, 1999; Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). This might include an invasive level of exploration into people's private lives, thinking and sacred worlds, disruption to people's lives and people being treated and/or represented in culturally inappropriate and/or inaccurate ways (Smith, 1999; Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). I tried to avoid this, as far as possible, by communicating and conducting my research in culturally appropriate ways and by not making false promises. Decolonising methodologies are also concerned with the fact that research

findings from the Global South are, on the whole, disseminated exclusively in the Global North, thereby excluding those that participated in the research from accessing them (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016). I attempted to overcome this, at least in part, by disseminating my findings in Sierra Leone, both at the university I was lecturing in and with the three relocated communities in Kuranko.

The colonial nature of research is exemplified by academic scholars referring to certain countries as ‘developed’ and others as ‘developing’, thus evoking a notion of incompleteness of the latter (Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016). At the heart of decolonising methodologies is the revealing of the true voices of those once marginalised and/or spoken for, who have previously been represented as helpless victims in need of saving, i.e. ‘the colonised’ by ‘the colonisers’ (Barnes, 2018). It should be noted that decolonising methodologies have been criticised as being in danger of oversimplifying the relationship between ‘research methodologies’ and ‘decolonisation’. If not used cautiously there is a risk of inadvertently reinforcing the system they critique (Barnes, 2018), for example, by reinforcing stereotypes of ex-colonial communities needing to be empowered by more powerful researchers (Barnes, 2018).

I deemed it particularly important for my study to draw on decolonising research methodologies, particularly in terms of knowledge collection, given that the aim of the research is to show how local women’s agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR in Sierra Leone. One of my primary objectives is to represent women’s agency, and not to present local women (or men) as homogenous victims of mining - as the extractive industries discourse tends to do (Mahy, 2011; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015, see for example Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). Additionally, contextual elements (including the colonial history, the civil war, the NGO/aid culture and the plethora of development initiatives), have been presented as factors in reducing women’s agency. This is due to the tendency to present African women as either victims, or as beneficiaries, of powerful (often white Western) peoples’ actions within the development discourse (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Warrick *et al.*, 2017).

For example, Sierra Leonean women have largely been portrayed as a homogenous group of (sexually) abused war victims (Human Rights Watch, 2003; Cohen, 2007; MacKenzie, 2009; Marks, 2013). This illustrates how Sierra Leonean women's identity and agency, or more particularly lack of agency, has been prescribed by exogenous researchers and reporters (Marks, 2013). This is something I seek to avoid doing throughout my research, by, as far as possible, decolonising my methodology in order to represent the voices and true experiences of relocated women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria.

Decolonising ideologies were central to my epistemological stance, as I prioritised the voices of relocated women (and men) that have first-hand experience of MIDR and the ways in which this has affected their lifeworlds, agency and wellbeing. To understand how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context accurately, I had to ensure that my methods of data collection, and the way I conducted myself, were in line, as far as possible, with local Kuranko norms and beliefs. Otherwise I felt that people were unlikely to feel comfortable with me spending time in their villages, talking to them and learning about their lives.

2.3.3 How methodology articulates with conceptual argument

Through my examination of how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context, I draw on, and contribute to, the feminisation of mining theory (see chapter 3), the core of which exposes the unique and diverse role(s) women play within the mining industry (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015).

Considering the ontological and epistemological stances of my research, an ethnographic research approach, grounded in decolonising practices, was employed. Decolonising methodologies attempt to bring together a number of critical, indigenous, liberation and feminist methodologies in order to understand authentic social reality(s) from the perspective(s) of those that live them (Mohanty, 1984; England, 1994; Gable, 1995; Sheyvens and Leslie, 2000; Hesse-Biber, 2007; Russell-Mundine, 2012; Barnes, 2018; Seehawer, 2018). Decolonising research methodologies are relevant to my research which seeks to expose the experiences, perspectives and agency of local women in remote rural mining communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Within academic literature these women have, up until now, largely

been presented as homogenous victims (see Akiwumi, 2011; Perks, 2011; Muchadenyika, 2015).

In order to decolonise my research I drew on feminist and indigenous perspectives. My research is shaped by feminist ideology in terms speaking to women directly (DeVault, 1996; Ramaazanoglu and Holland, 2002), as opposed to another party (such as a male representative or an NGO) representing them. My research is also shaped by indigenous ideology in terms of representing specific women and men that represented different categories of people in the three villages in order to understand the diverse agency, lifeworlds and experiences of local indigenous people (Barnes, 2018; Seehawer, 2018). This is in contrast to feminist methodologies that have been critiqued for being largely homogenous in the way they represent 'all women' (Ramaazanoglu and Holland, 2002). Beyond this, Western feminist researchers have been critiqued for depicting women in the 'Third World' as homogenous victims and thus denying their agency (Mohanty, 1984; Hesse-Biber, 2007). In this sense, feminist methods could, therefore, be seen to result in reinstating the colonial power dynamics, of powerful researcher and vulnerable subjects to be studied and 'saved'.

Given that my research, in line with feminisation of mining theory, is concerned with revealing the diverse voices and experiences of local women, including their agency (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015), it was paramount to select methods that would enable local women (and men) to participate in the research comfortably (see subsection 2.4.2), in order to demonstrate and explain their true experiences of MIDR (Shaw, 2007; Coulter, 2009). Drawing on indigenous methodologies, I attempted to select and implement research methods in line with local cultural norms and beliefs, as far as I was able (see Smith, 1999). For example, speaking to young women separately to men, as Kuranko culture dictates that younger women do not speak out in front of men (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). In this respect it was necessary for me to do preliminary research on local Kuranko modes of communication before conducting certain methods, such as interviewing.

Related to this is the assumption that, in a patriarchal society, women have no voice and men speak on their behalf (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Fallon, 2008; Perks,

2011; Jenkins, 2014). Thus, research that has been conducted in patriarchal societies, such as mining-related research, has allowed men to speak on behalf of women, in the name of culture, and has acted to hide not only women's voices but their agency and ability to speak out in such societies. This is demonstrated in the Human Rights Report on the effects of MIDR in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, in which the majority of the quotes concerning the relocation are from men, including the *sutigi*, who spoke on behalf of residents in some meetings. This resulted in the relocation process and its effects being presented from a male perspective (see Human Rights Watch, 2014).

When men speak on behalf of women in research, I argue that, rather than abiding by patriarchal norms, this can challenge local culture, as women often have a local culturally accepted mode of publicly communicating. For example, in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria it is the role of the *dimusukuntigies* to represent the opinions of the women. Adverse to men speaking on behalf of women, within feminist research there is a tendency to promote challenging patriarchal cultural norms in order to 'empower women' through the Western research process (Sheyvens and Leslie, 2000). Again this assumes that women do not have a voice in patriarchal society. Thus, to some extent, feminist research presents women as passive victims of patriarchy in need of emancipating through research. In contrast to both of these standpoints, I advocate looking for a pre-existing, culturally appropriate mode of female communication (Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000), thereby drawing on indigenous research ideologies and challenging feminist ones. In the next section, I outline the specific methods I used, how I conducted them in line with local cultural norms and beliefs, and how they articulate the aims and objectives of this thesis.

2.4 Aim, objectives and methods

No research method (whether quantitative or qualitative) can, or should be, considered as abstract. The choice and adequacy of a method is intrinsically related to assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge, methods through which knowledge can be obtained, and the nature of the phenomenon to be studied (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). In this section I restate the aim and objectives of the

research and explain the research methods I used and the reasons they were selected for conducting research with the given participants and the context in which the research took place.

2.4.1 Addressing the aim and objectives

In this thesis I aimed:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

To achieve this I examine how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. Within this are three key objectives. First, ***to demonstrate the specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change by examining how women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and physical structures it causes, specifically the structure of the village and the house and access to land and water.*** The qualitative data needed to fulfil this objective was collected from participant observation of everyday life in the relocated villages, including the resources and physical structures that people had access to and how they used them. In addition, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data regarding the rapid change in resources that MIDR has caused and the effects of this from different peoples' perspectives. These included relocated women; relocated men; a representative of the Paramount Chief; the Company-Community Relations Officer (an employee of the mining company (Shandong))²³; and a representative of the Good Governance Department working in the area²⁴.

²³ The Company-Community Relations Officer is the intermediary between the mining company (previously AML and now Shandong) and local communities that have been affected by mining at the Tonkolili mine, including those that have been relocated (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

²⁴ The Good Governance Department working in the area is responsible for hearing the needs of local communities, including Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, and reporting them to the appropriate authorities, including government and/or corporate bodies, as well as NGOs (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

Secondary data was also used, including previous research into Kuranko way(s) of life which documents the types of resources that were used to maintain this, and published reports on the effects of MIDR, including the change in resources and physical structures it causes, in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. The potential bias of these sources is acknowledged and reflected on throughout the research process (see subsection 2.4.2).

Second, *to examine the ways in which international and national capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems shape MIDR and the conflicts and impacts this has on local economic, sociocultural and political systems.* The evidence needed to address this was primary qualitative data from participant observation of patterns of behaviour in the three villages and, therefore, the post-MIDR local economic, sociocultural and political systems. Additionally semi-structured interviews with relocated women, relocated men, a representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department were held to understand the following: the international and national capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems that MIDR represents; the pre-MIDR local economic, sociocultural and political systems; how these different systems have interacted and the outcome of this at the local level. Secondary data was also used, in the form of previous research into Kuranko way(s) of life including the local systems and rules that governed this.

Third, *to examine the diverse nature of women’s reactions, which include adaptation, avoidance, passive and active resistance (including involvement in mining-related social movements) to MIDR and its effects.* I looked at how these reactions differ along life phase lines, interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. The evidence required to address this was participant observation of different women’s everyday reactions to the effects of MIDR and semi-structured interviews with relocated women, relocated men, a representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department regarding the ways that different women have reacted to the effects of MIDR. Secondary data was also drawn on, in the form of Human Rights’ Reports concerning the anti-mining social movement in the Kolansogoia chiefdom in order to understand the cause, modes and

outcome of relocated women's reactions to MIDR, including their active modes of resistance.

2.4.2 Research methods

I used an ethnographic case study of three villages that have experienced MIDR in the north of Sierra Leone. The research taking place in the context in which the phenomenon (MIDR) was being experienced was appropriate given my ontological and epistemological beliefs that peoples' actions, and the meanings of these, can only be understood in the context in which they are taking place (see section 2.3). The main methods I used as part of my ethnography and which related to how women's agency was performed in a post-MIDR context included: participant observation in the three relocated villages; semi-structured interviews with a range of participants (outlined above); and a review of relevant available documentation.

Ethnographic case study

In an attempt to decolonise my research and understand the culture and society of the three relocated villages, and the way people live in these villages from their perspectives, I conducted a 12 month ethnographic case study from August 2016 to July 2017 (Spradley, 1980; Giddens, 1984). Ethnography is concerned with understanding the meaning of events and peoples' actions in a given society, often in line with economic, sociocultural and political systems, in order to understand the culture (Giddens, 1984; Fife, 2005; Crang and Cook, 2007; Geertz, 2017). This case study method was selected in order to gain a detailed understanding of MIDR and its effects as a social phenomenon (Swanborn, 2010; Gerring, 2017). By including three villages, that have all been relocated for the same mining project, within my case study, I was able to compare the effects MIDR had in one village to others, highlighting a number of sociocultural complexities in and between villages and related to MIDR. Ethnographic research methods have previously been used to study other social phenomenon amongst Kuranko peoples in Sierra Leone (see Jackson, 1975; 1977a; b; 2017; Coulter, 2009). These were useful to both gain a preliminary understanding of the culture prior to starting my ethnographic research and use as supplementary data in order to understand how peoples' lives have changed as a result of MIDR.

While I conducted ethnographic research in the three relocated villages – Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, including participant observation, semi-structured interviews and informal conversations, I chose not to live full time in any of the villages. One reason for this was that, in order to experience the effects of MIDR, I would have had to live off the provisions from the mining company, which are already insufficient for the amount of people in the villages. I did not want to put further strain on these already limited resources. Additionally, I decided to live outside of the villages to avoid biasing my research or increasing tensions by affiliating myself with one over another. It was apparent early on in my research that there were tensions between the three villages and I did not want to increase these further.

I based myself in another village (village A²⁵) in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone, approximately 35 kilometres south of the three villages. I travelled by public transport – motor car and bike – with my interpreter every week to spend time in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria consecutively, sometimes spending the night with a family in their house in one of the villages. When staying over, I arranged this ahead of time with the family I was to stay with and offered food and/or money so as not to lessen their food provisions. While it is possible this may have generated income past the provisions I consumed, which raises ethical dilemmas related to local expectations of research, power and wealth inequalities, guilt and personal discomfort (cf. Hammett and Sporton, 2012), I viewed it as necessary in order to compensate the families I stayed with. I stayed with different families in the different villages so as not to be seen to be affiliated with one family in particular. I visited on different days of the week throughout the 12 months, so as to experience both different daily and seasonal activities. In a preliminary visit to the relocated villages I had spoken to the village elders about the possibility of doing research in the three villages and gained consent from the three *sutigis*, as is the local norm, to visit and spend time in the villages regularly throughout the year. When I was not spending time in Ferengbeya, Wondugu or Foria, I lectured in the department of Development Studies at the University of Makeni (UniMak) in Bombali district in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone.

²⁵ I do not have consent to use the name of this village in this thesis.

During my time in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria I spent time with both women and men in the villages. In line with decolonising methodologies, drawing on indigenous ideologies I tried to do this as far as possible in culturally appropriate ways, by following Kuranko gender rules. For example, I spent time with women mostly in the private domain and also at the roadside market between Ferengbeya and Wondugu. During my time with women, I participated in and observed some of their daily activities, including their domestic duties such as carrying water and cooking (discussed below). I spent time with men predominantly in the village *barrie*, from where I could observe the rhythms of the village. I was involved in both informal conversation and semi-structured interviews with both women and men, with the assistance of my interpreter.

I collected my ethnographic data in a fieldwork diary. This involved me recording a range of things including experiences, ideas, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs and problems that I had encountered in that day (Spradley, 1980). This was in addition to the condensed notes I took while conducting participant observation and interviews (Spradley, 1980) (see below).

Ethnographic research has a number of critiques that I attempted to overcome, as far as possible, while conducting my research. Some of the critiques of ethnography, and how I attempted to overcome these, is outlined below in the discussion of the methods I used.

Participant observation

Participant observation was an essential tool when collecting data on how women's agency was performed in the post-MIDR context. Participation observation allows a researcher to observe participants in their everyday life (Sluka and Robben, 2012). In so doing, I was first able to understand how women's agency was being performed in the post-MIDR context. Secondly, by observing people over a long period of time, I was able to observe patterns of behaviour which were the manifestation of social rules and local economic, sociocultural and political systems. These social rules and systems prescribe both how people behave and are influenced by it (Giddens, 1984; Fife, 2005).

For some observations, particularly men's daily activities, I would describe myself as a passive observer. I observed these activities as an outsider and did not participate because I am not a Kuranko man (Spradley, 1980). For other observations, such as some of the women's daily activities, including their domestic duties, I actively participated not only to gain acceptance by the women but to more fully learn what it is like to be a Kuranko woman in the three relocated villages (Spradley, 1980). As an 'outsider' I was able to observe certain experiences and make comparisons that 'insiders' cannot, due to them being taken for granted (Sluka and Robben, 2012). This addresses the question of whether an 'outsider' can understand a culture that is different from their own (Crang and Cook, 2007). Through participant observation I was able to observe physical actions and also gain an understanding of the social meaning of the action and/or lack of action. For example, women laundering clothes is both a physical activity and an aspect of fulfilling their domestic duties that gains them status in the community. I recorded my observations in note form and expanded on these in my fieldwork diary in the evening, when I was out of 'the field' (Fife, 2005).

Limitations of participant observation include people acting differently when they know they are being observed, which they are likely to be particularly aware of if using a notebook to record observations (Crang and Cook, 2007). I overcame this, to some extent, by spending a long period of time in the villages, which meant that people had time to become familiar with me and live their lives 'normally' while I was present. Additionally, participant observation is highly subjective in nature, as it is the observer that chooses what to observe and how to record this (Crang and Cook, 2007; Gerring, 2017). I tried to be as objective as possible by recording as much of everything as I could and analysing key themes at a later date (see section 2.6).

Participant observation was used to collect some of the data needed to fulfil my three objectives and achieve my overall research aim. For example, through participant observation I was able to observe the types of resources and physical structures that people had access to and how they used them, which contributed to my first objective - *the examination of how women's agency is altered by a rapid change in resources and physical structures*. I also observed patterns of behaviour in the three villages which enabled me, in part, to fulfil my second objective - *the examination*

of the ways in which the local economic, sociocultural and political systems have been (re)shaped by MIDR and the international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems in which MIDR is bound. Additionally, I observed women's everyday reactions to MIDR and its effects, which enabled me to fulfil my third objective - *the examination of different women's diverse modes of reactions to MIDR and its effects, including adaptation, avoidance, passive and active resistance.*

Semi-structured interviews

In addition to participant observation, I used semi-structured interviews (understood as a conversation with a purpose) and group interviews in order to understand the relocated women's and men's lives and how they have changed as a result of MIDR (Crang and Cook, 2007). The majority of these interviews took place with relocated women and men. I also held semi-structured interviews with a representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department working in the area.

Semi-structured interviews allow a degree of flexibility by allowing the researcher to moderate the questions and structure of the interview according to the participant (Fife, 2005). For example, when people were less elaborate in their answers, I would ask more probing questions. Additionally, this flexibility means that the researcher is able to incorporate new issues that they may become aware of as the research progresses (Fife, 2005).

I had a set of broad themes that I used for all the interviews with the relocated women and men and the other informants (outlined above), which I altered when necessary (see appendix 2 for example interview schedule). These themes were: life before being relocated; life post-MIDR; and the relocation process. The broadness of the themes meant that the interviewees had the freedom to talk about issues they were most concerned about (Crang and Cook, 2007). All interviews were recorded with the consent of the participant(s), using an electronic recording device, and additional comments about the interview were recorded by hand, such as location and the participant's body language (cf. Fife, 2005). I transcribed the interviews in

full, as soon as possible after the interview, in order to allow me to remember any additional details (Crang and Cook, 2007).

Interviews with relocated women and men

Given that my interest was in understanding how local women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context, and the aim of my research was to expose women's agency, including their voices, the majority of my interviewees were women and men from the three relocated villages. Despite the focus of the research being women's agency, relocated men were also included for a number of reasons. I felt it was appropriate to compare men's experiences and perspectives of MIDR with women's and to hear their opinions of how women's agency is performed in the post-MIDR context. Men's perceptions were deemed important given the way Kuranko women and men live in symbiosis, meaning the way women and men live and enact their agency is influenced by each other and the social systems of society. Including men, therefore, allowed me to explore the relationship between women's agency, male agency, how they are interdependent and how this influences and is influenced by access to certain resources and physical structures and the social rules and systems of society (Giddens, 1984; Cornwall, 1997; Cleaver, 2002; Rao, 2017).

A combination of theoretical, quota, convenience and purposive sampling techniques were used to select interview participants. In theoretical sampling it is not the sheer number, typicality or representativeness of people which matters, but the quality of the information the person has (Crang and Cook, 2007). In the case of my research, anyone over the age of 18 that lived in the relocated villages, and therefore had experience of MIDR, qualified. A quota system was used to include the experiences and beliefs of different women and men (Górny and Napierala, 2016). Interviewees were distinguished by their gender and life phase (see section 2.1), into six categories, (i) *musuba*, (ii) *na*, (iii) *mama*, (iv) *kemine*, (v) *fa*, (vi) *bimba*. I interviewed three people from each category in each village (see Table 1) because this was the number of people available during the time that I was there.

Table 1: Interviewees from relocated villages

Village	Gender and life phase	Number
Ferengbeya	<i>musuba</i>	3
	<i>na</i>	3
	<i>mama</i>	3
	<i>dimusukuntigi</i>	1
	<i>kemine</i>	3
	<i>fa</i>	3
	<i>bimba</i>	3
	<i>sutigi</i>	1
Wondugu	<i>musuba</i>	3
	<i>na</i>	3
	<i>mama</i>	3
	<i>dimusukuntigi</i>	1
	<i>kemine</i>	3
	<i>fa</i>	3
	<i>bimba</i>	3
	<i>sutigi</i>	1
Foria	<i>musuba</i>	3
	<i>na</i>	3
	<i>mama</i>	3
	<i>dimusukuntigi</i>	1
	<i>kemine</i>	3
	<i>fa</i>	3
	<i>bimba</i>	3
	<i>sutigi</i>	1

Due to people's busy lives, I also used convenience sampling, in terms of selecting and speaking to people, that represented the different categories and that were available and willing to be interviewed (Lohr, 2010; Górný and Napierala, 2016). The study, therefore, is not representative of the whole population of the three villages but represents specific people's experiences and opinions of how women perform their agency in the post-MIDR context (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000;

Górny and Napierala, 2016). The focus on different people's opinions and experiences, and the heterogeneity of women in particular, addresses the critique that ethnographies treat subjects as a homogenous group with a singular culture, when in reality there can be multiple cultures within one society (Crang and Cook, 2007; Geertz, 2017).

Using the purposive sampling technique I selected and interviewed the *dimusukuntigi* and *sutigi* of each village because they are regarded as knowledgeable on the issues concerning their villages. Using the aforementioned three sampling techniques enabled me to build a suitable sample that represented specific categories of people in the three relocated villages and enabled me to make claims about their different opinions, that I present in later chapters.

Interviews with relocated women and men were organised on the spot, with people that were available, as is the local social norm for informal social interaction (Crang and Cook, 2007). Before the interview started I obtained verbal informed consent (see section 2.6). It was important to appear neutral on the subject as some people, particularly men, were afraid of the mining company and the government but also dependent on them. Some were, therefore, hesitant to participate in research concerned with mining. It was therefore very important to be clear about my identity, in terms of not being affiliated with the mining company, and endeavour to maintain their anonymity. I had to be realistic about the conceivability of this, particularly if they were a distinguishable person, such as the *sutigi* and the *dimusukuntigi* of the three villages. Only two *musubas* decided they did not want to be interviewed.

It is relevant to note that, during my fieldwork, certain exogenous players that were involved in hearing and representing the voices of the relocated communities told me that everyone in the villages spoke Krio, the country's *lingua franca*. In reality, a large proportion of the residents of the three villages were not fluent in Krio and those that were fluent were more comfortable expressing themselves in Kuranko. By making assumptions such as these, the voices and experiences of certain people, particularly women in remote rural locations who often only speak or are more comfortable speaking in their indigenous language, are eliminated. This is

particularly relevant to this research, given that feminisation of mining theory is concerned with representing the experiences of all women. Thus, all the interviews conducted in the villages with relocated women and men were held in Kuranko, with the exception of a few cases that were held in Krio or English. All the interviews in Kuranko were translated at the time of the interview by a Kuranko interpreter (as I do not speak fluent Kuranko), and then transcribed later (Crang and Cook, 2007). The quotes from relocated women and men that are included in my empirical chapters are the direct transcription of the interpreter's translation from Kuranko into English (see subsections 2.6.2 and 2.6.3 for discussion of challenges and advantages of using interpreters, including issues of power dynamics). Any quotes from the interviews that were held in Krio are my translations into English, as I was proficient in Krio at the time of the research. Quotes taken from non-Kuranko interviews are marked as such.

Interviews with others

A representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department working in the area also participated in the research. These participants were selected on the grounds of their knowledge on the topic and interviews with them were set up in a more formal manner, compared with the interviews with the relocated women and men. The location of the interviews with both relocated women and men and the others, represents the relationship the interviewee has with the topic. For example, relocated women's and men's everyday lives were affected by MIDR and thus these interviews were conducted within their everyday routine. In contrast, the other interviewees were related to MIDR in a more formal, professional capacity, and, therefore, these interviews were more formal in style. I arranged all these interviews by contacting the person in advance to arrange a time and location convenient to them. All these interviews were conducted in English, with the exception of the interview with the Chiefdom Councillor, who represented the Paramount Chief, which was conducted in a mixture of Kuranko and Krio and translated by my interpreter.

It proved impossible to arrange a meeting with government representatives. Although I tried repeatedly, I was not warranted an interview with a representative

of the Government Mines and Minerals Department, perhaps due to the controversial nature of the industry in the country. Additionally, the Paramount Chief was too busy to meet with me. However, he arranged for me to speak with one of his representatives. I gained verbal informed consent from all the participants before commencing the interviews. Unlike with the relocated women and men, I was unable to anonymise the Chieftom Councillor, who represented the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer or the representative of the Good Governance Department, due to them being distinguishable by their jobs.

Interview locations and logistics

In line with cultural norms that women and men in the three villages predominantly socialise separately, interviews with women and men were, on the whole, held separately. There was an observed tendency for some men to speak on behalf of some women when together, which would have reduced some women's participation in interviews. In addition to this, is the thinking that women and men are more likely to demonstrate differences in opinion if interviewed apart (Crang and Cook, 2007). Due to cultural norms, the way in which interviews with women and men were conducted varied along both gender and life phase lines. For example, the majority of interviews held with relocated women took place on the front porch of their houses, where women in the villages do a number of domestic-chores and spend a large proportion of their time. Due to the familiarity of the location, women appeared to be comfortable talking with me. Holding interviews in/near the house proved useful, due to the importance of place in people's lifeworlds, and acted as a visual reminder of a number of issues we discussed (Crang and Cook, 2007). A number of women (and men) showed me round their houses during the course of the interview to demonstrate their points, including the way in which the new houses have been built. *Mamas* appeared to be most comfortable talking with me and this was demonstrated in their more elaborative answers compared to *musubas* in particular.

Some interviews with men were held within the house or on the front porch and, in contrast to this, a number of interviews with *bimbis* and some *mamas* took place in the village *barrie*, (a public meeting place, where male village elders in particular, and some women, socialise and discuss issues) (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork

observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This resulted in a number of the *bimbas*' interviews being observed and at times, interrupted, by other men. Additionally, men on the whole were more forthcoming with their experiences, particularly related to the MIDR process and protesting in town. I tried to conduct all the interviews, as far as possible, in places and ways that were similar in style to the way both women and men would ordinarily communicate and thus felt most comfortable with, as opposed to implementing a Western style of interviewing, for example the interview location and interviewer being both formal and unfamiliar to the interviewee (Seehawer, 2018).

Some group interviews were held with *musubas*, as they seemed to be less shy and more at ease talking to me with other women present (cf. Fife, 2005). I also held a group interview with the three *dimusukuntigies*, one from each relocated village. This interview took place in the village *barrie*. I noted this as an interesting choice of location, given the majority of interviews with women had taken place on the front porch of houses, which I had taken to understand as a female space. I interpreted the choice of holding the interview with the three *dimusukuntigies* in the village *barrie* as a demonstration of their authority and status within the community. The choice of location by participants thus offered an insight into gendered spaces and statuses that also varied along life phase lines. Interviews with the representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and the representative of the Good Governance Department were held in a location specified by them.

In addition, complementary conversations related to the topic of study were held with people at different times, in a variety of places, during my fieldwork. A number of significant conversations were held with people while travelling on public transport and while doing domestic activities with women.

While semi-structured interviews were a valuable method in collecting rich data regarding people's perceptions of MIDR and its social effects, there are a number of criticisms. These include the aspect of subjectivity. This is in part caused by the researcher setting the themes of the interview and thus dictating the topics of conversation and the way in which the questions are asked, which in turn influences the participant's response (Seehawer, 2018). To reduce this, I kept the themes and

questions as broad and open as possible. Semi-structured interviews can also be time consuming both in terms of the interview itself, but more particularly in terms of transcribing (Crang and Cook, 2007). It is estimated that a full transcription of a one hour interview takes between six and ten hours (Crang and Cook, 2007). In my experience, background noise and the accent of interpreter can add to this already lengthy process.

Semi-structured interviews with relocated women and men and a representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department, contributed to me fulfilling my research objectives in three ways. First, they enabled me to understand what kind of resources and physical structures people had access to prior to being relocated, how this has changed and how this affected women's agency in particular. This contributed to my first objective. Second, I was able to understand how MIDR is bound in international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems by interviewing the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department. Additionally, I was able to understand how MIDR and the systems it is bound in, has influenced the local economic, sociocultural and political systems, by interviewing relocated women and men, thereby contributing to my second objective. Third, semi-structured interviews with relocated women and men, with a representative of the Paramount Chief, the Company-Community Relations Officer and a representative of the Good Governance Department, enabled me to understand how different women have reacted to - *adapted, avoided, passively* and *actively resisted* - MIDR and its effects and the outcomes of this, which contributed to my third objective.

Focus groups

In addition to participant observation and semi-structured interviews, I had planned to hold focus groups as a method of hearing and observing the way(s) different people discuss MIDR and its social effects (Crang and Cook, 2007). However, focus groups proved unsuccessful and inappropriate due to the hierarchical structure of Kuranko society that dictates who speaks in front of whom, or for whom within a group, thus preventing a meaningful discussion (Crang and Cook, 2007; Coulter, 2009).

Secondary data

Another of the data collection methods I used was a review of the relevant secondary sources; by this I mean material that has been produced by other people. This included (i) previous research into Kuranko way(s) of life; (ii) documents about mining in the Kolansogoia chiefdom, such as published reports on the effects of mining and MIDR in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, that were available either online or from the Sierra Leone national archives; and (iii) Human Rights' Reports concerning the anti-mining social movement in the Kolansogoia chiefdom. All these sources come with an element of bias, which was reflected on as part of the research process. This included the research being conducted by non-indigenous researchers, including both Sierra Leoneans from outside of the villages and non-Sierra Leoneans; on the whole the documents were intended for a non-indigenous audience, including the Sierra Leonean government and 'Western' scholars; and a number of the sources used non-decolonising research methodologies. Despite the inevitable bias of these sources, they were useful for both background information and clarification of particularities such as numbers and dates. Additionally, the bias of these sources proved useful for understanding different exogenous perspectives about Kuranko culture and MIDR and its effects.

Previous research into Kuranko way(s) of life (for example Jackson, 1977a; Coulter, 2009) proved useful as supplementary data in understanding what life was like prior to MIDR, including how women's agency was performed and the economic, sociocultural and political systems that were in existence. This was useful in addressing my first objective about how women's agency is altered by a rapid change in resources and physical structures caused by MIDR and my second objective about how local economic, sociocultural and political systems have been affected by MIDR. In ethnographic research, there is often a need to understand the past, including previous influencing factors of social change in order to understand contemporary social change (Fife, 2005). However, due to the nature of my work and my concern with representing women's true experiences and agency, I had to be cautious in terms of the secondary data I selected to gain an understanding of Kuranko women's agency. While the sources I used were ethnographic studies about Kuranko women in Sierra Leone, they were not the same women, in the exact same context. In line with my epistemological stance (see section 2.2), the most reliable

source of information on the topic of how Kuranko women's agency has been influenced by MIDR are the women that have experienced it (Fife, 2005).

Documents about mining in the Kolansogoia chiefdom such as published reports on the effects of MIDR in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, were useful in gaining an understanding of the history of MIDR in the Kolansogoia chiefdom, that is documented to have started in the colonial period. These documents also offered a preliminary understanding of mining and MIDR in the area before I started my fieldwork. Additionally, I used the data from Human Rights' Reports to understand how MIDR has caused a rapid change to certain resources and physical structures, which contributed to fulfilling my first research objective. I also used Human Rights' Reports concerning the anti-mining social movement in the Kolansogoia chiefdom, to compare relocated women's active modes of resistance to relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's active modes of resistance, which was useful in addressing my third objective about relocated women's *active modes of resistance* to MIDR.

2.5 Analysis of data

In line with decolonising research, it was important to analyse and present the data in a way that represented how local women's agency is performed, and the sociocultural meaning of this, as accurately as possible (Barnes, 2018; Seehawer, 2018). To do this I used a thematic coding method to analyse my data. This is described as a way of grounding theory in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). As Crang and Cook (2007) state, the objective of thematic coding is not to develop a definitive account, but instead a way of trying to find a means to understand the complex interrelations of multiple versions of reality within ethnographic research. This includes theory that illuminates the interconnectivities within social phenomenon (Crang and Cook, 2007).

Thematically coding data entails looking through the data for patterns known as 'themes' (Swanborn, 2010) and then examining the themes that emerge in more detail. To thematically code my data, I started by preliminarily coding. This entails

reading through all the data and coding reoccurring ‘themes’ with a short phrase or word. First I did this with the data from my participant observations, then the transcripts from the interviews with relocated women and men, then the interviews with people from outside of the three villages and lastly, the secondary data. Doing it in this order is described as building an ethnographic case from ‘the ground up’ (Fife, 2005). This was particularly important for my research that sought to expose local women’s true experiences and agency.

After the preliminary coding phase, I had a large number of conceptual themes, some of which were entangled and could be merged together. Some of the individual code(s) that I first identified then became subthemes within another theme. With a smaller set of themes, I manually sorted the data into the themes that I had predefined (Crang and Cook, 2007). This evidence came from both different people and places within the same source of evidence as well as different sources and thus different levels of society (Fife, 2005). Within each theme, I was then able to analyse the evidence for similarities and contradictions in terms of how women’s agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. For example, relocated women talked about the use of resources associated with nature in performing their agency and within the secondary sources, there was data about the loss of certain natural resources. I was then able to analyse how the loss of certain resources influenced women’s agency using different sources of data. I then analysed the contradictions within the data, for example, some women behaving in one way, while others behaved in another, some of which became additional (sub)themes, such as the heterogeneity of women, that cut across the main identified themes (see below).

The main themes to emerge from data and related to theory, included (i) how women’s economic agency is transformed and performed in a post-MIDR context (see chapter 4); (ii) how women’s sociocultural agency is related to resources and physical structures that are associated with nature and how this is altered by MIDR (see chapter 5); and (iii) how women perform their political agency through active resistance in the post-MIDR context (see chapter 6). Cutting across these three conceptual themes is how different women (on the grounds of life phase, status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience) perform

their economic, social and political agency in different ways, by *adapting, avoiding, passively resisting* and *actively resisting* the social effects of MIDR.

Limitations of thematic coding include the fact that researchers start analysing from an early stage in the research, even before fieldwork begins, which inevitably biases data collection, as preconceived themes influence the way we conduct research (Crang and Cook, 2007; Swanborn, 2010). There is also a risk that while analysing the data, the themes and findings become disconnected with reality, i.e. are no longer grounded (Crang and Cook, 2007). One recommended method to avoid this and give participants more voice and agency in the research is to include participants in the analysis process (Crang and Cook, 2007). However, due to wanting to represent the diversity of relocated people's opinions, some of which are contradictory, coupled with the promise of anonymity, it was not feasible to include my participants in the analysis phase. Different people's diverse opinions on the MIDR process and whose views should be listened to and represented is illustrated in the following quote:

'You should meet with the key stakeholders first so you know more about the situation instead of asking the community people because they don't know'
(sutigi, Wondugu, 08/11/2016).

Instead of involving participants in the analysis process, during my fieldwork and in subsequent visits I have explained my findings to different people in the relocated villages to check that I have understood their experiences and perceptions accurately.

Common themes from ethnographic case study research can be used to understand phenomenon elsewhere, although the extent of generalisability should not be exaggerated, given that case study research speaks to a unique group of people at a specific time (Fife, 2005; Crang and Cook, 2007; Swanborn, 2010; Gerring, 2017). For example, using the themes I have outlined above, it can be theorised that the economic, social and political aspects of women's agency are likely to be influenced in different ways by non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR. Additionally, the way in which different women perform their women's agency is also likely to differ related to their identity and pre-existing agency that are influenced by sociocultural nuances within society. Given that ethnography aims to

understand the specificities of a given culture or society, ethnographic findings should be used with caution to understand other cultures in any real detail (Malinowski, 2012; Geertz, 2017).

Overall, the collection of qualitative data among a range of different actors, from relocated women and men to a mining Company-Community Relations officer, provided me with a variety of perspectives. These have enabled me to address my objectives and overall research aim: *to show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change*, by examining how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. In the next section, I outline some of the challenges I faced while conducting research in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria.

2.6 Challenges and personal reflection

As with any research, my research in three remote villages that have experienced MIDR in the north of Sierra Leone, came with a number of challenges, including my positionality, the positionality of my participants and the relationship between the two.

Reflecting on positionality has been an important aspect of ethnographic research for more than 50 years, concerned with how the positionality of both the researcher and 'research subject' influences research, which can happen at numerous stages of the research process (Chiseri-Slater, 1996; Finlay, 2003; Geertz, 2017). For example, the researcher's positionality, related to factors such as age, gender, race, nationality and life experience, influences the topic of research, how the research is conducted and the findings and conclusions (Gould, 1978; Chiseri-Slater, 1996; Hertz, 1997; Oakley, 2000; Gough, 2003; Ikäheimo and Laitinen, 2011; Gerring, 2017). Similarly, the positionality of the 'research subject' influences how they participate

in research, the information they give to the researcher and therefore the findings and conclusions (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992; Crang and Cook, 2007). The positionality of the researcher and the ‘research subject’ also influence the relationship between them and therefore, how research is planned, conducted and the data and findings gained from it (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992).

In ethnographic research, positionality is described as a part of the data and is often reflected upon as part of the data collection process, such as keeping a fieldwork diary (Chiseri-Slater, 1996; Gough, 2003). The positionality of both the researcher and ‘research subjects’ are aspects of the context in which research takes place; understanding this is important in understanding the factors that influence (bias) research and the research topic itself (Finlay, 2003; Gough, 2003; Geertz, 2017). While it is not possible to eradicate bias, by critically reflecting on positionality in research, the reader is able to understand some of the factors that have influenced the findings (Geertz, 2017). Transparency is therefore argued to enhance the credibility and quality of research findings (Seale, 1999). Below I reflect on how the positionality of myself, my interpreter, my participants and the relationship between them have influenced my research.

2.6.1 Interview fatigue and catastrophising

Since being relocated for commercial large-scale mining to take place on their land, there has been an influx of exogenous visitors to the three relocated villages, including academic researchers, journalists and Human Rights activists, under the guise of researching MIDR, the social problems it causes and a promise of ‘helping’ those who have been negatively affected by MIDR. However, people in the relocated villages described being exploited by researchers for information without any benefit for them. This is illustrated in the following quote:

‘Lots have come here and asked the same questions you are asking and nothing changes’ (dimusukuntigi, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

This demonstrates a perspective link between external engagement and change. It also demonstrates my participants’ feelings of ‘interview fatigue’ and reluctance to take part in my research, that was particularly common at the beginning of the

research. Feelings of being ‘over-researched’ are common in places where a unique phenomenon has taken place, due to it attracting numerous researchers (Clark, 2008). Additionally, these feelings are heightened when those who have been researched receive little in the way of benefiting from the research (Clark, 2008). As time went on, my participants became more willing, and at times enthusiastic to explain their experiences of MIDR to me, as I behaved differently to ‘the other researchers’, spending a longer time getting to know the situation, participating in and experiencing their day-to-day life and asking different questions.

A second challenge I encountered during my research, was needing to understand the way people lived pre-MIDR in order to understand how MIDR has influenced the present. This is common in ethnographic research when used to examine social change and is thus rarely synchronic (Fife, 2005; Hann, 2012), but there not having been a reason to conduct research in the location prior to the phenomenon taking place. Due to not having conducted research in the three villages prior to them being relocated and there being no available documentation about this, I was reliant on people’s descriptions of the past. The past that I present in this thesis is therefore a (re)creation of what life used to be like through people’s chosen memories (Hann, 2012; Bula, 2016). Women’s agency prior to MIDR is therefore how women perceived their agency to be. I do not view this as a significant limitation to my findings, as I am interested in presenting how women perceive their agency to have changed as a result of MIDR and how this perception differs for different women. Additionally, which women displayed more nostalgia for the past and how this influenced how they performed their agency in the post-MIDR context, is a finding in itself that I present in this thesis (see chapter 5).

The challenge with relying on people’s memories is the tendency of people to be nostalgic about the past and at times, remember a previous situation to have been better than it was (Hann, 2012; Bula, 2016). Selective memory is common to human beings, particularly when having experienced rapid, unwanted change, which results in feeling nostalgic for the past and forgetting certain negative aspects (Hann, 2012; Bula, 2016). In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, people were not necessarily misremembering the past, as many people explained that the mining company had promised them a ‘better life’, thus admitting life was not perfect prior

to MIDR. However, there was a tendency for some respondents to romanticize life in their pre-resettlement locations in order to emphasise their dissatisfaction with the post-MIDR villages. This is illustrated in the following quote:

‘It is like we are coming from heaven to hell’ (fa, Wondugu, 02/11/2016, interview conducted in English).

This quote demonstrates a phrase that I heard repeatedly throughout my research and people’s nostalgia for their pre-MIDR way of life.

Comparing a romanticized past to the present, is also a way of catastrophising the present. A rhetoric of catastrophising and presenting selves as vulnerable victims of MIDR was another challenge that I encountered during my fieldwork, particularly at the beginning. For example, people responded to my enquiries with similar, and what sounded like rehearsed, responses detailing how bad life in the post-MIDR villages is and how helpless they are. This was a challenge because I did not want to portray the village(s) as homogenous victims of mining and its effects, as others have done (see Jenkins, 2014). I was thankful that after a short time people started to talk about MIDR and its effects, beyond the generic problems it caused.

A possible reason for people romanticizing the past and catastrophising the present is that I represented both the exogenous researchers and activists that had gone before me, who had been interested in only the negative effects of MIDR and had promised to ‘help’ the relocated communities. On the one hand, this may have encouraged participants to talk to me and thus aided my research (Lagisa, 1997; Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000). However, this comes with ethical dilemmas, as I had to ensure that my positionality, in terms of me representing ‘help’, was not influencing people consenting to talk to me (see section 2.6). On the other hand, associating me with other researchers and activists may have caused people to catastrophise their situation, in the thinking that the worse they made their situation out to be, the more ‘help’ they would receive, thus reducing the accuracy of the data.

2.6.2 Reflecting on identity

Central to my research is representing the views, experiences and agency of local women accurately. To do this, I conducted an ethnographic study in order to understand and represent people's way of life from their perspective(s); thus, being able to spend time with and talk to women in a comfortable manner for both female and male participants and myself was paramount. The success of ethnographic research is argued to be largely influenced by the identity of the researcher, including whether they are able to build rapport with participants and how well they are able to understand the culture, that they are often not a part of (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Glesne, 1989; Crang and Cook, 2007; Geertz, 2017).

One major critique of ethnographic research is its subjective nature (Crang and Cook, 2007). This includes, relevant to this thesis, how the researcher's positionality influences the research at all stages and how the participants interpret the researcher's positionality and thus respond to them (Reisman, 1987; Beoku-Betts, 1994; DeVault, 1996; Oakley, 2000; Hesse-Biber and Piatelli, 2007). To address this, I have tried to reflect on my positionality throughout all stages of the research, in terms of how I have identified myself, how others have identified me and how this has influenced the research (Rose, 1997; Oakley, 2000). Below, I discuss some of the aspects of different people's identity, that were involved in the research, including my own, the participants' and my translator's, that have influenced the power dynamics between us, my positionality and the research.

Being a woman is not enough

Along with others (Reissman, 1987; DeVault, 1996), my research challenges the (mis)conception that women researching women feel comfortable talking with each other, have instant rapport through their shared sex category and that data collection is therefore aided by this (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992). This is in line with the critique that feminist methodologies fail to take the heterogeneity of women into consideration, instead presenting women as homogenous, with a shared identity and shared values (McDowell, 1992; Beoku-Betts, 1994; Ramaazanoglu and Holland, 2002). My experience of conducting research with Kuranko women in three remote villages in the north of Sierra Leone challenges the assumption that being a female researcher conducting research with women creates instant rapport and instead,

highlights how multiple aspects of researchers' identities influence research in different ways, with different participants, at different times (Ramaazanoglu and Holland, 2002).

On the whole, I do not fit in with the local Kuranko notion of what an adult woman is. As an unmarried woman without children, I lack the main achievements that Kuranko women and men measure a woman's status by. As a result of this, particularly at the beginning of my fieldwork, I found it difficult to find a common ground with my female participants to create rapport and aid socialising. Additionally, at the same time as conducting research, I was lecturing at a university in the north of Sierra Leone. This increased the divide and power hierarchy between myself and my participants, the majority of whom lack any formal education. I felt early on that being white, foreign and educated were the defining aspects of my identity and created a barrier to communicating and conducting research between my participants and me (Reissman, 1987; Beoku-Betts, 1994).

I tried to negotiate my identity, as far as possible, by emphasising certain aspects and experiences that I had in common with women in the three villages (Beoku-Betts, 1994). For example, I tried to perform domestic duties in the same way as women in the villages, washing and cooking outside with other women and wearing similar attire. I feel we bonded over this, at least to some extent, as local women appreciated my attempts. Perhaps to some extent, it also reduced the power hierarchy between us, as they were the knowledgeable and skilled agents in how to perform domestic work, whom I was learning from. My participation in daily life, was successful in creating rapport to some extent, as women began to socialise with me in a more familiar way. For example, after a short time women began to leave their children and babies with me. I don't believe this would have happened if I had been male.

On the whole, *mamas* were more comfortable communicating with me, both with and without an interpreter present (see subsection 2.5.3), compared to *musubas*. Possible reasons for this might be that *musubas* are shy and do not speak to strangers as a cultural norm, and/or that I was with a male Kuranko interpreter, which might have made *musubas* feel less comfortable in speaking to me via him

(see subsection 2.5.3). In contrast, *mamas* may have been more comfortable due to cultural norms of *mamas* speaking out more generally (see chapter 6).

What it means to be white in an ex-colony

Worthy of note is that the aspects of my identity that have most significantly influenced my positionality and therefore the research, on the topic of how MIDR influences women's agency, are related to a number of the additional factors that I outline as influencing women's agency in Sierra Leone, thus re-emphasising the degree of influence these factors have on both agency and social norms in Sierra Leone. This includes the colonial history of Sierra Leone, the international aid culture in the country and international commercial extraction of natural resources (see chapter 3). While these are presented as non-organic triggers of social change that influence women's agency, it is the inherently racial power hierarchies that exists within the colonial legacy, the aid culture and commercial extraction in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mama, 2001), that have influenced my positionality and my research with Kuranko women and men who have been relocated for international commercial mining in the north of Sierra Leone. This highlights the challenges of a researcher conducting research on a topic that they are inherently linked to through one or more aspects of their identity, that evokes power hierarchies.

The power hierarchies that my skin colour evokes, linked to colonialism, aid and exploitative extraction of natural resources (Mama, 2001; Seehawer, 2018) in Sierra Leone (Coulter, 2009), were of particular concern while conducting research, particularly interviewing, given the power dynamics and hierarchies that are at play within interviews to begin with (Oakley, 1981; Parr, 2015). Although it is recognised that participants hold power in the form of knowledge that the researcher wants to gain (Oakley, 1981), in the case of my research I was very aware of the power and status my white skin tone has in the country and how this was likely to influence people's willingness to speak to me, what they told me and the responsibility to represent what I was told appropriately (Momsen, 2006). There is a danger of reconstructing colonial (race) power hierarchies, given the exploitative nature of conducting research in so-called 'developing countries' in particular, and the Western methods we use to gather data and theories we use to analyse 'other'

people's lives and experiences (England, 1994; Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000; Nhemachena *et al.*, 2016).

There are varied opinions on whether it is appropriate for non-indigenous researchers to conduct research in indigenous cultures. While certain scholars (Rigney, 1997; Martin, 2001; Atkinson, 2002; Foley, 2003; Russell-Mundine, 2012) challenge how non-indigenous researchers interact and conduct research with indigenous peoples, whether they can ever fully understand indigenous culture and thus do meaningful research in indigenous communities, there are arguments that an 'outsider' offers a new understanding of a culture they are not from (Spradley, 1980; Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000; Sluka and Robben, 2012). This is because there is the potential for 'outsiders' to notice aspects of a culture that an 'insider' would take for granted and might not emphasise in the write up (Spradley, 1980; Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000; Sluka and Robben, 2012). It is my hope that my 'outsider' status has enabled me to offer a unique understanding of how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context.

Related to my 'outsider' status, is my use of interpreter(s), which on the one hand re-emphasised my lack of understanding of the local Kuranko language and thus my 'outsider' status. On the other hand, using an interpreter bridged the gap between my ('insider') participants and my 'outsider' self, as my interpreter(s) are Kuranko and thus perceived more as local 'insiders' compared to someone that is able to speak the language but does not understand the nuances of the language or the culture. That being said, my interpreter(s) were also, at the time of research, in higher education, which gave them 'outsider' status, to some extent, in a community in which very few people have any formal education.

2.6.3 Using an interpreter

Throughout my 12 months of fieldwork, I used three male interpreters to translate the majority of interviews with relocated people in the three villages from Kuranko to English. The first limitation of translation is that having responses translated into another language is likely to lead to a loss of information or meaning. For example, there might be Kuranko words that do not have a direct translation in English; for this reason, colloquial translation was deemed more useful than a literal one

(Devereux and Hoddinot, 1992; Bujra, 2006). I also recognise that having multiple interpreters will have influenced the data, due to the unique positionality of each individual and the different bias they brought to the research and the way they each translated differently (Devereux and Hoddinot, 1992; Bujra, 2006; Crang and Cook, 2007). Additionally, I am aware that having three interpreters may have limited the rapport between researcher and interpreter due to not working with each other consistently. However, having three interpreters was deemed appropriate given that they were all students at the time of fieldwork and I was conscious of not wanting to interrupt their studies too much.

The three interpreters were selected on the basis that they spoke fluent Kuranko, Krio and English and that they were willing and able to spend time in the three relocated villages with me. It was not my choice, necessarily, to have a male interpreter, but only males volunteered for the position. I recognise and have reflected on having only male interpreters and the effect(s) their gender has had on the research (Devereux and Hoddinot, 1992; Bujra, 2006). For example, on the one hand, having a male interpreter potentially limits interaction with *musubas* in particular, who may be less comfortable speaking in front of men due to cultural norms (as noted above). This is particularly significant given the focus of the research and objective to represent different women. Having a male interpreter also prevents entrance into female only arenas, such as *Segere* spaces. However, I suspect that my positionality and ‘outsider’ status also affected these two things and would have been a barrier, even if I had had a female interpreter. On the other hand, given that I am a woman, having a male interpreter created a gender balance within the research team that I believe aided in communicating with men in particular, who may have been less willing to talk with me if I had had a female interpreter, due to cultural norms.

All three interpreters understood and were interested in the research topic and active in the process of data collection. By this I mean that they occasionally asked their own additional questions for clarification or detail on a point. Therefore, it has to be recognised that they too influenced the data that I collected. They were familiar with ethical protocol and at the beginning of every interview, started by asking for the participant’s informed consent (see subsection 2.2.4).

2.7 Ethical issues

To ensure that the research was as ethical as possible, I applied for and was granted ethical approval from the University of East Anglia before commencing fieldwork (see appendix 3). The UEA School of International Development's ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research process, including acquiring informed consent at the beginning of every interview (The International Development Ethics Handbook, 2015). This entailed explaining the purpose of the research to participants, including there being no reward for participating and that it is academic research, not connected to the government, an NGO or a mining company.

All participants were required to give oral consent that they understood the purpose, that they were happy to participate, that they were taking part voluntarily and could therefore terminate the interview at any point, that they would remain anonymous, where possible (see subsection 2.4.2), and that they were willing to have the interaction recorded electronically (Wilson, 1993; Corbin and Morse, 2003; Momsen, 2006). I ensured that participants had the opportunity to ask any questions, thus enabling respondents to give 'informed consent' to take part (Wilson, 1993). As I was conducting research in a different culture to my own, it was important to be aware and respectful of the social norms and my position as a white, educated young woman, and essential to context, taking extreme care when asking sensitive questions (McDowell, 1992; Wilson, 1993; Momsen, 2006; Smith, 2014). The sensitive nature of this study, made ethical issues of paramount importance.

The ethical procedure process itself also comes with a number of ethical dilemmas, particularly when following British ethical guidelines outside of Britain (Fife, 2005). This is because what is considered ethical in one country is not necessarily considered ethical in another (Fife, 2005). An example of this is that anonymity is regarded as best practice within British social research ethical guidelines; however, I found that in Sierra Leone many people wanted to have their name documented and included as research data (Fife, 2005). Thus, ethical procedures need to be negotiated throughout the research, including with participants, if research ethics are to be truly ethical, i.e. respect local cultural norms (Fife, 2005). In relation to my research, I discussed the issue of anonymity with my participants and it was decided

that I would not include their names in the write up, due to the public nature of academic research. During the discussion, some of my participants from the three villages voiced their concern about their interview responses being traced back to them by the state and/or the mining company. For this reason, instead of using the names of my participants from the three relocated villages, they are identified by their gender, life phase and the village they reside in.

In addition, there is an ethical dilemma concerning the inherently exploitative nature of research, that is most commonly conducted by white ‘Western’ academics in so-called ‘developing countries’, the findings of which are by-and-large reported in so-called ‘developed countries’ (Crang and Cook, 2007; Nhemaehena *et al.*, 2016). The significance of this is re-emphasised given that I was conducting research about commercial extraction, given the exploitative nature of this too. The exploitative nature of both researching in ‘foreign’ countries and extracting resources from these countries, whether in the form of knowledge or natural resources, are reminiscent of the colonial period; thus, research has been described as a form of (re)colonisation (Nhemaehena *et al.*, 2016). As part of decolonising my methodology as far as possible (see section 2.3), I disseminated some of my findings at the university (UniMak) I was working at, to students, academics and other interested parties (I intend to continue to do this when I return to Sierra Leone to resume lecturing). In so doing, I avoid the total extraction of knowledge from Sierra Leone, by presenting my findings in the country, as well as in so-called ‘developed countries’.

Having explained my methodological approach in this chapter, in the next chapter, I outline the framework I used for my analysis of how women’s agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects.

CHAPTER THREE: FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

Having outlined my methodology in the preceding chapter, I set out my framework for analysis in this chapter. The theoretical point of departure in this thesis is the *feminisation of mining theory*. I draw on this theory in my exploration of how MIDR has affected women and their agency and go beyond the common focus on women's economic agency (Perks, 2011; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; Bashwira *et al.*, 2014) (see chapter 4). I also go beyond the popular assumption found in mining literature that women are most vulnerable to the detrimental impacts of the mining industry (Mahy, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015, see for example Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). In line with feminisation of mining theory, *I show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change*. I contribute to the theory by exploring how MIDR shapes and is shaped by women's sociocultural (see chapter 5) and political agency (see chapter 6).

Central to my framework for analysis are the resources and physical structures associated with nature that embody women and their agency. I examine how the profoundly feminine structures of the village and the house and the resources that women draw upon to perform their agency in their daily lives, including land, the cooking pot and water, have been altered since relocation and how this influences women's agency, the pre-existing economic, sociocultural and political systems and women's role in these (Jackson, 1998; Harcourt and Escobar, 2005; Harcourt, 2009; 2017; Adam *et al.*, 2015).

In so doing, I highlight the role that the different resources and physical structures associated with nature, play in women's lifeworlds, cultural identity and maintaining

and enabling individual and collective wellbeing in small-scale communities impacted by mining and resettlement. For example, I illuminate the value of women's customary gender roles, such as their domestic duties in establishing their identity and status in this context. In so doing, I challenge the ethnocentric tendency of some feminist scholars (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Ortner, 1974; Little, 1987; DeVault, 1991; de Beauvoir, 1997; Sullivan, 2004; Cleaver, 2007; Harcourt, 2009) and feminisation of mining theorists (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015) to report that women are subordinated by their relationship with nature, and made vulnerable to the destruction of nature by it (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993; Jenkins, 2014). I demonstrate that the natural resources that women draw upon are essential to the way women perform their agency and the cultural rules that dictate this behaviour. To do this, I draw on two further theories, *the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory* and *cultural adaptation*. These contribute to feminisation of mining theory by illuminating how women's economic, social and political agency, related to natural resources, shapes and is shaped by MIDR.

I examine how women have reacted to the change - loss, transformation and provision - of natural resources and physical structures, caused by MIDR. I draw on *cultural adaptation* literature (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 2016; Hiên, 2016; Chaudhury *et al.*, 2017; Pandey *et al.*, 2017; Rao *et al.*, 2017; Warrick *et al.*, 2017) to analyse how and why different women with existing social and financial capital have *adapted to* the change of economic resources, in contrast to *resisting* the effects of a loss of sociocultural resources; in this way I contribute to feminisation of mining theory by demonstrating contemporary forms of cultural adaptation. For example, in line with cultural adaptation, in response to a loss of land as an economic resource, some women have *adapted* their behaviour from subsistence farmers to market sellers, in response to the capitalist market-driven system that is being imposed through MIDR. In contrast, women have *resisted* the changes MIDR has posed to sociocultural resources and the meaning of these resources in two distinct ways. All women, to varying extents, related to life phase, have *passively resisted* the loss of the customary mud-thatch houses, by refusing to conform with the 'Western modern' lifestyle that has been imposed through the

provision of ‘Western modern’ structures provided by the mining company. Women from all life phases have also demonstrated *active modes of resistance* by protesting about the loss of access to an adequate water source and the threat this poses to women’s sociocultural identity, by publicly protesting.

My findings demonstrate that the different ways in which women react to MIDR may both act to maintain and transform women’s agency and the local economic, sociocultural and political systems. For instance, some women become economic agents of the imposed capitalist market-driven system, some women become dependents of it and others *avoid* it and continue with their subsistence-based lifestyle; this has changed the local economy from a subsistence-based system to three interconnected economic systems (see chapter 4).

In contrast, all women resisting the threat MIDR poses to certain sociocultural resources, highlights the value of sociocultural identity and how this and the sociocultural system is being maintained through women’s actions (see chapter 5). Women’s *active resistance* to the loss of water, in the first instance is about protesting the threat MIDR poses to women’s customary gender roles that centre around water. However, the public mode of their protests demonstrates how the political agency of *musubas* in particular has been enhanced from passive members of society to political actors, which would suggest a transformation of the local political system. Conversely, women’s active resistance, drawing on pre-existing political power bases, including *mamas*’ pre-existing decision-making power and all women’s agency within *Segere*, may also suggest that women’s political agency has not been transformed by MIDR, but that MIDR has forced women to make *Segere* public, to gain attention from the state and mining company, thereby altering an aspect of society that was once hidden from men (see chapter 6).

In the next sections of this chapter, I first discuss the key concepts I use in my analysis that enables me to contribute to the feminisation of mining theory. I explain how my findings contribute to the feminisation of mining theory by showing how women perform their sociocultural and political agency, in addition to their economic agency, in a post-MIDR context in order to maintain and enhance

individual and collective wellbeing for themselves and the community. I do this by demonstrating the critical role natural resources play in enabling and maintaining agency and social systems and how the impact MIDR has on these resources, influences women's economic, sociocultural and political agency and the economic, sociocultural and political systems. I do this by drawing on critical junctures and path dependency concepts and the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory. I draw on cultural adaptation and resistance literature to examine how different women have responded in diverse ways to the loss and/or change of a variety of natural resources; I also examine what this means in terms of the value of the natural resource and women's agency in this context.

3.2 Feminisation of Mining theory and key concepts

The feminisation of mining theory, that is a call to go beyond the assumed masculine nature of the industry and the negative effects it has on women, to reveal women's involvement and recognise the different ways women's agency is being performed in and related to the mining industry (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015), is central to my analysis of how different women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context.

While the feminisation of mining literature has begun to expose women's role(s) in the mining sector, it is limited in its scope of reflecting the diversity and complexity of women's economic, social and political agency, in a number of ways. First, the feminisation of mining theory tends to focus on women's economic agency either in large-scale mining in the Global North (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Mayes, 2014) or women in the Global South being involved in ASM as a poverty alleviation strategy rather than an economic choice (Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasi, 2012; Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). Second, feminisation of mining theory deters from associating women with nature that is related to their reproductive responsibilities, as this is assumed to result in the subordination of women and act as a barrier to gender equality and development, including wellbeing (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015) (see section 3.3). By doing this, indigenous women's agency, that is often dependent on notions of nature and natural resources, is obscured and devalued (Bhanumathi, 2002; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013a; b). Third, the feminisation of mining

literature gives little consideration to the implementation and (formal and informal) negotiation processes of industrial large-scale mining projects in developing countries and how women experience this in a unique way, beyond assuming that they have been excluded from negotiations (O’Faircheallaigh, 2013a; b). Fourth, women’s involvement in mining-related protests has been depicted as women resisting their customary gender roles and the patriarchal system, amongst other things (Jenkins, 2015). Fifth, there is a lack of exploration of feminisation of mining theory in the Sub-Saharan African context.

I contribute to the feminisation of mining research agenda that aims to highlight limitations within the mining-related discourse and makes recommendations for further research on the diverse roles women play in the mining industry, by examining how different women in the Sub-Saharan African context have experienced and reacted to MIDR in a diversity of ways. I contribute to the growing literature on women in mining by showing how women’s agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. In so doing, I illuminate not only how different women’s (on the grounds of life phase, interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience) economic agency is influenced, but also how different women perform their sociocultural and political agency after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change (MIDR). Below I discuss the key concepts that I use in my analysis of how different women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing.

In this thesis, agency is defined as a person’s ability to set their own goals and access the resources needed to act upon said goals, this can take multiple forms including bargaining, negotiating, subversion and resistance (Giddens, 1984; Kabeer, 1999). In a post-MIDR context, I examine how women’s economic, sociocultural and political agency is performed by exploring women’s freedom to choose how to act, women’s access to the resources needed to act and the meanings and values of these actions in the sociocultural context, both to individuals and the society more broadly.

People enact different aspects – economic, sociocultural and political – of their agency in different ways in different contexts according to societal rules, systems,

values and access to the necessary resources. For example, economic agency often describes people's ability to generate an income related to their access to the required economic resources. Women's economic agency often takes the form, at least in part, of women playing reproductive roles that enable societal economic production, such as feeding male workers (Whitehead, 1999; Kabeer, 2016). Women are also often responsible for paying for children's education, that is acknowledged to enable future security (Rao, 2014; Kabeer, 2016). Particularly relevant to this thesis, women in farming communities are directly involved in food and economic production. In Zambian farming communities different women enact a variety of economic activities, including farming, trading and domestic work - that enables economic production (Whitehead, 1992).

Women's sociocultural agency often centres around fertility and domesticity. Therefore having children is central to women's sociocultural agency and status in society (Jackson, 1977a; Rao, 2018). This is exemplified in state policies promoting women's fertility, which encourages women to be identified as mothers above anything else (see Kandiyoti, 2003). In some societies, including Kuranko, a woman's body is representative of her biological reproductive ability and a fat body is therefore associated with motherhood and revered (Walentowitz, 2011).

Political agency refers to decision-making capacity, which can be enacted at any level of society - household, community, national or international - and take a variety of forms, ranging from matchmaking decisions to resisting and influencing international corporations and policies (see Scott, 1985; Hart, 2007; Kandiyoti, 2007; Hannah *et al.*, 2017). There is an incorrect assumption within the academic literature that women in patriarchal societies lack political agency (Rao, 2017). However, women have been shown to have both decision-making power and/or the ability to negotiate/resist patriarchal structures in order to influence decisions and are thus political agents in patriarchal societies (Kandiyoti, 1998). For example, Mammy Queens have the power to represent women in decision-making processes in patriarchal communities in Sierra Leone (Jackson, 1977a).

In this thesis, power refers to the ability to act and influence (Sen, 2001). Status is taken to mean, the social standing a woman is granted by other community members related to life accomplishments (Sen, 2001). In contrast to Sen's argument that lower fertility levels correlate with higher status and wellbeing of women, in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, as well as elsewhere, reproduction is highly valued and therefore having children increases a woman's status (cf. Rao, 2018). Values such as these play a key role in shaping how people perform their agency in order to achieve status in the community. In addition to having children, other factors positively influence a woman's status including performing other reproductive responsibilities such as cooking, having made beneficial decisions for the community previously and/or being economically sufficient (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

In this thesis, I examine how the change in resources that MIDR causes influences the way women perform their economic, sociocultural and political agency. The way(s) in which economic, sociocultural and political agency is enacted is both shaped by and shapes the economic, sociocultural and political systems²⁶ and the rules that govern these, which contribute to the overall structure²⁷ of society²⁸ (Giddens, 1984). In this thesis, I explore how a change in resources, caused by MIDR, and women's reactions to this, influences economic, sociocultural and political systems and individual and collective wellbeing at the local level.

²⁶ In line with "complex adaptive systems theory" *economic, sociocultural and political systems* are defined as regulated patterns of human behaviour prescribed by economic, cultural and political social norms respectively (Sawyer, 2005). They are all considered social systems in the sense that they are both maintained and transformed by people's collective actions (Sawyer, 2005).

²⁷ According to Giddens (1984, p.17) *structure* refers to certain 'structuring properties' (for example institutions and traditions) enabling and maintaining social systems and practices in a given context (time-space). A structure is made up of transformative relations, meaning that reproduced social practices do not have 'structures' but rather exhibit 'structural properties', as they have the ability to change from one context to another.

²⁸ *Society* here refers to a group of people living together in an ordered community (Giddens, 1984).

3.3 Nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory

3.3.1 Lifeworlds and natural resources

The ways in which people and women in particular have experienced non-organic triggers of social change centres around particular resources that are drawn upon in people's lifeworlds being changed by non-organic triggers of social change. These resources are critical to people's cultural identity. As a result of this, there is a strong link between cultural identity and non-organic triggers of social change, particularly when the latter involves indigenous people being relocated to a new place or their own land and resources being altered (Abernethy, 1979; Hiên, 2016). In order to demonstrate the cultural meanings and value that are attached or have been assigned to different natural resources and thus, the significance of natural resources being lost or changed through MIDR, I examine women's lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987) and the natural resources that are drawn upon in enacting these.

The lifeworld, according to Habermas (1987) is constructed from the common cultural traditions that exist within a given society. Communicative actions in line with cultural traditions bind individuals within a society to one another and act to maintain society (and life) as people know it. In this sense, values of life are wrapped up in the identity, power, agency, social rules and social systems that are dependent on natural resources. Within this, the agent is both the initiator and product of traditions and therefore responsible for the maintenance of society and lifeworld (Habermas, 1987).

I examine people's lifeworlds to explore the way people live beyond their economic means (Mtero, 2017) and highlight what is culturally valuable to them and thus gives their life meaning and them a sense of wellbeing (Harcourt, 2009; 2017) and how this is affected by MIDR. For example, my findings demonstrate how water that is used for *Segere* business is culturally valuable, involving women spending time together, talking about their issues, training girls to be *musuba* ('woman big') and preparing them for marriage. The loss of water as a result of MIDR, thus reduces women's ability to perform certain actions, thereby reducing their agency. Conversely, women have resisted the loss of water and the threat this poses to their cultural identity. In contrast to the loss of water reducing women's agency, women's

resistance demonstrates how women have enacted their (political) agency as a result of MIDR and its negative social effects.

To explore women's lifeworlds, I examine the resources and physical structures that are needed for women to perform their agency, the rules that influence their actions and how MIDR has affected this. In so doing, I demonstrate the role of nature, the natural resources needed to maintain people's lifeworlds and the cultural rules that dictate behaviour in enabling women's agency and wellbeing in a subsistence-based society (Butler, 1990; Cleaver, 2000; 2007; Haraway, 2003; Rocheleau, 2011; Rocheleau and Nirmal, 2014; Rao, 2017; Rao *et al.*, 2017). This challenges the assumption made by some feminist scholars and feminisation of mining theorists specifically, that associating women with nature subordinates them to men and makes them vulnerable to being dominated by culture (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997; Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015).

3.3.2 Women subordinated through relationship with nature

As part of my analysis, I explore the relationship between women, men, nature and culture in order to understand Kuranko society. Most societies have a division of labour based on gender categories (MacCormack, 1990); however, the gender-prescribed roles differ from one culture to another. How gender-prescribed roles influence women's (and men's) agency, gender equality and wellbeing has received much attention within the development discourse (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Ortner, 1974; Ardener, 1975; MacCormack, 1990; de Beauvoir, 1997). The nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory is a key example of this (see Lévi-Straus, 1969; Ortner, 1974; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997). Within this concept, women are seen to be closer to nature than men in various ways (see Ortner, 1974), which is believed to subordinate women to culture and to men. For example, de Beauvoir (1997) argues that a woman's physiology, including giving birth and menstruating, not only makes a woman closer to nature but restricts her to this due to this taking up so much of a woman's body space and time. Socially, women's unpaid reproductive, domestic chores, such as raising children, is seen as a natural extension of her biological ability and seen as inferior to men's productive social role(s) (Lévi-Straus, 1969).

Men are argued to be creative in the public domain, for example through building infrastructure and technology, thereby economically developing society (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Ardener, 1975; de Beauvoir, 1997). Therefore men are associated with culture and its development. Culture is used synonymously with society in the nature/culture theory and men are associated with this, while women are associated with nature, due to the aforementioned biological reductionist argument (MacCormack, 1990). Men's public role and direct involvement in economic development is regarded as superior to women's social reproduction (MacCormack, 1990; Rao, 2014). Thus, women and their unpaid work are presented as subordinate to male breadwinners (Gibson-Graham, 1996; 2005; Cameron and Gibson-Graham, 2003). For example, women's unpaid domestic work, such as women collecting water, is thought to be a barrier to gender equality and development, as this is argued to take up women's time that could be spent doing 'paid work' (Koolwal and Van de Walle, 2013), with little regard for the social benefits women can gain from water collection (Van Houweling, 2016). Women's relationship with nature is interpreted as a barrier to gender equality and development, including wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997; Sullivan, 2004; Harcourt, 2009). The nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory has both been discounted as a theory for female subordination (Ardener, 1975; MacCormack 1990) and been criticised for having incorrect dualisms (MacCormack, 1990). For example, MacCormack (1990) argues that for the Sherbro in the south-west of Sierra Leone, the nature/culture dualism exists but for children and married couples instead of females and males.

Ortner (1974) challenges the notion that women are simply closer to nature and argues that women play an intermediary role in transforming nature into culture. She argues that women are made subordinate to men through this intermediary position. In contrast to both the argument that women are made subordinate to men through their closeness to nature or their intermediary role in transforming it, I argue that women gain status from their relationship with nature.

Women's relationship with nature has also been argued to make women vulnerable to environmental degradation (see d'Eaubonne, 1974). For some, this is believed to

be a symbolic relationship (Merchant, 1980; Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990). For example, women are described to have an ‘inherent’ or ‘natural’ closeness to land, demonstrated in the noun ‘mother’ being attributed to both the earth and nature, due to their biological reproductive capabilities and nurturing traits (Merchant, 1980; Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990). Other scholars argue that women’s relationship with nature is based upon material realities, such as drawing on certain natural resources, including food, fodder, fuel and water, in order to enact their lifeworlds (Plumwood, 1991; Warren and Cheney, 1991; Agarwal, 1992). For example, Mende women in Sierra Leone drawing on the natural resources in the Gola forest to enact their lifeworlds (Leach, 1992; 1994)

In the name of economic development, processes of commercialism and industrialisation including mining, have been prioritised throughout the world (Merchant, 1980). The processes that are associated with capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems, cause degradation to nature and natural resources, including land and water (Merchant, 1980). Given the aforementioned relationships women have with nature, both symbolically and physically relying on certain natural resources to enact their lifeworlds, women are vulnerable to the changes in nature that are thought to be predominantly caused by men (see Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993). The conceptualisation that women are to men as nature is to culture, that is both subordinate and vulnerable to domination by it, has long been argued to be at the root of women’s ‘secondary status’ within feminist literature (see Little, 1987; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; de Beauvoir, 1997).

In what are frequently described as ‘developed nations’, the process of industrialisation happened gradually and thus the effects this had on nature and women happened gradually too (Merchant, 1980). In contrast, commercialisation and industrialisation processes in so-called ‘developing countries’ today happens rapidly, as does the change this causes to nature and natural resources. The unique way this affects women’s agency and the local economic, sociocultural and political systems in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria is explored in this thesis.

In order to contribute to feminisation of mining theory, I seek to reveal women's agency in the post-MIDR context, thus shifting the focus away from the dominant perception that women are the vulnerable victims of the negative effects of mining. Within this theory, in line with ecofeminist scholars who call for an egalitarian relationship with ecology (d'Eaubonne, 1974; Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993), women are assumed to be negatively affected by the degradation of nature and of natural resources that mining causes (Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014).

In this thesis, I explore women's relationship with nature and how this is affected by MIDR. In so doing, I show (i) how women's relationship with nature enables their agency both pre and post-MIDR (chapter 5); (ii) how women's agency is threatened by the change in resources and physical structures associated with nature and caused by MIDR (chapter 5); and (iii) how women have resisted the negative social effects of the change in resources and physical structures associated with nature and maintained their agency and individual and collective wellbeing, therefore showing how women are not necessarily dominated by the change in nature and natural resources that large-scale commercial mining causes (chapters 5 and 6). My stance, and the contribution my findings make to the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory, are outlined below.

3.3.3 Heterogeneity of women and men

Within development discourse, largely influenced by Western social ontological assumptions, women are presented as a homogenous group associated with nature and subordinated and dominated by culture, which in turn men as a homogenous group are associated with (Merchant, 1980). Related to this narrative, in order for women to be 'empowered' and gain life satisfaction, scholars such as DeVault (1991) and Sullivan (2004) have asserted that women must resist their reproductive responsibilities such as feeding the family and gain a more prominent role in the public domain. This is related to capitalist notions of a person's value, status and wellbeing being related to economic value, with little regard for the valuable role women play in the social reproduction of society and the agency, status and feeling of wellbeing some women gain from this (MacCormack, 1990).

Little consideration is given to how the relationship between women, men, nature and culture might play out for different people in different societies (Merchant, 1980; Rocheleau, 2011; Rocheleau and Nirmal, 2014). For example, when rural indigenous women's relationship with nature is examined, this is by and large done through a Western lens, which results in indigenous women being presented as weak and vulnerable due to them having such a close relationship with nature (Merchant, 1980). This is reminiscent of the colonial period, in which 'the colonised' were classified as 'weak', 'underdeveloped' 'uncivilised', at least in part due to living harmoniously with nature and being vulnerable to the exploitation of the land by 'the colonisers' (Engels, 1942). Thus, the perceived dualisms between women and nature and men and culture is comparable to that of the colonised being subordinate and dominated by the colonisers (Engels, 1942). Within this conceptualisation, women like the colonised are not inherently weaker than the colonisers and men, but have through historical processes and structures, been made marginalised and less powerful (Lévi-Straus, 1977). This is particularly relevant to this thesis that explores the effects of mining on women in Sierra Leone, due to the colonial history surrounding the extraction and exploitation of land and people. This raises questions about the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory, in terms of whether it is gender that binds people to nature and culture in different ways or other factors such as race, ethnicity and belief systems. For example, women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria have a particularly close relationship to water and men have a particularly close relationship to land, both of which are threatened by large-scale mining that is orchestrated by Western men. Thus, both Kuranko women and men have a relationship with nature that is being threatened by the international, exploitative, masculine mining culture.

The way in which indigenous women's and men's relationship with nature and culture may differ from Western society and the agency they gain through these relationships, are underexplored (MacCormack, 1990). Thus, there is a risk of colonising our perceptions of the relationship women and men in rural indigenous societies have with nature and culture and the value of this in relation to wellbeing (MacCormack, 1990). For example, Sub-Saharan African women are described by

Caine (1988), Roberts (1988) and Kritz and Gurak (1989) to be subordinate to men due to their biologically determined reproductive responsibilities, such as giving birth, that restrict them to the domestic sphere, at least while pregnant and the child is young. This is exacerbated by the high fertility rates in the region (Caine, 1988; Kritz and Gurak, 1989; Upadhyay and Karasek, 2012).

Additionally, due to women's reproductive responsibilities, including their domestic duties being reliant on natural resources, Sub-Saharan African women are presented to be most vulnerable to changes in access to natural resources such as water, caused by non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR (Akiwumi, 2003; 2012). My research contributes to the nature/culture, female/male conceptualisation theory by drawing on a combination of indigenous and feminist research methodologies in order to understand the relationships different women and men have with nature in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria and, in contrast to women being vulnerable to cultural domination, how the relationship women and men have with nature works in symbiosis with culture to maintain society and enables both women's and men's agency and individual and collective wellbeing.

My findings show that women are not suppressed by culture, but gain agency, status and wellbeing from fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities that are associated with nature, including giving birth and performing their domestic duties prescribed by culture. Resources and physical structures associated with nature are therefore found to embody women's reproductive roles and sociocultural agency and therefore play a critical role in women's status and wellbeing. I examine how MIDR changes women's (and men's) access to certain resources and physical structures associated with nature and how this threatens women's agency. However, in contrast to ecofeminist theory that women are dominated by the change in resources that capitalist industries, such as large-scale commercial mining, causes (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987; Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993), my findings show how women resist the negative effects of the loss of certain resources and physical structures associated with nature, caused by MIDR, in order to preserve their lifeworlds and sociocultural agency. Moreover, women's relationship with nature is found to enable their political agency to resist

the degradation of nature and the related social effects of this (Shiva, 1988; Nightingale, 2006). Overall, my findings illustrate how nature and natural resources can enable women's agency.

I examine how the change in certain resources and physical structures MIDR causes initiates a critical juncture and opportunity for economic, sociocultural and political change at the local level and how women react to this and influence the post-MIDR systems by *adapting to*, *avoiding* and *resisting* different aspects.

3.4 Critical junctures and path dependency

Societal change and the effect it has on human wellbeing has often been examined from a national perspective and measured quantitatively in a change in Western indicators of human development, such as life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy rates and income per capita (Rao, 2017, see UNDP, 2018). This masks the effects of social change experienced by individuals at the local level, particularly in non-Western societies. This is because indicators of individual and collective wellbeing are likely to differ from one society, community and person to another (Rao, 2017).

The critical junctures concept is a prominent approach to understanding social change, predominantly at the macro level, though the way in which critical junctures are experienced at the local level is gaining strength (see Gartzou-Katsouyanni *et al.* (2018) as an example). The concept of critical junctures is that social and political change are shaped by political actors who during a moment of flux, have the opportunity to make decisions about changes to institutions which in turn influence path dependencies (systems) and the course of long-term national economic, social and political development (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015). Outside of the critical moment itself, path dependent systems are described as self-reinforcing, as repeated behaviour acts to reproduce and maintain the system(s) (Mahoney, 2000), in this sense, staying on the same path. The concept of critical junctures has been applied to a variety of types of triggers of economic, social and political change, including for example economic recessions, war or other forms of regime instabilities (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007).

According to the concept of path dependence, a critical juncture offers an opportunity to change path (Mahoney, 2000). The path after a critical juncture can be self-reinforcing, as it was prior to the critical juncture, but with different repeated behaviour, or it can be reactionary. A reactionary path is one in which behaviour is not repeated but is determined by the behaviour that went before. In a reactionary sequence, Mahoney (2000) describes there being an ‘inherent logic’ in terms of one event ‘naturally’ leading to another event (for more detail of types of causes of change to path dependency, see Mahoney, 2000).

A non-organic trigger of social change, such as MIDR, can create a critical juncture at the local level and may or may not change local path dependencies and/or national path dependencies. In the context of Sierra Leone, the national government has made decisions about the extractive industry and the way in which extraction will take place in Sierra Leone and at the Tonkolili mine specifically (promoting it as a national economic development strategy). Examining the decisions made about the extractive industry by political agents at the national level in Sierra Leone is beyond the scope of my thesis, as is the way in which this is shaping national development. Instead, this is presented as part of the backdrop to my examination of how local women’s agency is influenced by a non-organic trigger of social change (MIDR) and how this influences the post-MIDR economic, sociocultural and political pathway(s) (referred to as systems in this thesis) at the local level.

In this thesis, I examine how MIDR and those who have orchestrated it have created a local critical juncture and opportunity for economic, sociocultural and political change at the local level. By drawing on critical junctures and path dependency concepts, I examine the economic, sociocultural and political systems of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, pre and post-MIDR to show how MIDR creates a critical juncture and opportunity to change (economic, sociocultural and political) systems (referred to as pathways by Mahoney, 2000) and significantly, how, through their reactions to MIDR and its effects, local women influence this. In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the pre-MIDR economic system, was subsistence-based and after the critical juncture that MIDR imposed, the post-MIDR economic

systems are reactionary, as women reacted to the change in access to cash-economic resources, such as land and food, caused by MIDR. Different women reacted in a diversity of ways, including *adapting to* and *avoiding* the change in access to these resources, and in so doing created three post-MIDR interconnected economic systems (see chapter 4).

In contrast to transforming the post-MIDR economic system(s), women have maintained the post-MIDR sociocultural system. *Mamas* have done this by resisting the change in certain resources and physical structures, such as the structure of the house and the village, that represent a 'Western modern' lifestyle, by constructing their own customary structures in order to continue fulfilling their pre-MIDR reproductive responsibilities in the same way. In so doing, they maintain the pre-MIDR sociocultural system. *Musubas* have also continued to perform their pre-existing reproductive responsibilities; however, the way they perform some of their domestic duties has been altered by the change in structure of the house. For example, *musubas* perform some of their domestic duties inside that they previously performed outside. By continuing to perform the same reproductive responsibilities, both *mamas* and *musubas* are argued to maintain the post-MIDR sociocultural system (see chapter 5).

People's access to certain resources, such as water, that are needed to perform actions in order to fulfil certain sociocultural rules and therefore maintain the sociocultural system, have been lost. One would assume that the loss of a resource needed to perform an action would result in a change in the social system that requires the resource. However, it is significant to note that in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, while women are unable to fulfil certain sociocultural rules, such as fetching water as they once did, as a result of the loss of access to an adequate water supply, water collection being the responsibility of women has not changed even though they cannot fulfil this (see chapter 5). This raises questions about whether certain systems, such as the sociocultural system, are more resistant to change than others, such as the economic system, or whether sociocultural norms and therefore the sociocultural system, may change over time to match certain changes in women's sociocultural agency that MIDR has triggered.

MIDR creates a critical juncture at the local level through the resulting change in access to certain resources and in physical structures. On the whole, it is assumed that due to the relationship indigenous women have with nature, they are particularly vulnerable to non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR, due to the resulting changes in nature and natural resources (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993). Women's relationship with nature is therefore argued to make them vulnerable to non-organic triggers of social change. In contrast to this, through my examination of the relationship women in the three villages have with nature and how this is affected by MIDR, I show how women's agency is enabled by their relationship with nature.

3.5 Responding to MIDR: adaptation and resistance

The ways in which women experience, *adapt to* and *resist* MIDR in the three case study villages was found to centre around natural resources and how these are changed – lost, transformed or provided - by being relocated. Worthy of note is that women were found to respond in diverse ways to a loss of different natural resources. This is on account of the central role that specific natural resources play in establishing and maintaining different aspects of women's cultural identity and individual agency and some of these aspects being more important to women than others. The more important aspects of women's agency were therefore preserved and as a result hold more inertia. For example, women *resist* the loss of water due to its significant role in their cultural identity. In contrast, women *adapt to* the loss of cash-economic resources, suggesting that their economic agency is viewed as less in need of preserving and therefore less resistant to change. In addition, different women have responded in a variety of ways to a change in the same resource. For example, *musubas* have *adapted to* the change in structure of the house by doing their domestic chores inside, while some *mamas* have *resisted* this by building customary structures to continue performing their chores in the same way (see chapter 5).

A threat to people's cultural identity has been found to enhance people's perception of their cultural identity and therefore the need to protect it (Abernethy, 1979; Hiên, 2016). For example, Jenkins (2015) finds women's anti-mining activism in Latin America to be a mode of women resisting the threat mining has posed to their cultural identity, through the loss or degradation of a number of natural resources. This is demonstrated by women's protests in Ecuador and Peru centring around the following three interconnected narratives: women and water, women and the environment and women safeguarding livelihoods for future generations (Jenkins, 2015). Less is known about why certain aspects of people's cultural identity are transformed in certain contexts, while in others, cultural identity is preserved or enhanced. I explore how people's perceived cultural identity in the relocated villages has been affected by MIDR and how different women have *adapted* certain aspects of their cultural identity while *resisting* the challenge that MIDR poses to preserve other aspects of it.

3.5.1 *Lost natural resources*

In the three case study villages, I found that MIDR had altered a number of resources and physical structures associated with nature that are essential to maintaining people's cultural identity and individual agency. For example, people have lost land that was previously used for women's and men's *sumafen* business and farming. The latter has resulted in a loss of food. People have lost their customary houses, as they have had 'Western modern' houses built for them in the new villages. They have also lost the village structure, which was significant for their communal way of life. The relocated villages have also lost natural water sources that were needed for domestic duties, *Segere* rituals and small-scale mining.

Drawing on other research that examines how a change in resources influences women's agency, I explore how MIDR alters people's access to certain resources and physical structures and how this influences human agency (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 2016; Hiên, 2016; Chaudhury *et al.*, 2017; Pandey, *et al.*, 2017; Warrick *et al.*, 2017; Rao *et al.*, 2017). In addition, I draw on the argument that beyond the trigger of change, pre-existing sociocultural norms and beliefs also influence women's, in particular, access to resources and their reaction(s) to a

change in these (Rao *et al.*, 2017). Rao *et al.* (2017) argue that ignoring the sociocultural context in which a change in resources takes place, risks homogenising and victimising women, thus concealing their differences and their agency. With this in mind, I examine how different women have reacted – ***adapted, avoided, passively*** and ***actively resisted*** - to a change in access to a range of resources and physical structures associated with nature. In the following subsections I outline how I examine the ways in which women have ***adapted to, passively*** and ***actively resisted*** the change in access to different resources and physical structures.

3.5.2 *Adaptation*

In my exploration of how women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context, I examine how and why women ***adapt to*** a loss of certain resources and ***resist*** a loss of others. This enables a better understanding of how different women value different aspects of their identity and agency in different ways in the local cultural context. My findings demonstrate how some women's economic agency is less resistant to change compared to other aspects of their agency (namely sociocultural) as they have ***adapted to*** a loss of economic resources, such as land for farming and rivers for gold mining. As an illustration of this, some women who have access to cash-economic resources such as food, have changed their behaviour from subsistence farming to profit-driven market selling to assimilate into the capitalist market-driven system that has been imposed via MIDR. Some women who had existing social and financial capital have set up a credit system with women in Bumbuna to obtain food to sell in their village market for cash, thereby ***adapting*** their behaviour to the newly-imposed capitalist market-driven culture (see chapter 4).

Cultural adaptation is concerned with the ways in which people alter their behaviour in response to social change. Up to now, the cultural adaptation literature has been largely concerned with two main triggers of social change. First, immigrants moving into a culture different from their own and ***adapting*** their own behaviour to fit into the new culture (Hiên, 2016). Second, adapting to environmental change in people's own culture and how people ***adapt*** their behaviour to a change in or pending change in, natural resources (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 2016; Chaudhury *et al.*, 2017; Pandey *et al.*, 2017; Rao *et al.*, 2017; Warrick *et al.*, 2017). I draw on both

aspects of cultural adaptation in my analysis, as the three case study villages have been relocated from their indigenous land, where indigenous women's cultural identity is often dependent on the natural resources found there (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b). I examine how being relocated to a different place has resulted in a change – loss, transformation and provision – of resources and physical structures associated with nature and how this influences women's agency and individual and collective wellbeing (cf. Rao *et al.*, 2020). To do this, I also draw on the cultural adaptation literature that up to now has largely been concerned with environmental change, to demonstrate how women *adapt to* a change in access to natural resources as a result of MIDR and how this influences their agency and the sociocultural system (see chapter 5).

3.5.3 *Passive resistance*

In contrast to some women *adapting to* a loss of cash-economic resources, other women have *avoided* this by leaving the village in order to maintain their subsistence-based lifestyle. In addition, women have reacted differently to a loss of cultural resources and physical structures such as the shape of the village, customary style houses and natural water sources. Women have *resisted* the social effects of the loss of such resources and physical structures, suggesting a greater perceived value of these types of resources and what they represent, namely their cultural identity in terms of being a successful Kuranko woman. *Resisting* the change in cultural resources has taken two forms, *passive and active*.

Resistance to elite decision-makers and their actions can take many forms, ranging from everyday forms of resistance (*passive*) to aggressive forms of protest (*active resistance*) (Scott, 1985). Different forms of resistance often have in common, the aim of improving local people's lives and objecting to exploitative processes caused by so-called capitalist development (Scott, 1985). For example, peasant farmers in Sedaka, Malaya passively resisted capitalist agricultural development (the green revolution) and the loss of land this caused in a number of ways, including squatting on plantation and state owned land (Scott, 1985).

Women in the three relocated communities have *resisted* the effects of a loss of a number of cultural resources through *passive* modes of everyday *resistance*, by refusing to change their way of living (cf. Scott, 1985). For example, women have refused to use the ‘Western’ toilets that have been provided in the houses. In response to this, some people have built customary ‘wash-yards’ next to their houses while others who do not have the space, are choosing to use the bush. Another example of women *passively resisting* the imposed ‘Western modern’ social system, is that a number of *Mamas* in particular, have built customary structures, as they feel these are more conducive to their customary lifestyle, compared to the ‘Western modern’ houses that have been provided for them. In contrast *musubas* have *adapted to* the new houses by performing certain domestic chores inside. This demonstrates a difference in women’s responses to the change in certain cultural resources along life phase lines (see chapter 5).

3.5.4 *Active resistance*

Within the extractive industries literature, women’s involvement in decision-making about mining and their political agency in mining-affected communities is growing in academic attention (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2014; 2015). However it is limited in its scope. First, it largely assumes that indigenous women are left out of decision-making about mining (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; though see O’Faircheallaigh, 2011;2013a; b). Second, the literature that explores women’s involvement in anti-mining social movements, largely focuses on Latin America (see Muradian *et al.*, 2003; Bebbington, 2007; Jenkins, 2014; 2015). Third, when women are recognised to be involved in anti-mining social movements, there is a tendency to portray them as playing supporting roles, such as protesting on behalf of male miners (see Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009). Fourth, there remains a tendency to focus on the role and strength of the state and international mining corporations in resource conflicts, that masks the gendered modes of resistance and the outcome of this at the local level (Bridge, 2004; Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012). As a result of this women’s unique mining-related grievances and political agency, particularly in the Sub-Saharan African context has largely gone unrecognised (Spence, 1998). I contribute

to this gap, by exploring women's active modes of resistance to certain effects of MIDR in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria (see chapter 6).

O'Faircheallaigh (2011; 2013a) argues that within the extractive industries discourse, too narrow a definition of 'agreement negotiations' is adopted. This tends to refer only to the initial 'formal' decisions that are made across a board table, often between male mining company representatives and male community negotiators. The product of this becomes known as the 'mining agreement' (O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; 2013a). This hides the complex and substantial role indigenous women play in mining negotiations (O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; 2013a; Jenkins, 2014; 2015). In reality, negotiations are ongoing as company and male and female community members experience mining and react and revise the initial agreement (O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; Jenkins, 2015). Ongoing negotiations can take many forms that can be both formal and informal and range from discussions between mining companies and local communities to large-scale anti-mining social movements and individual protests within social movements (O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; Jenkins, 2015). Protests are therefore regarded as a form of negotiation in this thesis, as they are a mode of communication between local communities, the government and mining companies, that have the potential to influence the economic, sociocultural and political effects of mining at the local level, depending on how the state and mining company responds.

Due to limited research on women's involvement in anti-mining social movements in Sub-Saharan Africa and the unique cultural norms specific to the Sub-Saharan African context, I draw on literature concerned with women's involvement in social movements in Sub-Saharan Africa more broadly. I combine this with literature that considers women's involvement in anti-mining social movements in my analysis of local women's *active resistance* to MIDR in Sierra Leone. However, it should be noted that when women's political agency is considered in a Sub-Saharan African context, it is also limited in the following ways. There is a tendency to present women's political agency in Sub-Saharan Africa statistically, for example as the number of women holding seats in national parliament (see Tripp *et al.*, 2009), or women's involvement in formal social movements based in major cities (see Steady,

2006). Less is known about local women's social activism in remote areas in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition to passively resisting the effects of MIDR, relocated women have also *actively resisted* a loss of cultural resources such as water as a result of MIDR and the threat this poses to women's cultural identity, agency and status. Water is essential for women to complete their domestic duties and perform *Segere* rituals, both of which are important in establishing and maintaining a woman's status in the family and community. *Active resistance* to the loss of water has taken the form of women protesting on the trainline in the style of *Segere* rituals. This is very different from the relocated men's protests, concerned with the loss of land as an economic resource which have resulted in violence (see chapter 6).

Relocated women's active resistance is part of a broader anti-mining social movement with other groups of people involved (see chapter 6 for detail). For the purpose of this thesis, social movements are defined as a series of contentious performances (also known as individual protests), displays and/or campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims about perceived injustices on others (Tilly, 2004; Escobar and Alvarez, 1992; Escobar, 1995; Bebbington *et al.*, 2008). It is interesting to note that within the same context and under the same anti-mining headline, relocated women, relocated men and non-relocated women and men are found to be resisting the negative effects of mining, including MIDR and mining employees' working conditions in different ways (see chapter 6). This is significant, because social movement scholars assert that within the same context, social movements will be similar in their cause, method and outcome (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). I examine how relocated women's, relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's protests about mining, including MIDR in the Kolansogoya chiefdom, differ in their cause. For example, women's concern with the loss of a water source is related to its cultural significance for women, compared to men's protest about the loss of land and broken promises is related to men's responsibility to provide staple foods and an adequate house for their family.

By exploring the cause of women's protests, I highlight what parts of their agency women value most and how they perceive this to have been affected by MIDR. In terms of methods of protest, my findings demonstrate how in the same post-conflict context, women's and men's protests also differ. For example, relocated men alongside non-relocated women and men, caused disruption in the town by blocking roads, which ended in violence with the state police. In contrast, women's protest were led by older women and took the form of women performing *Segere* rituals on the trainline. In examining the modes of women's protests, I illuminate Sub-Saharan African women's pre-existing political power bases, that is thus far largely missing in the extractive industries and social movement literature (see Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014).

I also show how the outcome of the protests differed along gender lines, related to the state's response (cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). Women's protests were found to be perceived as successful due to their demands for water provision being met by the company, while in contrast, the men's protests were met by violence from the state police. I discuss a number of potential factors that influence the different outcomes of the relocated women's protest compared to other protests, including how the demand(s) of protestors are perceived by the state and mining company (cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015), the cost-benefit factor (cf. Ross, 1999; Luders, 2006) and the political strength of the protest and the protestors (cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015) (see chapter 6).

My findings demonstrate how women protesting MIDR in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing, may both act to preserve and alter women's agency and the sociocultural system of local society. For example women protesting the loss of water to maintain their pre-existing sociocultural agency that relies on access to water, while at the same time *musubas* strengthen their political agency by protesting, as they did not speak out in public in front of men pre-MIDR. An exploration of how women **actively resisting** MIDR at the local level has the potential to transform the national and international political systems of society is beyond the scope of my research. Nonetheless, I investigate the effect that different

women protesting has had on the local political system that dictates that *musubas* do not speak out in public in front of men. The findings could be used to predict how women resisting a non-organic-trigger of social change could also influence national and international systems that govern these changes, such as MIDR and mining. Exploring women's *resistance* to MIDR contributes to feminisation of mining theory by shedding light on how women's political agency is performed in a post-MIDR context and how women influence informal mining agreements.

3.6 Summary

In summary, I draw on and develop the aforementioned theories and concepts through my analysis (in chapters 4, 5 and 6), in order to address the aims and objectives of this thesis as follows. I contribute to the feminisation of mining theory by examining how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change. I develop the feminisation of mining theory by going beyond an analysis of how women's economic agency is affected by the mining sector, to include an exploration of how women's social and political agency shapes and is shaped by MIDR. In so doing, I demonstrate the value of nature and natural resources in establishing and maintaining women's cultural identity in a subsistence-based society. I thereby challenge the theory prominent within feminist literature that associating women with nature and natural resources subordinates women and acts as a barrier to women's wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997), a theory that underlies much of the literature that considers the gendered nature of mining (see Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014).

I examine how women's agency is altered by a non-organic trigger of social change as opposed to gradually adapting over time. I demonstrate how women have responded in different ways to the sudden loss of a number of different natural resources as a result of MIDR. I draw on cultural adaptation to analyse how women *adapt* to the loss of cash-economy resources in contrast to *resisting* both *passively* and *actively* to the loss of culturally valuable resources as a result of MIDR. I explore how the value of resources, different people's life experience and the context

in which MIDR is being experienced, influences the modes of response. In so doing, I demonstrate the gendered nature of mining-related social movements in a Sub-Saharan African context.

Through my analysis I show how women shape the post-MIDR systems. For example, different women's diverse reactions to the change in cash-economic resources, they have enabled the transformation from a pre-MIDR monolithic subsistence-based system to a post-MIDR economy made up of three interconnected economic systems – capitalist market-driven, dependency and subsistence-based. Additionally through their *resistance* to the loss of certain sociocultural resources and physical structures and the effects of this, women have maintained the sociocultural system in the face of a 'Western modern' sociocultural system coming into existence through the resources and physical structures that have been provided for the relocated villages that represent a 'Western modern' way of living. This is in contrast to assumptions that powerful elites, in this case the state and the mining company, would determine a monolithic capitalist market-driven economic system and a 'Western modern' social system in the post-MIDR villages.

Having outlined my framework of analysis in this chapter, in the following three chapters I present my empirical findings. In the next chapter, I examine the ways in which different women perform their economic agency in the post-MIDR context and how this has transformed the economic system(s) of society at the local level.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN'S DIVERSE REACTIONS TO THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF MIDR

4.1 Introduction

Having outlined my framework for analysis in the preceding chapter, in this chapter I demonstrate how women's economic agency is performed in the post-MIDR context. The findings presented in this chapter respond to my three research objectives and main research aim:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

To achieve this, in this chapter, I examine how different women's *economic* agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its *economic* effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. The findings presented in this chapter particularly address research objective 2: to examine the ways in which *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems shape MIDR* and the *conflicts and impacts this has on local economic, sociocultural and political systems*. I do this by showing how the diversity of ways women have reacted to the economic effects of MIDR and performed their economic agency has created three interconnected post-MIDR economic systems (dependency, capitalism and subsistence), thereby showing women to be agents in the (trans)formation of the local economy. Through the process of MIDR, an exogenous capitalist market-driven economy has been imposed on Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. This is in part due to large-scale commercial mining being inherently capitalist (Downing, 2002) and being presented and advocated by the Sierra Leone

government as an economic development strategy to become a so-called 'developed (capitalist) nation' (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012). MIDR is a frequent consequence of large-scale extraction, particularly in remote rural locations in low income countries, and is therefore part of the global extractive industry that is a driver of capitalism (Owen and Kemp, 2015). In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the process of MIDR has altered the local subsistence-based (exchange) economy by rapidly changing the resources people need, to act in line with efficient economic systems (cf. Scott, 1995).

My findings also touch upon objectives 1 and 3. My findings address objective 1: to demonstrate the *specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change* by examining how *women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and in physical structures it causes*, specifically the structure of the village and the house and *access to land* and water. I address this by showing how people have experienced a sudden loss in access to the land needed for subsistence farming and have been provided with food and money, which has resulted in some people becoming dependent on the capitalist market-driven system.

My findings address objective 3: to examine the diverse nature of *women's reactions, which includes adaptation, avoidance*, passive and active resistance (including involvement in mining-related social movements) to MIDR and its effects and how these reactions differ along life phase lines, interrelated with status, such as position of wife in polygamous marriages, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. I address this by showing how different women, such as those in polygamous family units, heads of households and women with existing social and financial capital, correlated with life phase, have reacted in diverse ways, including *adapting to* and *avoiding* the economic effects of MIDR.

The literature would assume that political and economic elites, such as state and mining company representatives, would determine, through the resources they have provided including cash to buy food, a monolithic capitalist market-driven system coming to dominate in the relocated villages, to the detriment of women (Dunaway, 2000; Bhanumathi, 2002, Akiwumi, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). In contrast, I show how

women have shaped the post-MIDR economy through their diverse reactions to the economic effects of MIDR. The diversity of women's reactions is, I argue, influenced by the speed at which these resources are altered by a non-organic trigger of social change (MIDR), and their post-MIDR access to resources needed to act in line with an efficient economic system. Different women's varying post-MIDR access to resources is determined by the social context. For example, some women who do not have access to resources that enable them to *adapt to* or *avoid* being part of a capitalist market-driven system, have become dependent on their husbands and the mining company for food, which has created a system of dependency. Others who have access to social capital have set up a credit system with women in Bumbuna to obtain food to sell in their village market for cash. These women have therefore *adapted to* and enabled an element of the capitalist market-driven system. While others who have access to fertile farm land have *avoided* the capitalist market-driven system and continued with their subsistence-based livelihoods, thereby maintaining a subsistence-based economic system.

Different economic systems are enabled and maintained through the actions of different agents, acting in line with the rules of the divergent economic systems (Mei-hui Yang, 2000). The behaviour of agents is dependent on individuals' priorities, values and access to resources (Mei-hui Yang, 2000). In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the speed at which natural resources have been changed has affected the way different women have been able to enact their economic agency. My findings demonstrate how different women's varying forms of reactions to the economic effects of MIDR has enabled the emergence of three interconnected economic systems in the relocated communities.

My findings broaden the reach of the economic aspect of feminisation of mining theory, which up to now has focused on the direct and indirect employment opportunities women gain from mining (see Mayes and Pini, 2010; Mahy, 2011; Mayes, 2014). My findings not only demonstrate the role of women's agency in (re)shaping the post-MIDR economy, but also highlight the heterogeneity of women. My findings also contribute to the extractive industries discourse more broadly that presents women as impoverished victims of the extractive industry (Hinton *et al.*,

2003b; Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014), by demonstrating how some women shape the post-MIDR economy of local mining-communities to their own advantage in their efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing.

This chapter is structured as follows. The first section outlines the overall contribution I make to feminisation of mining theory, by challenging the assumption that political and economic elites such as state and mining company representatives determine a post-MIDR monolithic capitalist market-driven economy (pathway) to the detriment of women. I show that while MIDR is orchestrated by political elites and creates a critical juncture at the local level, women's responses to this are shaping the post-MIDR economy. Following on from this, I explore how different women's diverse reactions to MIDR and the capitalist market-driven system it imposes, are shaping the three post-MIDR interconnected economic systems.

4.2 MIDR is a trigger for economic change

The existing literature concerned with the economic aspect of feminisation of mining theory focuses on women earning a wage either directly from mining or indirectly through related industries. This includes first, women being employed by multinational mining companies in countries in the Global North, such as Australia and Canada (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Mayes, 2014). Second, women earning money from ASM in the Global South (Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasi, 2012). Third, women gaining financially from the services they provide in and around mines and mining communities (Lahiri-Dutt, 2011; Mahy, 2011). For example, women provide food and drinks and are involved in commercial sex work (Mahy, 2011).

Within the broader extractive industries discourse, when the gendered nature of the economic aspect of mining is considered, women tend to be portrayed as victims of the negative economic consequences. For example, women frequently receive less of the financial benefits of mining, either by taking on lower paid 'support roles', as miners or wives of miners (Hinton *et al.*, 2003b; Dinye *et al.*, 2012; Mayes, 2014; Mayes and Pini, 2014).

In addition to this, in rural mining locations, women's natural resource-based livelihoods are often found to be threatened by mining processes through the loss or degradation of necessary resources such as land and water (Bhanumathi, 2002; Akiwumi, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). Mining and its related negative economic impacts can result in women becoming increasingly dependent on men (Akiwumi, 2011). This is related to the argument by feminist geographers (Gibson-Graham, 1996; 2005) and extractive industries scholars (Bhanumathi, 2002, Jenkins, 2014), that women from subsistence-based societies are less able to succeed in a monolithic capitalist system (that mining is a part of). This is arguably caused by the patriarchal systems that govern the extractive industry and mining-affected communities, systems that limit women's access to the human and economic capitalist resources, such as education, land and cash, that would enable them to fit into and benefit from capitalist norms (Gibson-Graham, 1996, 2005; Dunaway, 2000; Bhanumathi, 2002, Akiwumi, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). Exogenous, international and national capitalist and patriarchal systems of mining are therefore assumed to disadvantage women in mining-affected communities (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014; Mayes, 2014; Mayes and Pini, 2014; Wilson, 2015).

4.2.1 Capitalist and patriarchal systems of mining

Mining is part of and governed by, the global capitalist market-driven economic system, that prioritises financial gain (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). Distinct but interrelated with this, large-scale commercial mining is also governed by patriarchal norms, in which men are the primary decision-makers and make up the greater proportion of financial benefactors (Jenkins, 2014) (see chapter 1). Although many mining-affected communities, including Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria are also defined as patriarchal (Jackson, 1977a; Mercier and Gier, 2007; 2009), they may not be governed by the same patriarchal rules as the mining industry (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 – July 2017). For example, in my three case study villages, women hold certain decision-making positions that are ignored and threatened by MIDR and the distinct patriarchal norms it is governed by (see subsection 4.3.1).

The international and national capitalist and patriarchal systems of mining are shaped by the history of extraction (Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014). For example, existing records show that large-scale commercial mining has been promoted as an economic development strategy since the colonial period in Sierra Leone (Akiwumi, 2011; 2012). Colonial exploitation of cheap African resources is argued to be the cause of Sierra Leone's unequal trade agreements today (Akiwumi, 2011; 2012). For instance, the Mines and Minerals Act (MMA) states that minerals in, under, or upon any land in Sierra Leone belong to the government (Government of Sierra Leone, 2009; Akiwumi, 2011); this contradicts customary land rules under the Provinces Land Act Cap. 122, that land is managed and granted access to by the Chiefdom Council (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014) (see subsection 4.2.2, for detail of women's access to land in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria before mining). Local mining-affected communities are therefore disadvantaged by mining through the loss of access to the land and resources they need for their livelihoods (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014).

Large-scale commercial mining has also been promoted as a post-conflict economic reconstruction strategy since Sierra Leone's civil war that ended in 2002 (Ross, 1999; Maconachie and Binns, 2007). The post-conflict context further weakens the government's negotiating power, as the country is in need of the revenue from large-scale commercial extraction to rebuild institutions, infrastructure and the economy at large (Maconachie, 2008; Mosselmans, 2014). On top of this, (in part) due to the war, Sierra Leone is lacking the good governance structures needed to monitor commercial extraction and its effects at the national and local level (Maconachie, 2008; Mosselmans, 2014). Due to these factors, multinational mining companies are able to act largely autonomously, prioritising self-interested capitalist gain within Sierra Leone (cf. Perks, 2012).

Women and their livelihoods are particularly vulnerable to the capitalist market-driven system that large-scale mining and MIDR impose on local communities in Sierra Leone (Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014). For example, the negative effect large-scale mining has had on natural water sources has threatened women's water-based livelihoods (that men do not participate in as much), such as fishing in the southwest of Sierra Leone (Akiwumi, 2012). In contrast, both male state representatives and

some men at the local level benefit financially from capitalist opportunities related to the extractive industry (Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; Wilson, 2015). Male government representatives reap financial rewards for facilitating the exploitation of both land and local populations by mining companies (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2014). Women are more likely to take on lower paid or non-paid (domestic) 'support roles' in mining communities, due to the belief that they are not capable of taking on the same roles as men, such as miners, because they are not seen as physically strong or skilled enough (Mayes and Pini, 2014). In contrast, local men are more likely to be hired directly by mining companies, but often mine-workers' wives complain that they do not benefit because their husbands do not share their earnings with them (Akiwumi, 2011; Mayes, 2014).

In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, elite decision-makers exogenous to the relocated communities make assumptions about the patriarchal system and rules, such as women's decision-making power, of the villages thus limiting some women's capabilities and prohibiting them from being employed by the mining company. For example, the mining company has not offered vegetable-growing contracts to women in the relocated villages and instead have offered them to women in the main town. This is illustrated by the following quote from the Company-Community Relations Officer:

'[The company] has been encouraged to buy locally and support the local economy but only women from Bumbuna are able to provide vegetables. This would be an opportunity to capacitate the women, but Kurankos are strongly patriarchal, men make the decisions for women and won't let them do these business initiatives. The women are not educated. That is why we don't ask them (male, educated, Sierra Leonean national, 04/07/2017, interview conducted in English).

This quote demonstrates the belief held by an urban, educated Sierra Leonean that particularly women in villages, are illiterate, lack decision-making power and autonomy compared to people in urban areas, thus highlighting the rural/urban illiterate/educated divide within the country. This masks women's economic agency

prior to being relocated (see subsection 4.2.2) and has prevented some women from taking advantage of certain economic opportunities related to mining, thus reducing some women's agency.

Despite the capitalist and patriarchal systems of mining that frequently disadvantage women economically (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014; Mayes, 2014; Mayes and Pini, 2014; Wilson, 2015), my findings show how MIDR creates an opportunity for socio-economic change at the local level and how some women shape this to their own advantage in their efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing.

4.2.2 MIDR creates a critical juncture for socio-economic change

On the whole, the critical junctures concept is concerned with moments that may accelerate economic, social and political change at the national or international level (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015). According to the critical junctures concept, a critical juncture is a period of uncertainty that is created by an event or situation (such as war or a change in national state policies or regime type), in which the economic social and/or political norms of society lose their rigidity. During this time, political actors have the opportunity to make decisions about changes to institutions, which in turn influences path dependencies (systems) and the course of long-term national development (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015). In this chapter I examine the way in which MIDR has created a critical juncture at the local level and influenced the post-MIDR economic systems of the three relocated communities.

In contrast to the classic critical junctures concept, in relation to a non-organic trigger of social change (such as MIDR), a critical juncture may be facilitated at the local level by exogenous decision-makers. This critical juncture can trigger a change in the economic, social and/or political behaviour of local people, thereby threatening local economic sociocultural and political systems. Within the critical junctures concept, there is an underlying assumption that the change or preservation of the post-critical juncture national pathway(s) is determined by the political elites involved (Mahoney, 2000). In contrast, when certain non-organic triggers of social

change create a critical juncture at the local level, the change in post-critical juncture social systems can be a by-product of elite behaviour.

In the case of the critical juncture that MIDR created in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, I argue that the state was attempting to transform the pre-MIDR subsistence-based economy to a capitalist market-driven one, as part of their national economic development strategy (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012). By applying the critical junctures concept, I examine how socio-economic change at the local level has been triggered by MIDR. My findings show that while orchestrators of MIDR have triggered a critical juncture at the local level by promoting a capitalist market-driven system, women's diverse reactions to this have created three interconnected post-MIDR economic systems (see section 4.3). This is in contrast to the argument that elite (male) decision-makers (including the state and the mining company) would determine a post-MIDR monolithic capitalist market-driven system (made by extractive industries scholars, including Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006; Idemudia, 2010; Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015 and critical junctures scholars, such as Mahoney and Snyder, 1999).

4.2.3 Economic path dependencies

The impact critical junctures have on economic (as well as sociocultural and political) systems can be understood using the path dependency concept (Capoccia, 2015). Ordinarily, systems (pathways) are transformed through agents *adapting* their behaviour in response to a gradual (organic) change in the resources that are needed for agents to act upon to maintain the system (Giddens, 1984; Mahoney, 2000). This change is progressive. In relation to critical junctures, the path dependency concept can be used to show how a juncture offers an opportunity for rapid change to the system(s) of society (Capoccia, 2015). According to the path dependency concept there are two types of post-critical juncture pathways. The first is a reactionary path in which behaviour is not repeated but is determined by the behaviour that went before (Mahoney, 2000). In a reactionary path there is an 'inherent logic' to the way one event 'naturally' leads to another (Mahoney, 2000), thus the path is continuously *adapting*. The second type of path is self-reinforcing. A self-reinforcing path can

either be the same as before the critical juncture²⁹, with people repeating the same behaviour, or it can be a different self-reinforcing path, with people repeating different behaviour post-critical juncture (Mahoney, 2000).

The path on which people find themselves depends on people's access to the resources they need in order to perform their agency, in line with the social norms of a given social system (Giddens, 1984; Mahoney and Snyder, 1999; Capoccia, 2015). Applying the path dependency concept can show how a rapid change in these resources, caused by a non-organic trigger of social change, is likely to alter the way people behave and therefore the social system(s) (Giddens, 1984; Mahoney and Snyder, 1999; Capoccia, 2015). I draw on the path dependency concept to show how the post-MIDR economic systems have been changed from a subsistence-based system to three interconnected economic systems. This change, I argue, has been enabled by women's reactions to MIDR and the change in resources needed to act in line with the economic systems it has created.

Prior to any critical juncture, according to Mahoney (2000), social systems are self-reinforcing, as repeated behaviour acts to reproduce and maintain them (Mahoney, 2000). The continuity of the social system(s) is dependent on people's access to the necessary resources to act in line with the social norms of the system (Mahoney, 2000). In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the economic system prior to MIDR was defined by subsistence, as people were involved in subsistence-based livelihoods and the non-monetary exchange of resources, therefore enabling and maintaining a subsistence-based economy (Human Rights Watch, 2014). For example, women and men both had access to fertile land and were involved in subsistence farming to grow what they needed to feed their families. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'[In Old Ferengbeya], farming was our source of getting food' (mama, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

²⁹ Prior to a critical juncture the pathway is always self-reinforcing (Mahoney, 2000).

4.2.4 *Subsistence-based economy pre-MIDR*

According to people from the three relocated villages, prior to being relocated for mining, cash was not an integral part of life. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We used to have an abundance without paying any money' (fa, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

Although cash was used in transactions for necessary items or services, such as paying school fees, accumulating cash was not a primary concern. People could survive without it and finance did not dictate an individual's status within society, unlike a capitalist society in which economic gain dictates people's behaviour and status (Gibson-Graham, 1996; 2005). In the pre-resettlement locations the majority of women and men were subsistence farmers and did not have to exchange cash for the food they ate. In this sense, the pre-MIDR villages can be defined as having a subsistence-based economy (Human Rights Watch, 2014). According to customary law (see chapter 1) land was owned by kin groups and held by a male relative for the benefit of the family. Men and women took it in turns to farm. After the men harvested the staple crops, women farmed groundnuts. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'In Old Ferengbeya we used to farm for free, because our family's owned the land and we women were able to farm on it' (mama, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

'In Old Ferengbeya we women used to work for ourselves; planting groundnuts. According to the tradition here, we all work together on the farm [...]. After the men have harvested their rice, the women come and cultivate the land for their groundnuts' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

In addition to farming on their family land, women had their own 'backyard gardens' close to their houses where they grew fruits and vegetables for their family to eat. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Before we were having gardens and you would just go at the back and pluck anything' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017)

Instead of status being dictated by financial accumulation, women's and men's status was defined according to culturally-specified and symbiotic gender roles. A woman's status was established and maintained through fulfilling her gender-defined reproductive responsibilities, including giving birth and culturally prescribed domestic duties such as cooking and feeding the family (see chapter 5). In contrast, a man's status was dependent on his ability to provide staple foods for his family to eat. This is evident in the following quote:

'In Old Ferengbeya, we just divide the work; men will go to the farm to do their farm work and the women will go to the stream [to mine] and when we [the men] come in the evening the women will just cook, they will not even ask the men. They know that the men are only responsible for the rice, [the women] too are taking part; supporting the men' (bimba, Ferengbeya, 05/06/2017).

When women needed money for school fees, or health care, which are commonly seen as a woman's expense due to it being a woman's responsibility to take care of her family, they would sell the surplus food they had grown or sell gold that they mined in the nearby rivers. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'When I was there I was doing farming in order to pay my children's school fees' (na, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

'We had a river where we [women] could go and mine for gold, so we can raise funds for things like children's school fees' (mama, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

These quotes highlight the economic gender relations that were at play prior to being relocated. Men were responsible for growing staple foods for their family to eat, the surplus of which would be sold. A woman's main responsibilities were cooking and

providing money for their children's school fees as part of their domestic role (cf. Rao, 2014; Kabeer, 2016). This illustrates the symbiotic economic relationship between women and men and how women performed economic agency prior to being relocated.

4.2.5 Change in post-MIDR economic system(s)

MIDR created a critical juncture at the local level and the opportunity to change from the pre-MIDR economic system to a different post-MIDR economic system. According to the critical junctures concept (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015) in the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the state and mining company would be assumed to control the post-MIDR economic systems as they influence the availability of a number of (economic) resources needed to act in line with an economic system. For example, through MIDR, the state and mining company have reduced relocated people's, in particular women's, access to the land and water that they need to maintain their subsistence-based livelihoods (see section 4.3). The loss of such resources is a common impact of large-scale commercial mining and MIDR (see Kemp *et al.*, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014).

In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, people have experienced a reduction in access to land and water because the post-MIDR location that was chosen by the government, has less easily accessible fertile land for men and women to farm, as the allocated farm land is far away and of poor quality. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We don't have land here, the land they located for us is poor quality and very far, it is over 10 miles³⁰' (na, Foria, 28/11/2016).

On top of this, there is no water source for women to mine for gold. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We used to go to the stream to find gold, we wanted to dig for gold

³⁰ There were a number of discrepancies over the exact distance of the allocated farmland from the villages ranging from 7 miles to 10 miles. In part depending on which village people were from and which plot of land they were farming on.

here, but we don't have any' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

The people in the three resettled villages said that the state and mining company relocated them to their new location without considering their livelihoods or way of life. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The nyeman' tigi is not interested in whether we are comfortable in this place or not' (mama, Wondugu, 08/11/2016).

'The company is not caring how we live here. We have to solve all the problems for ourselves' (mama, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'We suggested a different place [to live, but] the mining company put us here instead. The place we thought we were going to move to was much closer to our old land with good quality farm land. They just wanted to know our view, but by then they had already started construction' (bimba, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

The loss of resources, such as land and water, has threatened both men's and women's subsistence-based livelihoods and therefore the pre-MIDR subsistence-based economy. This is illustrated in the following quote from the male Chiefdom Councillor, representative of the *nyeman' tigi*:

'We (the leaders) understand that people miss their old land. We know the situation is not good because they don't have adequate water, no convenient farming area, houses are not appropriate for people's lifestyle because they don't have a backyard in which they can plant vegetables. Certain crops (which they had before), they no longer have in the new location' (13/07/2017).

In addition to reducing resources, the mining company provides resources that influence the way people live and therefore the post-critical juncture economic system(s). For example, as part of the relocation agreement and in acknowledgement

of the loss of certain resources needed to maintain their way of life, the mining company gives each household a bag of rice and 150,000Le (approximately £15) each month. Some people are now dependent on the mining company for these provisions. As a result, the mining company creates a post-MIDR dependency system. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We depend on the supplies [from the company], once a month, only those supplies' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

This demonstrates how MIDR and those that orchestrate it (the state and mining company) have influenced the current economic system by creating a change from the pre-MIDR subsistence-based economy by removing resources. In addition, they have influenced the post-MIDR economic system(s) by providing certain resources, namely cash and food, that people need to abide by the norms of a capitalist market-driven economy and the interconnected dependency system.

4.2.6 Self-interested capitalist decisions

The critical junctures concept assumes that elite decision-makers play a pivotal role in shaping the post-critical juncture path dependencies to suit their priorities (Mahoney and Snyder, 1999). In the context of extractive industries, the nation state and multinational or national mining companies are assumed to select post-critical juncture path dependencies to suit their own capitalist self-interests, such as maximum economic profit, often at the expense of rural mining communities in particular (see Gilberthorpe and Sillitoe, 2009; Akiwumi, 2011, 2012, 2014; Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015). Under this assumption, in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, a capitalist market-driven system would come to dominate because a capitalist market-driven economy, and mining as an aspect of this, is promoted as the preferential national development pathway by the state in post-conflict Sierra Leone (Maconachie and Binns, 2007; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014). In contrast to this, my findings show that women's diverse reactions to MIDR and the capitalist market-driven system it imposes, has resulted in three interconnected post-MIDR economic systems.

4.3 Women's agency in post-MIDR interconnected economic systems

As a result of MIDR, the local economy of the three relocated communities has been transformed from what research participants and secondary sources such as Jackson (1977a) and Human Rights Watch (2014) describe as a singular subsistence-based economy to three interconnected economic systems. Interconnected economic systems are enabled and maintained through different agents, in this case elite decision-makers and relocated women and men in the relocated villages, conforming to the norms of different economic systems in the same space, therefore enabling distinct yet interconnected systems to co-exist (Mei-hui Yang, 2000). These three economic systems are presented as being shaped by women's agency.

I argue that the three interconnected economic systems have been established through different women's diverse reactions to MIDR and the capitalist market-driven system it imposes, therefore enabling different economic systems to exist and interact in the same place. At the same time, women's reactions are shaped by their access to the necessary resources and the rules of the economic system(s) (Giddens, 1984; Mei-hui Yang, 2000). For example, women (and men) who do not have access to economic or social capital and are therefore unable to act in line with capitalist social norms have become dependent on the mining company to survive. This has created a dependency system (see subsection 4.3.1). In contrast, some women who have access to social and financial capital, have *adapted to* the imposed capitalist market-driven system by abiding by capitalist social norms such as buying and selling for profit, therefore enabling a capitalist market-driven systems to exist (see subsection 4.3.2). Other women have *avoided* the interconnected capitalist-dependency system by leaving the villages to continue with their subsistence-based livelihoods, thereby maintaining a subsistence-based system (see subsection 4.3.3). I argue that the subsistence-based system is interconnected with the capitalist-dependency system, as it has been created through women's *avoidance* of the capitalist market-driven system and becoming dependents of this. These findings highlight first, women's agency in shaping the post-MIDR economy and second, how different women's unique agency related to their access to resources enables

them to conform to the rules of different economic systems. This shows that women should not to be seen as homogenous in mining contexts.

The three interconnected economic systems have been shaped and enabled to co-exist due to different local women's reactions to the economic effects of MIDR, related to the resources they have access to, as well as exogenous elite decision-makers at the national and international level. For example, the Government of Sierra Leone has a history of, and continues to promote, economic development by seeking investment from abroad, including attracting multinational mining companies. This can be seen in a range of development strategy papers promoted by the two main (opposing) political parties in Sierra Leone that advocate natural resource extraction, including iron ore, as one of their main national post-conflict recovery and economic development strategies (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012). As a result, mining and MIDR have gone largely unrestricted by the state and MIDR is accepted as an inevitable consequence (Mosselmans, 2014). The state can therefore be seen to promote a global capitalist market-driven economic system.

As a result of the commercial extraction of iron ore at the Tonkolili mine, the resettled communities have been exposed to an exogenous capitalist market-driven system through the influx of cash MIDR has caused. Relocated villages now need cash to obtain resources such as land, food and water, as these are not available in the resettlement locations. This illustrates how MIDR has imposed a capitalist market-driven system on the relocated communities. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We have to buy everything here' (na, Wondugu, 29/05/2017)

Prior to being relocated, the communities had unrestricted access to these resources. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'In Old Foria we were having plenty bush, and at the same time we were having gardens we would not even ask, we could just go anywhere and pluck something because food was common' (kemine, Foria, 05/06/2017).

'[In our old villages] there weren't the same water problems. We were able to get water from the stream' (fa, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

My findings demonstrate that all women need money to buy food due to subsistence farming being more difficult as a result of MIDR. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We used to have mango trees, [...] orange trees, but since coming here we have to buy these things' (na, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

This shows how all women have been exposed to the capitalist market-driven system as a result of MIDR. However, the extent to which different women participate in the capitalist market-driven system varies.

In stark contrast to the imposed capitalist market-driven system, all of my female participants prioritise fulfilling their natural resource-based livelihoods, including taking care of the family over capitalist pursuits. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'Finding water, taking care of the children, feeding the family, as well as other things is the most important responsibility of the women' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

'We the women are primarily responsible for the house, domestic work, fetching water, taking care of the children, feeding' (dimusukuntigi, Foria 18/10/2016).

These quotes illustrate the reproductive, sociocultural priorities of relocated women (see chapter 5 for detail), that are discordant to the capitalist priorities of the state

and the mining company. By examining how women's agency is shaped by MIDR and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects, my findings show how the ways in which different women have been able to continue with their livelihoods has varied due to their ability to access the resources needed to maintain these, such as land and water, in the post-MIDR communities. This is in part due to the speed at which these resources have been lost or changed through the process of MIDR, as opposed to an organic change, which would result in natural resources changing more gradually over time and people (in this case women) having more time to *adapt* to this. This responds to my first research objective. The speed at which certain resources have been lost or altered as a result of MIDR has influenced the various ways in which different women enact their economic agency in the post-MIDR communities and has created three interconnected economic systems: dependency, capitalism and subsistence. These are explored in detail below.

4.3.1 Adapting to a dependency system

My findings show that a number of women (and some men) have become dependent on the capitalist market-driven system that has been imposed through MIDR because they do not have access to the necessary resources. For example, they do not have the cash to buy food and other necessary items that would enable them to be agents of the capitalist market-driven system (see subsection 4.3.2) nor do they have access to adequate land to grow their own food to be able to maintain the pre-MIDR subsistence system (see subsection 4.3.3). As a result of a lack of resources, some women and men have become reliant on the capitalist market-driven system. For example, they have become dependent on the mining company for the food and money that they provide once a month (see subsection 4.2.2). In addition, women are dependent on men for provisions from the mining company, as they are only given to male heads of households, thus interdependent of the capitalist market-driven system, a dependency system has emerged. I argue that the dependency system is enabled in part by the company providing food and money, therefore providing the resources needed for people to act in line with a dependency system (cf. Giddens, 1984). In addition, by accepting and becoming dependent on the provisions, relocated people's behaviour is enabling and maintaining the dependency system (Giddens, 1984).

According to the extractive industries literature, capitalist features of extractive industries prioritising capital accumulation for multinational companies and resource-rich country's governing elite ('the core'), result in detrimental exploitative effects at the local level ('periphery') (Akiwumi, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013a). One such effect is that people on 'the periphery' are made dependent on 'the core' due to being deprived of a number of resources needed to survive independently (Scott, 1995). Comparable to this, my findings demonstrate how some relocated people have become dependent on the mining company due to the loss of resources caused by MIDR. Below, I explore the complexities of this dependency along gender and life phase lines in the post-MIDR, post-conflict context. In so doing, I highlight how the social context influences the diverse ways women experience dependency as a result of MIDR .

Within the mining literature, women are often presented as most vulnerable to dependency in mining-affected communities, as a result of factors such as patriarchal land rights and local social systems limiting women's decision-making power and access to resources (Dunaway, 2000; Bhanumathi, 2002, Jenkins, 2014). In contrast to the argument that pre-existing contextual factors increase women's vulnerability to becoming dependent in mining-affected communities, I argue that in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, women are particularly vulnerable to becoming dependents, due to the way the mining company allocates, enables or restricts access to resources such as water and land. For example, the locations that were chosen for the three villages to be relocated to is particularly unsuitable for some women, due to the lack of streams for ASM, which used to be some women's primary source of income (see subsection 4.2.2).

In the new location, women also struggle to work on the farms because the land that has been acquired for the relocated communities is several miles away from where they live. Getting to the farms is a long walk and women often cannot afford to pay to take a bike (the cheapest and most common mode of public transport). On top of this, women have a number of domestic duties in and around the home (cf. Boserup, 1989; Moser, 1993; Sikod, 2007) that makes traveling long distances to farm impractical. As a result, farming has become more difficult for women, which means

people have less food and are unable to survive from subsistence farming as they did previously (see section 4.2).

In addition, women no longer have backyard gardens. This is because the way in which the villages have been designed did not leave enough space between the houses for gardens and the soil is poor quality for growing vegetables. Women who have limited access to resources, including land to grow food, have become dependent not only on the mining company, but also forced to become more dependent on men than they were prior to being relocated. I argue that this has reduced some women's social status within the community. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'In Old Ferengbeya we had our own back garden, we can just plant groundnuts or cassava. The women can do that without asking the men, but here, we are only surviving through the men' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

Exogenous assumptions

My findings demonstrate how exogenous assumptions and decisions made by the state and the mining company about the MIDR process have reduced women's agency and increased their dependency, therefore altering some women's social status in the relocated villages (cf. Gilbert, 1997). Women's dependency on men and the mining company and the negative social effects of this, is exacerbated by the way in which the mining company allocates food and money.

As part of the resettlement agreement, the mining company provides one bag of rice and 150,000Le to people in the relocated villages every month; however, this is only given to the male head of each household (see chapter 5 for detailed discussion). This demonstrates how the patriarchal norms of the mining industry have dictated how food and money are distributed in the three relocated villages. This ignores the local cultural norms whereby women are the decision-makers in the home, particularly regarding food. This highlights how the orchestrators of MIDR have made patriarchal assumptions about men making all the decisions in rural Sub-Saharan African communities. Conversely, in Kuranko culture, women make the

household decisions and are responsible for feeding their family. As such, the reduction in women's access to resources such as water, land, food and money, through the process of MIDR, reduces women's economic agency. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The relationship before coming here was very cordial, for example the man brushed the ground and it was my responsibility to clear. When it was time for me to plant groundnuts, the man would come and brush [(clear)], that was the relationship between the men and women there. But here now, that doesn't happen anymore. That relationship is not any more existing, I used to be able to manage things there, but here now my husband manages my food, the money for the food, I am not responsible for anything, so our relationship is going down now' (na, Wondugu 02/11/2016).

This quote also demonstrates the level of sex-interdependence that is vital in subsistence/exchange economies and how this has changed as a result of MIDR.

In addition, the company has ignored the demographics of the family structure in the provisioning of food and money. For example, in the three villages, many households are polygamous, which means it is common for multiple wives and children to live in one house with one man in the relocated villages³¹. However, the amount of rice and money provided does not take family size into consideration. Consequently, men in polygamous relationships are not given enough for all of their family. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Some houses have multiple wives and children living there. Some houses have two wives, some have three wives. They promised us that when we came here they would give us all the food we need, but they give only to the head, so it's not enough' (bimba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016) .

³¹ According to my participants, prior to being relocated polygamous families would live in a 'compound' within which each wife would have her own house. Since being relocated the entire unit has been allocated just one house to live in.

As a result of not having enough food, polygamous wives feel they are failing in their duty of feeding their family.

A further issue is, as a direct result of the civil war, that many houses in Sierra Leone are headed by women (Abdullah *et al.*, 2010; Milazzo and Van de Waal, 2017). The high rate of female-headed households in Sierra Leone is in part a post-conflict legacy due to more men dying in the civil war (TRC, 2004; Buvinic *et al.*, 2013). The high proportion of female-headed households has not been taken into consideration in allocating provisions, as these are only given to male heads of households. Consequently, female-headed households are dependent on their social networks such as friends and family for food and money. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'My husband has died, so I am taking care of the children. I am not [able to work in New Foria as I did before] and I do not receive supplies from the company, so that is a big challenge for me. That is why I have come to stay with my Father' (na, widow, Foria, 05/06/2017).

In making patriarchal assumptions about men being the decision-makers and ignoring demographic realities related to polygamy and post-conflict female-headed households, MIDR and its orchestrators have facilitated some women becoming more dependent on men. Elderly, widowed women and women in polygamous relationships, are particularly vulnerable to becoming economically and socially impoverished.

My findings correspond with arguments that non-organic triggers such as mining and MIDR can have unforeseen negative consequences due to exogenous decision-makers' lack of understanding of the local cultural norms and circumstances (see Akiwumi, 2014). My findings demonstrate that women had economic agency and decision-making power prior to being relocated for mining. For example, the majority of women were involved in subsistence farming and ASM, which enabled women to provide for their families. This is particularly significant for women who do not have a husband to share financial responsibilities with. In ignoring women's

pre-existing decision-making roles and economic agency in the allocation of resources, some women's economic position in the villages has been threatened. This demonstrates how MIDR and its effects are shaped by exogenous patriarchal norms, in this case assuming women are not decision-makers, and how these conflict with some women's decision-making powers within the household, thereby threatening their agency and pre-existing economic, sociocultural and political systems.

Uncertainty of dependency

Women (and men) are unhappy about being dependent on the mining company. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The problem I am having is I cannot depend wholly and solely on somebody. In Old Foria we used to do work for ourselves which meant we were not reliant on anybody but here we have nowhere to work for ourselves. What if the person you are reliant on says they will not give you today?' (mama, Foria, 02/02/2017)

Beyond not wanting to be dependent, a particular concern of women was the uncertainty of being dependent on a mining company and how this would affect their children's future, given the short-term nature of mining (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe, 2013). This is related to not just the finite nature of minerals such as iron ore, but also the transient nature of mining companies (Owen and Kemp, 2015). This is exemplified in Shandong taking over from AML at the Tonkolili site (see chapter 1). Since Shandong has taken over, people are receiving fewer food and monetary provisions. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'AML was better, these ones [Shandong] are rebels. AML, before the end of the month were giving us supplies. Shandong [...], maybe after the end of the month you have to cut off a part of the other month before they give you your supply again' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

Women were concerned about how long food, money and water will be provided for and what will happen when the extraction of iron ore at the Tonkolili site ends as part of their efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing.

This is illustrated by the following quotes:

'We don't even have legal documents for our places [in the new villages], we know when the company goes our life is very uncertain and our old have been destroyed' (mama, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'There will be a huge problem for our children's future and our grandchildren's future, because there used to be plantations, but here there is nothing that is sustainable for them' (na, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

The short-term lifespan of mining makes the lives of the relocated people that have become dependent on the mining company, uncertain. This corresponds with the argument within the extractive industries discourse that the promotion of mining as a sustainable development strategy, including enhancing local wellbeing, is a paradox due to its finite nature (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe, 2013) (see chapter 1).

4.3.2 *Adaptation to the imposed capitalist market-driven system*

The prominent argument from extractive industries scholars (such as, Bhanumathi, 2002, Akiwumi, 2011; Jenkins, 2014) and my findings, show how some women are vulnerable to becoming dependent on the capitalist market-driven system that large-scale mining and MIDR imposes. In contrast, my findings also show how some women who have access to economic and social capital resources, have ***adapted to*** and accepted certain aspects of the capitalist market-driven system that MIDR has imposed. For example, some women with existing financial or social capital have become traders and according to capitalist norms are benefiting from the capitalist market-driven system, as they are accumulating profit. Other women have ***adapted*** and become part of the capitalist market-driven system by gaining employment with the multinational capitalist mining company. Beyond this, all women now having to purchase certain resources to fulfil their reproductive roles, namely food, are abiding

by capitalist norms and therefore, enabling the capitalist market-driven system to some extent.

According to my observations, possessing financial and social capital was found to largely, although not totally, correlate with life phase. *Nas* (women in the middle-age Kuranko life phase) were found to be most likely to have existing financial and social capital and therefore, most able to **adapt to** the capitalist market-driven system in terms of performing capitalist transactions such as buying and selling food. There are a number of reasons for *nas* having more financial and social capital than *mamas* (older women) in particular, and *musubas* (young women) to some extent. *Nas* (and their husbands) are more likely to have financial capital because they are fitter than *mamas* (and their husbands) to work and earn financial capital and have worked longer than *musubas* (and their husbands, if they have them) to have saved more financial capital. Additionally, *nas* are more likely than *mamas* to have social capital in the form of friends or associates at the market in Bumbuna that they can set up credit systems with, to take food to sell and pay for later, due to being more able to travel into town more easily than *mamas* who are likely to be less mobile. *Nas* are also more likely to have more social capital than *musubas* due to being older and having had more opportunities to have formed these relationships. However, a number of *musubas* also talked of having set up credit systems with women in the market in Bumbuna.

Additionally, directly linked to the need for cash to obtain food and water is the need for paid employment. Since being relocated, some women (and men) aspire to become employees of the local multinational mining company. Women (and men) now aspiring to gain paid employment demonstrates how some people are abiding by certain capitalist norms and have therefore **adapted to** the capitalist market-driven system (see below).

My findings are comparable with claims within the cultural adaptation discourse, that people **adapt** their behaviour, to both abide by the rules of a new culture they move into, in this case the capitalist market-driven system (Hiên, 2016), and/or in response to environmental change, such as a loss of, or change in access to resources

that threatens people's ability to continue in their way of life, in this case the loss of adequate land for subsistence farming (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 2016; Chaudhury *et al.*, 2017; Pandey *et al.*, 2017; Warrick *et al.*, 2017). I argue that some women are enabling a capitalist market-driven system at the local level by acting in line with capitalist rules both pro-actively and opportunistically. For example, they pro-actively aspire to be employed by a multinational capitalist corporation and opportunistically use cash to obtain certain resources that have been commodified through the process of MIDR, including land, food and water.

Commodification of land, food and water

My findings show that women and their livelihoods are particularly exposed to the capitalist market-driven system that MIDR imposes. This is because having adequate and accessible resources such as land, food and water, that now have to be purchased as a result of MIDR, are critical for women to be able to perform their natural resource-based livelihoods, including farming, backyard gardening and domestic duties in and around the home. This is compared to men who are more easily able to travel to the farm land that has been provided, in part due to having less domestic responsibilities at home. My findings show that the loss and/or commodification of certain resources, such as food, forces many women to have to buy these in order to fulfil their reproductive responsibility of feeding their family (see chapter 5). In participating in this capitalist behaviour, women are (opportunistically) enabling an aspect of the capitalist market-driven system to exist. One *na* from Ferengbeya compares producing their own palm wine (an alcoholic drink that is tapped from palm trees) in the pre-resettlement location to now having to buy it:

'Palm wine we used to have for free and then we would go and sell [what was left over], now it is 3000 or 40000 [Leones]' (25/01/2017).

This quote illustrates, the change from a subsistence-based system, in which people could access resources without cash in their pre-resettlement locations, to a post-MIDR capitalist market-driven system in which people need cash to buy certain resources.

In order to buy the resources they need and to afford other expenses, such as children's school fees, the latter of which women used to be able to afford by mining and selling gold, some women who have the necessary financial or social capital, have started trading and therefore can be seen to have *adapted to* the commodification of certain resources that is related to the imposed capitalist market-driven system. While in their pre-resettlement locations, women would sell the surplus farm produce they had grown, they now have to buy produce to sell from Bumbuna town. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'I sell groundnuts. I go into town to buy the groundnuts, but before I was growing them myself. I buy the groundnuts and bring them to peel them, after peeling, I patch them and [...] sell them. This is how I earn money' (na, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

Some women who do not have the financial capital, but possess social capital have set up a credit system with women traders in the market in Bumbuna town. Through this credit system, women who have social capital in the form of social networks are able to take food to sell in their own village and pay for it later. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'I have to go and loan fish from the big town and bring it here and after which I return the money' (musuba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

I argue that in performing capitalist modes of transactions, women's agency can be seen to have been influenced by and has *adapted to* the commodification of natural resources related to the imposed capitalist market-driven system. At the same time, by abiding by capitalist norms such as the commodification of natural resources (Heynen and Robbins, 2005), for example buying and selling food, women are enabling the capitalist market-driven system to exist at the local level (Giddens, 1984).

Any woman (or man) that sells and/or buys food is drawn into the global capitalist market. During my fieldwork I observed that the price of food that women buy and

sell from town is influenced by the price of the US dollar. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Where we buy it from, they say the dollar has gone up, so because of this it raises the prices' (musuba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

The food that women now buy, such as rice and tinned sardines, is internationally imported. The price is influenced by global food prices and international transport costs. Also, the price of food that is produced in other parts of the country is influenced by local transport costs, which is relative to fluctuating global fuel prices. As a result of MIDR, all women who are responsible for feeding their family and thus obtaining food (elderly women are often exempt from this and are provided for by others) have therefore been exposed to and opportunistically become, economic players in the global market, more so than men who have less direct dealings with cash. This is because in order for women to fulfil their role of feeding the family, they now have to buy food.

Restrictions to abiding by capitalist norms

In line with Thulstrup's (2015) claim that people's access to (capitalist) resources influences their capacity to **adapt** their livelihoods to change, my findings demonstrate how only women with the capitalist means to obtain food from town to sell have been able to become traders. This is restricted to women who have financial capital in the form of cash to buy food from town to sell or women who have social capital in the form of personal networks with women market traders in town who are willing to give them food to be paid for after they have sold it. I argue that this shows how agency is dependent on access to the resources needed to act in line with a given social system. Lacking access to capitalist resources therefore excludes some women from becoming agents in the capitalist market-driven system.

Women shaping modes of capitalism

The mining company can be seen to have imposed a capitalist market-driven system, (in part) by reducing people's access to resources such as food, resulting in the commodification of such resources in the relocated villages. Evidence of this can be

seen in the provision of a market place being included in the resettlement agreement. However, women from Ferengbeya and Wondugu have resisted using this market and built their own, demonstrating their agency in shaping the local capitalist market-driven system. This illustrates the nuanced way(s) in which women have culturally *adapted to* the capitalist market-driven system.

Some of my participants explained that the agreed location for the market to be built by the company was not in Ferengbeya, but a space outside all three villages that they could all use equally. It was suggested by people from Wondugu, that people in Ferengbeya are more powerful and used their influence to have the market built in their village. A *mama* from Wondugu explained:

'The location of the market is not the initially proposed place. What they proposed initially is that it should be in a central location, but because the people from Ferengbeya are the most powerful, they stood firm to see that the market was constructed there' (08/11/2016).

In *resistance* to this, women from Wondugu refused to use the market place in Ferengbeya and as a result, the market place is unused by anyone, including people in Ferengbeya. Some of my female participants explained that this is because women from Ferengbeya view this market space as less profitable than the one they have built and share with Wondugu. Women from Wondugu and Ferengbeya have constructed a market place to use at the side of the road that divides the two villages. This market space is not in either village and is convenient for any passing vehicles to stop and buy from. Women from both Wondugu and Ferengbeya sell and buy at this shared market place. This demonstrates how women are conforming to and enabling a capitalist way of living, but shaping the nature of this by choosing the location of the market and building it themselves. This shows how women shape the way in which capitalism is performed in mining affected-communities.

In addition, Wondugu women's *resistance* to using the market that has been built in Ferengbeya, also demonstrates the emergence of new conflicts between the villages. For example, people from Wondugu object to Ferengbeya being more influential in

choosing the location of the company-built market. An emerging hierarchy between the three villages is also evident here. Within this hierarchy, Ferengbeya are perceived as the most powerful, as they have influenced the location of the company-built market. Wondugu, have also demonstrated their power by influencing the creation of the shared market. In contrast, Foria is shown to be less powerful as they were unable to influence the location of the market and as a result of this, do not have access to the shared market because they are further away.

Being employed by the mining company

In addition to some women opportunistically becoming agents of the global capitalist market-driven system, some women (and men) also have pro-actively ***adapted to*** the capitalist market-driven system by aspiring to and being employed by the mining company. There are a number of reasons for this. First, money is needed to survive in the resettlement locations. Second, the government of Sierra Leone promotes the extraction of natural resources, including iron ore, as a national economic development strategy (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012). People therefore want to be a part of and reap the financial reward from it. Third, the relocated populations, who once owned the land that iron ore is being extracted from, feel they are entitled to a share in the financial benefits. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The resident minister made a statement on our behalf, saying that they [the company] should give us [the three communities], priority [of employment] because we are the most effected, we left our land, for their investment, therefore if they give employment [...], let them give us [the three communities] our own quota, let them [employ at least] 4 or 5 [from the] three communities. That has not been followed' (bimba, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

Women and men from the relocated villages said that as part of the resettlement terms, the company agreed to employ people from the relocated villages as part of remunerating them for their land. In reality, very few men or women have been employed (approximately 10 in total, according to my observations) by either of the

mining companies that have operated there, AML or Shandong. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'AML employed [only a few people] and Shandong have not employed anyone new' (fa, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

This quote not only shows that the mining companies have employed a limited amount of people, but also the perceived difference between the two mining companies.

Given that few people from the relocated communities are employed by the mining companies, it is particularly noteworthy that three women (one woman from each relocated village) have been employed. Women have demanded for women to be employed by the mining company, as illustrated in the following quote from an interview with the three *'dimusukuntigies'*:

'They employed three women, because we are crying, 'why are we the women not working, while other people are working?' So that is why' (dimusukuntigi, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

This is significant due to Sierra Leone's national patriarchal structure that is particularly evident in rural villages in the north of the country (Denov, 2006) and the masculine, capitalist system of the extractive industry (Mayes and Pini 2010; 2014; Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasi, 2012; Mayes, 2014) that tends to prioritise the employment of men over women.

Women's feelings of entitlement to employment, in addition to the aforementioned reasons (including need for money to purchase resources, wanting to reap the financial reward from mining and feeling entitled to this due to the extraction of iron ore taking place on their land), could be in part related to the post-conflict context. It is believed by some women in the relocated communities and by scholars such as Denov (2006), that the civil war in Sierra Leone opened up employment opportunities due to both women and men realising the capabilities of women. The

post-war context can thus be seen as an influencing factor in some women seeking employment in the mining company and enabling the capitalist market-driven system. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Before the war we were totally dependent on the men but after the war we were aware that we should not only be dependent on the men. Some of us can even work better than men (mama, Foria, 02/02/2017).

In addition to the post-conflict legacy, there are other possible reasons for the company employing women. For example, mining companies' CSR policies set out a number of recommendations to enable sustainable development at the local level (Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012), including the employment of a certain quota of women. However CSR is frequently proved to be more of a promotional strategy than a reality for local mining communities (Hilson, 2006; 2012; Gilberthorpe and Banks, 2012; Maconachie and Hilson, 2013). This demonstrates that there are a multitude of factors influencing women gaining employment with the mining company and therefore influencing local women's participation in the capitalist-market-driven economy at the local level.

Women (and men) being employed by the mining company has (in part) created and enabled the post-MIDR capitalist market-driven system, as people are conforming to the social norms of capitalism such as becoming wage labourers for a multinational mining company. In *adapting to* the imposed capitalist market-driven system through buying and selling food and aspiring to and becoming employed by the multinational mining company, women demonstrate cultural *adaptation* in response to the loss of natural resources due to MIDR. The ways in which women have *adapted to* the imposed capitalist market-driven system highlights that women should not be assumed to be vulnerable victims of global capitalism: my findings demonstrate that women's agency is being performed in a way that enables a local capitalist market-driven system to exist in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. The cash that women make is used to purchase necessary resources to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing, at least in part.

4.3.3 Avoidance of the capitalist market-driven system

While some women have ***adapted to*** and enabled a capitalist market-driven system to exist in the post-MIDR villages and others who have not been able to ***adapt to*** it, have become dependent and enabled a dependency system, other women have ***resisted*** or ***avoided*** the imposed capitalist market-driven system and becoming dependent on it, by leaving the villages to continue their natural resource-based subsistence-based livelihoods³². Through the act of ***avoiding*** capitalism and thus dependency, I argue these women have enabled a subsistence-based system that is interconnected with the capitalist-dependency system.

Leaving with family

A number of women from the three relocated villages have left the new villages with their husbands and children to find a new place to live, where they can continue their subsistence-based livelihoods, by living off the land as they did before they were relocated. In so doing, through their actions, these women and men are maintaining the pre-MIDR economic system. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'They have not settled in Old Foria[...], they have gone back to build thatched houses so they can just survive on their old land' (fa, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'I am just in New Wondugu to collect my things. I have left this place and gone back to our old land to do farming and to do some mining' (musuba, Wondugu, 29/05/2017).

Women leaving the village on their own

Other women, have left the villages on their own. Men and women had differing opinions of why women have done this. For example, some men believe women have left their husbands to go in search of new husbands who they can depend on financially. This could be seen to some extent as these women conforming to the

³² This has linkages with the 'exit' aspect of Hirschman's (1970) 'exit or voice' theory', in which he argues that people can exit or voice their grievances in response to negative economic change (see Hirschman, 1970 for detail).

capitalist-dependency system, as women look for men they can depend on economically. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'There are a lot of divorces. There are a lot of difficulties to provide for the house, so the women are leaving the husbands, some of them go to these other villages and marry others' (bimba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

An alternative view to women going in search of men to depend on financially, was the view of some women that women were leaving their husbands to go in search of a more independent lifestyle in which they do not depend on a mining company to survive³³. In this sense, women leaving their husbands could be interpreted as women **avoiding** becoming dependent on the mining company and maintaining their agency and subsistence-based lifestyle at any cost. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Some women cannot bear, so they will leave because of money [and] feeding, so they will go out of the village and probably their marriage is over. You will not be seeing your husband, you will not be seeing your children' (musuba, Foria, 02/02/2017).

Women choosing to leave their husband and children is particularly significant in a culture in which women's status largely stems from being married and raising children (see chapter 5). Prior to being relocated, men and women lived in economic and social symbiosis with men, providing the staple foods for their family to eat and women cooking the food to feed the family. According to some of my participants, both women's and men's status was maintained by these roles and as a result of this, divorce was uncommon. On top of this, the villages as a whole lived largely communally, farming together on each other's land and sharing the food that they produced. Since being relocated, women and men leaving the village together and women leaving the village alone, has resulted in both the socio-economic system of the family and the village being transformed as a result of MIDR. This shows how

³³ It should be noted that I was unable to corroborate either of the two theories about why women were leaving the villages alone by talking to women that have left without their family.

women (and men) **avoiding** the economic effects of MIDR, that are shaped by exogenous international and national capitalist and patriarchal norms, influences both the economic system and the sociocultural system at the local level.

Different women's diverse reactions to MIDR and the impact it has on the pre-MIDR subsistence-based economy (as an institution), particularly in relation to their access to certain resources, has enabled three interconnected economic systems to emerge that have replaced the pre-MIDR singular subsistence-based economy. This demonstrates how the economic system(s) of society can be shaped by women's agency.

4.4 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter contribute to the economic aspect of feminisation of mining theory, by challenging the assumption presented in the broader mining literature that women are a homogenous group of passive victims of the negative economic effects of mining (Hinton *et al.*, 2003b; Dinye *et al.*, 2012; Mayes, 2014; Mayes and Pini, 2014). In this chapter, I have addressed my research objectives and overall aim: to show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change, by showing; (i) how MIDR creates a critical juncture and opportunity for economic change at the local level; (ii) how different women, on the grounds of life phase and interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience, have reacted in diverse ways to MIDR and the capitalist market-driven system it has imposed, in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing; and (iii) how the unique and creative ways that women have reacted to MIDR has created three interconnected post-MIDR economic systems. In so doing, I show: that women are actors in shaping the economic systems after a critical juncture; that women had economic agency and decision-making power which varied according to life phase interrelated with status, social and financial capital and life experience, prior to being relocated (that often goes unrecognised in the mining literature). Central to my findings is the heterogeneity of women and the way they perform their economic agency.

My findings show that different women have reacted in diverse ways to MIDR. This diversity is related to women's access to resources that is influenced by the process of MIDR and the social context in which it takes place. For example, some women have become dependent on the food and money that the mining company provides, thereby causing a dependency system. Women compared to men were found to be more dependent. One reason for this is the inaccessibility of land for women in particular, related to many women's lack of financial means to afford transport and their domestic roles limiting their mobility to access the land needed for them to maintain their subsistence-based livelihoods. Another reason is the way in which resources are allocated to male heads of households, making women dependent on men. This is a particular issue for polygamous wives and female heads of households as they are not allocated provisions and therefore struggle to fulfil their domestic role of taking care of the family. They are therefore particularly vulnerable to a reduction in agency and social status.

My findings also show how women have *adapted to* certain aspects of the imposed capitalist market-driven system both opportunistically and pro-actively. For example, the majority of women have opportunistically been drawn into the global capitalist market-driven system through the commodification of food. This is because it is a woman's responsibility to feed her family and she now has to buy most food as opposed to being able to grow it. Some women who have financial and social capital have started trading to earn money, as opposed to growing food and selling the surplus as part of their subsistence-based lifestyle, thereby abiding by new capitalist norms. Additionally, some women have pro-actively *adapted to* the capitalist market-driven system by gaining employment from the mining company. Other women who have access to the resources needed for subsistence-based livelihoods, have *avoided* becoming part of the capitalist market-driven system and/or becoming dependent on the provided resources by leaving the village to resume their subsistence-based livelihoods, thereby maintaining the pre-MIDR subsistence-based economy.

Women's different reactions to capitalism have caused three post-MIDR interconnected economic systems to exist. This is in contrast to a dominant argument within extractive industries literature (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006; Idemudia, 2010; Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015) whereby powerful (male) elite decision-makers (including state and mining company representatives) determine a post-MIDR monolithic capitalist market-driven system to the detriment of women. In contrast, the capitalist market-driven system and the subsistence-based system that women have enabled, benefit certain women and contribute to maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing.

In the next chapter, I explore how certain resources and physical structures associated with nature embody women's identity and their agency and how this is affected by MIDR.

CHAPTER FIVE: NATURAL RESOURCES AND WOMEN'S AGENCY

5.1 Introduction

Having demonstrated how women's economic agency is performed in a post-MIDR context in the preceding chapter, in this chapter I show how women's sociocultural agency is affected by MIDR. The findings presented in this chapter respond to my research objectives and main aim:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

To achieve this I examine how different women's *sociocultural* agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its *sociocultural* effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. The findings presented in this chapter particularly respond to my first research objective: to demonstrate the *specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change* by examining how *women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and in physical structures it causes*, specifically the *structure of the village* and *the house* and *access to land and water*, by showing how certain resources and physical structures associated with nature, embody women's lifeworlds in small-scale MIDR-affected communities, and how a rapid change in these creates a critical juncture for women's agency.

The findings presented in this chapter also address research objective 2: to examine the ways in which *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems shape MIDR and the conflicts and impacts this*

has on local economic, sociocultural and political systems. I address this by showing how the transformation and provision of resources caused by MIDR are bound in 'Western modern' sociocultural norms and beliefs, that conflict with customary norms and beliefs and the sociocultural system in the relocated villages.

The findings presented also address research objective 3: to examine the diverse nature of *women's reactions, which includes adaptation*, avoidance, *passive and active resistance (including involvement in mining-related social movements) to MIDR* and its effects and how these reactions differ along life phase lines, interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. I address this by demonstrating how different women, along the aforementioned lines, have reacted in diverse ways – *adapted, passively and actively resisted* - to the change in culturally-valuable natural resources in their efforts to preserve the pre-MIDR sociocultural system and individual and collective wellbeing.

As a non-organic trigger of social change the process of MIDR rapidly alters a number of the culturally-valuable resources and physical structures associated with nature (Cernea, 1995; Downing, 2002). In my analysis, I draw on Habermas's (1987) concept of lifeworlds (see chapter 3), to show how specific natural resources informed the enactment of people's lifeworlds pre-MIDR and how this has been affected by MIDR. In their pre-resettlement locations, women's and men's actions in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria were dictated by sex-defined and symbiotic reproductive responsibilities that maintained their lifeworlds, the local sociocultural system and people's wellbeing (Giddens, 1984; Habermas, 1987; Butler, 1990). Women's reproductive responsibilities, including domestic duties, were central to their sociocultural agency in the pre-MIDR villages. The natural resources informing the ways in which people enact their reproductive responsibilities and lifeworlds are therefore critical to their cultural identity, agency, the sociocultural system and maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing (Giddens, 1984; Haraway, 2003; Harcourt, 2009; 2017; Rocheleau, 2011).

Consistent with the female-nature conceptualisation (see chapter 3 for detail), my findings demonstrate the relationship women had with nature, namely certain resources and physical structures associated with nature were central to their lifeworlds, in the pre-resettlement villages. However, in contrast to the longstanding conceptualisation that women are subordinated by their relationship with nature (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997), I argue that women are not devalued by this (cf. Ardener, 1975; MacCormack, 1990) and beyond this, gain social status from their relationship with nature. Prior to being relocated, women gained social status within society by fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities as these were respected by both women and men. My findings show how a number of specific resources and physical structures associated with nature (such as the house, the female body, food, water, the river and the structure of the village) embody and enable the enactment of women's reproductive responsibilities, lifeworlds and women's agency. I therefore contribute to the nature/culture debate by demonstrating the importance of women's relationship with nature and natural resources in enabling women's sociocultural agency.

Related to the female-nature conceptualisation, ecofeminists argue that the domination of women by men is linked to environmental destruction (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993). Some ecofeminists believe that women have a symbolic relationship with nature, for example, Shiva (1988) and Diamond and Orenstein (1990) argue that women have an 'inherent' or 'natural' closeness to land. Others (Plumwood, 1991; Warren and Cheney, 1991) believe that women's relationship with nature is based upon material realities, such as the natural resources they draw on to enact their lifeworlds, including food, fodder, fuel and water. The degradation of nature and natural resources, such as land and water, argued to be influenced by capitalist and patriarchal systems, is thus assumed to disadvantage women and their agency (see Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993). In contrast, I demonstrate how women in the post-MIDR villages have resisted the negative effects of the loss of natural resources and physical structures associated with nature in order to maintain their cultural identity and status (cf. Shiva, 1988; Nightingale, 2006).

Women have been argued to be most at risk from the negative sociocultural impacts of MIDR due to the transformative affect it has on access to the resources that women need to enact their gender-defined lifeworlds (Agarwal, 1992; Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014). Despite this, the reasons for women disproportionately suffering from the loss of these resources, in terms of local sociocultural beliefs about women and their social role in society, is underexplored (Rocheleau and Nirmal, 2014). One possible explanation for the lack of research into the sociocultural effects MIDR has on women within the feminisation of mining literature, is that it is assumed that women's sociocultural agency is negatively affected by MIDR (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Lahiri-Dutt, 2014; Owen and Kemp, 2015). This assumption stems from the ecofeminist argument that women, due to their attachment to nature, are vulnerable to being dominated (by men) through the destruction of nature and loss of access to natural resources, that MIDR causes (d'Eaubonne, 1974; Griffin, 1978; Haraway, 1991; Nightingale, 2006). This is in contrast to the fundamental objective of feminisation of mining theory, that is to expose women's agency in mining (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015).

My findings show how MIDR creates a critical juncture for women's lifeworlds through the transformation of culturally-valuable natural resources. However, I contribute to feminisation of mining theory by showing how women have resisted the effects of the loss of these resources in order to maintain their reproductive responsibilities, lifeworlds and sociocultural system and in so doing maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing (cf. Shiva, 1988; Nightingale, 2006). This challenges existing literature that presents women as passive victims of the loss/degradation of nature and natural resources that capitalist industries such as mining cause (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991).

My findings show how different women, along life phase lines, have responded in diverse ways (including *adapting*, *passively resisting* and *actively resisting*) to the loss of different culturally-valuable natural resources in an attempt to preserve their reproductive responsibilities, the sociocultural system and individual and collective wellbeing. This differs from women's reactions to the economic effects of MIDR,

that transformed the local economy (see chapter 4), and is in contrast to the argument that women are the vulnerable victims of the sociocultural impacts of MIDR (Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014). This finding further highlights the sociocultural value of natural resources. This is in contrast to the assumption, within feminisation of mining theory (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015) and development discourse more broadly (Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997; Koolwal and Van de Walle, 2013), that women's reproductive responsibilities and associating them with nature subordinates them and acts as a barrier to women's wellbeing.

This chapter is structured as follows. The first section outlines the contribution I make to feminisation of mining theory, by showing how resources and physical structures associated with nature embody and enable women's lifeworlds and how MIDR creates a critical juncture through the change in resources and physical structures it causes. Following on from this, I show how different women have responded to the loss of different resources and physical structures in diverse ways which contributed to preserving their cultural identity and the sociocultural system. In so doing, I contribute to feminisation of mining theory by highlighting the unique cultural value of different natural resources and physical structures to women's agency and how different women, along life phase lines, have reacted to the change in these to preserve their reproductive responsibilities. In so doing, I challenge the argument that women are a homogenous group of passive recipients of the negative sociocultural effects of MIDR.

5.2 Social role of natural resources

5.2.1 Natural resources and feminisation of mining theory

Within the broad extractives industries discourse, when the sociocultural impact of mining and MIDR is considered, women are portrayed as bearing the brunt of the most negative effects (Bhanumathi, 2002; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). This is because mining processes cause reduction and degradation of natural resources, including water and land, that women in particular draw upon in their lifeworlds (Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014). A specific list of

the negative sociocultural consequences that MIDR has on women related to a loss of resources associated with nature has been documented, including landlessness, joblessness, marginalisation, food insecurity and human disarticulation (Bhanumathi, 2002; Downing, 2002; Owen and Kemp, 2015).

Despite women being presented as the most disadvantaged by the loss of resources related to mining and MIDR (Ahmad and Lahiri-dutt, 2006; Lahiri-Dutt, 2014), the significant social impact of a rapid transformation in these resources, related to the sociocultural context is underexplored. On the whole, research concerned with the social consequences of the loss of resources to women has a generic narrative that is limited to it simply threatening women's ability to fulfil unpaid 'women's work'. For example, a loss of water caused by mining and MIDR reduces women's ability to fulfil their domestic chores, such as fetching water in mining-affected communities in India (Bhanumathi, 2002). Jenkins (2014) also argues that women are adversely affected by displacement for mining and the disruption this causes to the community, due to their responsibility for maintaining this.

A thorough examination of the complex sociocultural impacts of MIDR and the way different women (for example along geographic, ethnic and age lines) experience and react to these impacts is largely left out of the extractive industries discourse. As a result of this, women are presented as one homogenous group that experience the negative sociocultural effects of MIDR in the same way (Mahy, 2011; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b).

One possible explanation for why comparatively little attention has been paid to the complex sociocultural effects of MIDR, is the assumption that women's reproductive responsibilities and association with nature confines them to their biological role, reduces their agency and acts as a barrier to women's wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; de Beauvoir, 1997; Koolwal and Van de Walle, 2013). As a result of this, some feminist scholars within the extractive industries discourse (Mayes and Pini, 2010; 2014; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015) have avoided discussing the relationship between women's social agency and natural resources and how large-scale mining affects this (O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Rocheleau and Nirmal, 2014).

The significant sociocultural value of resources and physical structures that embody women's agency therefore tends to be overlooked within feminisation of mining theory. To address this, my indigenous stance (outlined in chapter 2) was vital to understand how Kuranko women's agency and status within their community relies on their relationship with nature and natural resources (cf. O'Faircheallaigh, 2013b; Rocheleau and Nirmal, 2014). In the following subsection I highlight the value of women's reproductive responsibilities and the way in which resources and physical structures associated with nature embody these and enhance women's sociocultural agency, and additionally, consistent with ecofeminist thinking, how MIDR creates a critical juncture for this (d'Eaubonne, 1974; Griffin, 1978; Haraway, 1991; Nightingale, 2006).

5.2.2 *Natural resources, lifeworlds and MIDR*

My findings show how in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria pre and post-MIDR, resources and physical structures associated with nature play a key role in the enactment and maintenance of women's sociocultural agency and women's lifeworlds in three significant ways. First, certain resources and physical structures, such as the mud-thatch house, symbolise women's reproductive responsibilities through their shape. Second, material resources, such as food and water, are needed in the enactment of women's culturally defined domestic roles. Third, the shape and function of specific resources and physical structures, such as the village and the river, provides a valuable space for social networking between women, thereby enabling collective women's agency. I show how rapid changes caused by MIDR to the profoundly feminine structure of the house, women's bodies, the village, sacred-places, the resources women draw upon in their daily life and the material items they use, for example the cooking pot, food and water, creates a critical juncture for women's agency and their pre-existing lifeworlds.

Structures associated with nature symbolise women's reproductive responsibilities

I argue that prior to being relocated, certain resources and physical structures associated with nature, such as the mud-thatch house represent women's and men's symbiotic reproductive responsibilities in society. My findings show how the mud-thatch house as well as other physical structures, such as the female body symbolise

the prominence of women's social and biological reproductive responsibility and how a change to these creates a critical juncture for women's agency. Pre-MIDR, the majority of people in the three villages lived in mud-thatch houses (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 Customary, round, mud-thatch house
(Source: Own, taken in anonymous village,
Northern Province, 13/02/2017)

My findings show how the customary mud-thatch house is more than a physical structure, as it embodies a woman and her reproductive responsibilities in a number of ways (cf. Adam *et al.*, 2015; Sidloyi and Bomela, 2015). First, the natural resources the house is made from, including mud for the walls and grass for the roof, are associated with 'Mother Earth', which is the personification of nature as a woman, due to it giving and sustaining life. Ecofeminists, such as Diamond (1994), argue that this is due to the connection between women's fertility and the fertility of land. Second, the round shape of the house represents women's round bodies and biological reproductive organs. Similar to the calabash in other parts of West Africa, including in Yoruba culture, Nigeria and in the chiefdoms of the Grassfields in Cameroon, the house represents the future, as it is associated with a woman's womb and reproductive and nurturing capabilities (Apter, 1991; Argenti, 2011). Third, the

primary function of the house in Kuranko culture is to provide a safe place to sleep. All other activities take place outside. On a practical note, due to high temperatures, it is more comfortable to conduct domestic duties, such as cooking, outside where it is cooler. The small, simple structure of the mud-thatch house is also conducive to women's responsibility of keeping the house clean, as there is only one room to sweep. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'I prefer my old thatch house. That was conducive for me to clean it and safe for my family to sleep in' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

This illustrates the role that mud-thatch houses play in bridging the gap between nature and culture, as they embody through the materials they are made of and their function of safe dwelling, the way in which nature is needed for people to survive (Bourdier and Minh-ha, 2011). This demonstrates how, in contrast to culture dominating nature, nature and culture in symbiosis are central to the enactment of certain aspects of people's lifeworlds (MacCormak, 1990; Haraway, 2003).

My findings also show how the house is representative of men's and women's symbiotic social reproductive responsibilities in Kuranko culture, as it is the man's responsibility to build the house for his wife and children. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'I really like my old house because I built it for my family' (bimba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'We like our old thatch houses because we structured them to suit our lives. We the men, build the houses for our wives and children, because it is the woman that has more responsibilities in the house, so the women use the house more than the men. That is why we build it for them' (bimba, Foria, 02/02/2017).

This illustrates that the customary mud-thatch house is a physical structure associated with nature where women's and men's symbiotic reproductive

responsibilities play out. The mud-thatch house therefore symbolises the sociocultural system of society and how this is enabled and maintained by women and men fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities (cf. Habermas, 1987; Butler, 1990).

Change to physical structures that embody women

Since being relocated, certain structures that embodied women (and men), their reproductive responsibilities and the customary sociocultural system such as the house and women's bodies have been transformed and been replaced with structures that embody a 'Western modern' lifestyle. For example, as part of the resettlement agreement, the mining company paid for houses to be built for the relocated communities by TS and Company, Ltd., where the president's (at the time) brother Thomas Koroma was Managing Director (Human Rights Watch, 2014). These houses are different from the pre-resettlement houses. For example, the new houses embody Western modernity both in terms of the materials they are made from and in design (see Figure 3). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Here my house has a zinc roof, before it was thatched' (fa, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).



Figure 3 'Western modern' style house (Source: Own, taken in Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016)

Figure 3 illustrates the 'Western modern' rectangular houses, that are made from bricks for the walls and zinc for the roof. I argue that replacing the customary, feminine mud-thatch house with a 'Western modern', masculine one creates a critical juncture and opportunity for sociocultural change. The change in physical structure of the house threatens both women's sociocultural agency and prevents women and men from fulfilling their symbiotic social reproductive responsibilities. In so doing, this also threatens the pre-MIDR sociocultural system of society.

For example, men not building the house means they cannot fulfil this social reproductive responsibility that gave men pride and status within society. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'In the old village the way the men built the house was to meet the needs of the family. But for here the houses are all the same style. There we plan for ourselves, houses were not planned for us' (musuba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

In addition to this, the structure of the house is not conducive to the local sociocultural norms, such as the importance of keeping a safe and clean house. This affects women in particular because they are responsible for taking care of the family, which includes keeping the house clean. One example of the house threatening women's ability to keep a clean house for her family is toilets being built inside the house, and these toilets not functioning properly. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The toilets were not built properly. They are not deep enough and there is no water to flush these Western toilets' (fa, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

Building these toilets inside the house has threatened women's ability to keep the house clean, related to the local cultural belief that having a toilet near to where you sleep is unclean. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'[The company] first asked us if we have a toilet, we said no. But when we came here we met a toilet inside' (musuba, Foria, 05/06/2017).

'Each house is now self-contained [...] They have put the toilets inside, but we prefer them outside. It is seen as dirty to shit where you sleep' (fa, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

'We like our old thatch houses. We like them because we structured them to suit our lives, we were more comfortable with those' (bimba, Foria, 02/02/2017).

Another example of how the new houses threaten women's agency is the unsuitable materials that have been used to build the houses. All of my participants reported that the houses are easily damaged by the weather, which makes them inadequate in terms of being safe for people to live in. This is a particular issue for women, who are responsible for looking after their family; thus if people feel unsafe, women are failing in their responsibility. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The houses we were living in in Old Ferengbeya were thatched houses and we were well comfortable with that, compared to the houses here. When it is rain season here and there is a strong breeze, I am always afraid for my children. We have to come out and stand until the breeze dies down' (na, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

The impractical design of the new houses, demonstrates how although exogenous players, such as CSR departments within the mining industry, promote their actions as beneficial to the sustainable development of local communities, in reality their actions can have unintended detrimental consequences to the wellbeing of local people (Gilbert, 1997; Hilson, 2006; 2012; Maconachie and Hilson, 2013) and women in particular. This is shown by the provision of Western toilets being promoted as a strategy for achieving 'Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation' (UN, 2019) by AML for the three relocated communities. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The company has provided them with Western toilets, that will help in achieving SDG 6 in Sierra Leone, but the people are refusing to use them'
(Company-Community Relations Officer, 04/07/2017, interview conducted in English).

This illustrates how Western toilets that are promoted as a development strategy, are opposed to local cultural norms about cleanliness. Additionally, the poor design of both the toilet and the physical structure of the 'Western' houses results in neither functioning as they should. Instead of enabling community development, the provision of toilets and houses is shown to have an adverse effect on individual and collective wellbeing because they are adverse to local sociocultural norms and beliefs.

Additionally, the change in shape of the house threatens women's agency. The loss of the round, feminine structure of the house, was likened to the change in women's body shape, that were both symbolic of women's reproductive responsibilities prior to being relocated. Both male and female participants explained that women had lost their 'fat bodies' since being relocated due to stress and a lack of food in the new locations. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We women used to have fine bodies, but since moving here we have lost our big bodies. We used to have enough to eat well. Now the stress and lack of food has caused our bodies to reduce. The loss of our traditional houses and our bodies shows how women are not represented or respected by the mining company here' (na, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016)

I have illustrated how the provision of 'Western modern' houses, that embody a 'Western modern' way of living, both symbolically and practically impose a 'Western modern' sociocultural system on the relocated villages. I argue that the loss of the feminine structure of the house and women's 'fat' bodies that symbolised the centrality of women's social and biological reproductive responsibilities (cf. Walentowitz, 2011), has created a critical juncture for women's agency. However, in contrast to critical junctures and path dependency concepts that would assume the

orchestrators of the critical juncture would dictate the subsequent pathways (systems) (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015), my findings show how women have reacted to the change in the structure of the house in order to maintain their sociocultural women's agency, the customary sociocultural system and individual and collective wellbeing. The various ways women have reacted, including *adapting* to the change of resources and *passively and actively resisting* the effects of this, are explored in section 5.3.

Resources and gender roles

In addition to physical structures symbolising women's reproductive responsibilities and women's sociocultural agency pre-MIDR, my findings show how certain resources associated with nature are also drawn upon in the enactment of women's sociocultural agency (cf. DeVault, 1991; Jackson, 1998; Akiwumi, 2003; Dallman *et al.*, 2013; Rao *et al.*, 2017). For example, water and food are needed for women to perform a number of their domestic duties, including cooking and cleaning. This is important for women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, whose status in society depends on fulfilling these culturally-defined reproductive responsibilities.

Food production is essential for women to be able to fulfil their domestic duties of cooking and feeding their family (DeVault, 1991). Pre-MIDR women were able to maintain big bodies because women and men were able to grow ample food to eat (see chapter 4). Cooking is a source of women's power and agency, first due to the knowledge women have about cooking (Robson, 2006). Second, due to women's responsibility for meal preparation, they are able to exercise power over what food is prepared and when, and how it is distributed and to whom (Robson, 2006).

In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, as well as elsewhere in West Africa, such as rural Hausaland, northern Nigeria, a woman's success as a wife and mother and their status within the community is dependent on cooking and feeding her family well (Robson, 2006). This is demonstrated through the Kuranko belief that the cooking pot represents a woman. Every married adult woman has her own cooking pot, from which she feeds her husband and children. This is particularly significant in polygamous family units, in which pre-relocation multiple wives living in the same

compound each had their own cooking pot, from which they cooked and fed their children. This differs from cultural norms in some other polygamous communities, such as in rural Hausaland, northern Nigeria, in which polygamous wives take it in turns to cook for the entire family from the same pot (Robson, 2006). The cooking pot representing each wife in the three villages is illustrated in the following quote:

'Each pot represents a grown woman with children. Some houses have more than one cooking pot. Some houses have two pots, some have three pots, meaning multiple wives and children living in the same house' (bimba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016)

Water is also an important natural resource that women draw upon in order to fulfil their reproductive responsibilities, including cooking and cleaning (Akiwumi, 2003; Dallman *et al.*, 2013; Rao *et al.*, 2017). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'Women are the ones taking care of the homes, in terms of domestic work, in terms of water, taking care of the children' (mama, Wondugu, 29/05/2017).

'We had streams to launder clothes, where we would take our bath and life was very good to us' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

In addition to this, for *dimusus* (girls) and *bila kores* (boys) to become adults and progress towards *koroya* (middle-aged and elderhood) and *lakira* (ancesthood) in Kuranko culture they have to be initiated into *sumafen* (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). For *dimusus*, this consists of being trained in how to be a good wife and mother, learning the secret lore of *Segere*, and a *dimusu biriye* ritual, part of which takes place in water (see chapter 1). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Segere is very much important in the life of women. We were having some cultural practices where in for the rest of the day you will be in the river, but how can you, when there is no river, no water? Women are not considered

proper women, until they go through the process' (mama, Foria, 18/10/2016).

Being initiated into *Segere* is important as it marks a *dimusu's* entrance into *musubaye* (womanhood) and readiness to be married, which results in a woman gaining respect, status and wellbeing (Thomas, 2000; El-Gibaly *et al.*, 2002; Sagna, 2014). If a female has not been initiated, she is not classed as a woman and cannot get married (cf. Mackie, 1996; 2000; Jackson, 1977a; Sagna, 2014; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This is important for women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria where local culture dictates that a woman's status within society is related to a woman's husband and how many children she raises (own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017, cf. Mackie, 1996; 2000; Jackson, 1977a; Sagna, 2014).

Loss of resources needed to enact women's reproductive responsibilities

My findings show how certain resources associated with nature, such as water and food, are needed for women to fulfil certain reproductive responsibilities, including cleaning, cooking and feeding the family. These resources are therefore essential for women to perform their sociocultural agency and maintain the sociocultural system (pathway). In their resettlement locations there is less fertile land to grow food and no fresh water source (see chapter 4). As a result of MIDR, people's access to food and water has therefore been reduced. This has created a critical juncture for women's agency. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'When we were in Old Foria we were having rivers where the women could fetch water, offering so much, but here we are not even having enough to drink, not to talk of women laundering. Another thing is the food aspect, when we were in Old Foria we used to farm, we used to have a lot of rice, we would give that food to the women to cook, that is the way we were living. The women were also having a lot of gardens where they were growing food, there was a lot of food stuffs, but here when you want to do any of these things the owners of the land will ask you what you want to do. That is the

problem we are facing here. The main problem is the food and the water aspect which are the women's business' (sutigi, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'Women face the bulk of the suffering. [...] Taking care of the children is the responsibility of the women. We are finding it very difficult to find water and feed our children' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016)

The loss of certain resources poses a critical juncture to women's social agency, that is dependent on a woman having access to resources, such as food and water, that are needed for a woman to fulfil her reproductive responsibilities.

The mining company provides food and water to the relocated communities as part of the resettlement agreement. However, the way in which these provisions are allocated does not take local sociocultural norms into consideration, thereby threatening women's lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987; Gilbert, 1997). For example, food is allocated to the male head of the household instead of to each woman and her cooking pot. As a result of this, many families, particularly polygamous units and female-headed households, do not have enough for their family to eat, which according to local sociocultural norms means that women are failing in their reproductive responsibility of feeding their family. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The mining company asked us how many cooking pots we have and promised us that when we came here they would give us all the food we need, but when we came here now they give only to the male head, so it's not enough' (bimba, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

'We are having two households living under the same roof, so the mining company counts it as one family. My husband has one wife with ten children. I am the second and I have five. So we are responsible for eighteen people and we are only given one bag of rice for the house. The women take the bulky part of taking care of the children and now I cannot give them enough to eat' (na, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

This illustrates that the way in which food is allocated to the male head of the household only, is a particular issue for polygamous wives, as polygamous families often have more children in them, which means there is less food to go round.

Water is also provided in tanks, delivered by truck, to the three relocated villages as part of the resettlement agreement. However, my participants explained that the company is unreliable, in terms of when it will deliver water, and when it does come it is often poor quality. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The company brought water for us but that is not right [...] That water, if you do your laundry with it, it will stain, that water you are meant to drink!' (fa, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

The loss of access to an adequate water source threatens women's ability to fulfil a number of their reproductive responsibilities, such as cleaning. This is a particular issue during the dry season, when women cannot collect rain water. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'Water is a problem during the dry season' (musuba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'The women are suffering in terms of taking care of the house, some domestic work, in terms of having water for this. The water they are having is no good for them, so the women are facing challenges in fulfilling their role' (kemine, Foria 05/06/2017).

'We the women are suffering more than the men [...] because of the house, domestic work, fetching water, taking care of the children, feeding, we need water for this, but the water is three miles away' (mama, Wondugu, 18/10/2016).

Due to the unreliability of the water provision, during the dry season, some women now source water from far away. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'To have water is very difficult. We are only relying on rain waters, after rainwaters, where we have to fetch water is very far' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/20/2016).

'The distance where the women are fetching water [...] is too much for them. In fact they are using motorbikes to fetch water. But not all women can afford that. Those that cannot afford to pay a bike, walk there, it's 2 ½ miles' (fa, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

As a result of the distance to the water source, some women have become dependent on men for water, either to fetch it for them, due to women's restricted mobility related to household duties (Boserup, 1989; Moser, 1993; Sikod, 2007) (see chapter 4), or to pay the transport cost for women to travel the long distance to collect it, due to some women lacking the financial ability. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We use motorbikes to get to where the water is which is 10,000 Leones. That's only for cooking, not for washing, not for anything. Just five gallons of water is 10,000 Leones and I cannot afford that so I have to ask my husband for the money' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/20/2016).

This illustrates how a reduction in women's ability to fetch water in order to fulfil their domestic duties independent of men, caused by MIDR, has created a critical juncture for women's sociocultural agency.

In addition to this, *dimusus* are less able to be initiated into *Segere* without a nearby water source such as a river, that is essential to the female initiation process (see chapter 1). Without being initiated *dimusus* cannot become *musubas* and cannot get married according to local cultural beliefs and values (cf. Mackie; 1996; 2000; Sagna, 2014). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The loss of rivers is a particular issue for women. In terms of the cultural aspect, the women are suffering more, because they are having big girls here now that are past the age of circumcision. As a woman who has not gone through the process will not be seen as an important person in society. After the process of the society business, men will come in to marry our daughters, so if your daughter is not circumcised she will not be recognised as a woman' (bimba, Chief, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'If women are not part of Segere, then men will not have respect for them because during the society process we older women learn girls how to behave, how to take care of their homes, all those things have gone so there is no respect for the younger women' (mama, Wondugu, 29/05/2017).

This illustrates how not having a river in the new villages has resulted in adult women feeling they are failing in their reproductive responsibility, to train girls in how to be *musuba* ('woman big'), and young women being perceived to be failing to gain adult status (cf. Thomas, 2000; El-Gibaly *et al.*, 2002; Sagna, 2014).

My findings show how MIDR causes a loss of certain resources needed for women to enact their social reproductive responsibilities, thereby creating a critical juncture for women's agency and the sociocultural system.

Feminine spaces enable collective women's agency

In addition to natural resources embodying and being drawn upon in the performance of women's sociocultural agency, my findings demonstrate how spaces, associated with nature, are also important for women's sociocultural agency (cf. McDowell, 1989; Spain, 1992; Massey, 1994; Robson, 2006). For example, in the three villages, certain 'natural' (organic) spaces, such as the village, river and bush are sacred to women, and access to them enables social networking, important for collective women's agency and individual and collective wellbeing (see chapter 1).

The structure of the pre-MIDR villages was described by participants to have formed in an organic way, that enabled women in particular to carry out their domestic

duties communally. In this sense the village was considered a female space. For example, houses were built in close proximity to kin members, clustered together in circular formations. This enabled female kin to help each other to perform their domestic duties, such as cooking. This was done outside in the space between the houses. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'In the old village I used to cook and talk to my women neighbours outside'
(musuba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

Cooking is a sociable activity in an open courtyard because women are able to chat to other women who are also performing their domestic duties in the same space and with women passing by (Robson, 2006). Having a cooking space in the open courtyard means women are less isolated than they would be in 'Western modern' houses, in which the majority of cooking normally takes place inside (Robson, 2006).

The river is also a space that enables women's collective agency and individual and collective wellbeing, as women travel to the river, fetch water and launder clothes together (Jackson, 1997a; 1998; Akiwumi, 2003). In addition to this, my findings show that women used the river and sacred bush for their *Segere* rituals (cf. Jackson, 1977a; Bjälkander *et al.*, 2012). During the time women spend in the *Segere* spaces, men do not come near them. *Musubas*, in particular, are therefore able to seek advice from older women about their personal problems and household matters away from men (Bjälkander *et al.*, 2012). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The rivers are very important in the life of Africans, for their cultural aspect. Women used to visit the rivers for their Segere rituals, the men will not come while this is happening, the women enjoy doing these things'
(kemie, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'For the women, there are some certain things we have to do in private. There we will discuss some things that we cannot discuss in front of the men. If you don't do it in secret it is like you are selling your pride, you cannot do

it in public, but when you have a discreet bush, no man will be around there because they know it is sacred for the women' (mama, Foria, 28/11/2016).

'When we want to call on Segere, we have to go to the bush. As women we can discuss and hold some meetings without men there' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

My findings show how the river and sacred bush are spaces where women from different life phases share domestic duties, problems and socialise (cf. Akiwumi, 2003; Bjälkander *et al.*, 2012; Dallman *et al.*, 2013). The river and sacred bush are therefore shown to be an important space for women's collective agency and individual and collective wellbeing.

Loss of female spaces

Through the process of MIDR, the structure of the village has been changed and women no longer have access to a nearby river or sacred bush. This has created a critical juncture for women's agency and the pre-existing sociocultural system as women are no longer able to share chores and socialise as they did before. For example, the houses have been built in straight lines and people have been allocated houses with no consideration of who they lived close to before (see Figure 4). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The structure of the new village is very difficult for us, particularly the women, because they are isolated. When we build our own, we have our own cousin, own brother nearby but now everyone is living separate' (bimba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

This illustrates how men built houses near to their family³⁴. Additionally, the quote emphasises how men built houses to suit women's lifeworlds, in terms of building them to enable the collective way in which women performed their domestic duties.

³⁴ Houses are built near to the husband's kin, this is also seen as the women's family as women become part of their husband's family upon marriage (Jackson, 1977a; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 – July 2017).

I argue that this is an example of how men respected women and their reproductive responsibility and how women performed their domestic duties pre-MIDR.



Figure 4 Houses built uniformly in straight lines (Source: Own, taken in Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016)

Figure 4 shows not only how the post-MIDR villages do not embody women in terms of no longer being round and feminine, but symbolises a non-communal way of living through the separation of houses. This is in line with a 'Western modern' lifestyle. This illustrates how MIDR creates a critical juncture and opportunity to change from the pre-existing customary sociocultural pathway to a new 'Western modern' sociocultural pathway.

This section illustrates the profoundly feminine essence of certain resources and physical structures associated with nature, that when changed by a non-organic trigger of social change, such as MIDR, creates a critical juncture for local women's sociocultural agency and individual and collective wellbeing. This challenges the assumption that women's reproductive responsibilities and associating women with nature, subordinates them and acts a barrier to women's wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; de Beauvoir, 1997), as women are shown to gain status and respect from fulfilling their gender roles that are related to nature.

MIDR is shown to create a critical juncture at the local level and opportunity for sociocultural change, through the rapid change in sociocultural-resources and physical structures that are needed to maintain the local sociocultural system (pathway) (Giddens, 1984; Mahoney, 2000). For example, the physical structure of the village and the house and access to food and a water source enabled women (and men) to abide by customary sociocultural rules, therefore enabling and maintaining the pre-MIDR sociocultural system. A change in these resources would be assumed to change the post-MIDR sociocultural system. For example, a change from the round communal structure of the village, that enabled women in particular to perform certain domestic chores together, to a 'Western modern' linear structured village, where there is not the same space(s) to perform domestic chores in the same way, one could assume would result in a change in women's action and therefore the sociocultural system of society (cf. Giddens, 1984). However, in contrast to critical junctures and path dependency writings which would assume powerful elites to be pivotal in shaping a post-MIDR 'Western modern' sociocultural system (Mahoney, 2000), also non-elite women are shown to influence and maintain the post-MIDR customary sociocultural system through their reactions to the change in certain resources and physical structures (see section 5.3). Women are thereby shown to be agents in influencing the post-critical juncture sociocultural system.

5.3 Women's diverse reactions

While I have shown how the loss of certain resources and physical structures associated with nature caused by MIDR creates a critical juncture and opportunity for change for women's sociocultural agency and the sociocultural system, my findings also show how women are agents in preserving the pre-existing sociocultural system post-MIDR. In this section, I show how different women, along life phase lines, have reacted to the change in specific resources and physical structures associated with nature in a diversity of ways. In so doing, women resist the threat this poses to women's sociocultural agency, in order to preserve aspects of their cultural identity and the sociocultural system.

The diversity of reactions includes first, women ***adapting to*** the transformation of certain physical structures by changing their behaviour in order to fulfil their domestic duties and maintain aspects of the sociocultural system. Through the process of changing their behaviour (***adapting***), although women are reacting in order to maintain their cultural identity and the sociocultural system, women change aspects of the sociocultural system, that is maintained through people repeating the same behaviour (Giddens, 1984) (see subsection 5.3.1). In contrast, women have also ***passively*** and ***actively resisted*** the transformation of other resources and the threat this poses to the way they enact their reproductive responsibilities and their women's agency, in order to preserve the way in which they perform their reproductive responsibilities and the sociocultural system (see subsection 5.3.2 and 5.3.3). It is worth noting briefly that my participants did not suggest women had ***avoided*** the sociocultural effects as they did the economic ones by leaving the village (see chapter 4). However, those who have left the village have ***avoided*** the change in certain sociocultural resources and physical structures whether intentionally or not. Though by leaving the village they have also enabled sociocultural change for themselves and the community.

5.3.1 Adapting to a loss of culturally valuable natural resources

My findings show how *musubas* in particular have ***adapted to*** the change in resources and physical structures, such as the village and the loss of food by changing their behaviour, thereby demonstrating their ***adaptive*** capacity (Brown and Westaway, 2011). I argue that while *musubas* have changed the way they perform certain domestic duties, they have maintained their responsibility for them and therefore on the whole contributed to the preservation of the pre-MIDR local sociocultural system.

For example, the change in physical structure of the village has changed the way *musubas* in particular are able to collectively perform some of their domestic duties, such as cooking and, that, pre-relocation, they did outside with other women. Due to the transformation of the structure of the village, in terms of the lack of space around the houses and people no longer living close to kin, and the provision of houses with allocated spaces inside to perform domestic work, *musubas* are now performing

certain domestic duties on their own, inside their house. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We women used to share our [domestic] duties, such as cooking. While we did this, we would, have fun together. Now I do these duties inside my house alone' (musuba, Wondugu, 08/11/2016).

I argue that due to a transformation in the physical structure of the village and houses, some women are abiding by and accepting new 'Western modern' social norms, such as performing domestic duties alone inside. This has resulted in women living more secluded lives, in which they spend less time with other women. In this sense, MIDR has caused a loss in women's collective agency and individual and collective wellbeing, for *musubas* in particular and altered the communal aspect of the sociocultural system. However, although women are performing certain domestic duties differently, they remain responsible for them. In so doing, they maintain their sex-defined reproductive responsibilities that are central to women's cultural identity and the sociocultural system (Giddens, 1984; Butler, 1990). Women are therefore shown to be agents in shaping the post-critical juncture sociocultural pathway in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing.

Women have also ***adapted to*** the loss of food caused by MIDR and remained responsible for the related domestic duties, including feeding the family. Both women and men respondents explained that women and men have ***adapted to*** the loss of food, and accepted the way the mining company allocates food to the male head of the house, instead of per cooking pot, that represents the woman (see 5.2.2). However, women remain responsible for feeding the family. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Even though they [(the mining company)] give the food to the men, we women are in charge of feeding our families' (na, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

In this sense, giving food provisions to the men has not changed the gendered aspect of who is responsible for feeding the family. This is illustrated first by some women

(who are able) purchasing extra food for their families to eat (see chapter 4) in order to fulfil this responsibility better. Second, by the cooking pot still symbolising a woman and her reproductive responsibility of feeding her family. This demonstrates *resistance* to change in sex-defined reproductive responsibilities and the preservation of pre-existing sociocultural norms post-critical juncture.

While some women who have existing financial and social capital have been able to *adapt to* the loss of food by getting additional food for their family elsewhere, others have not, and have become reliant on the provisions from the mining company (see chapter 4). As a consequence of this, the way in which women without access to extra food prepare food and feed the family has changed. First, there is no longer enough food to eat as many times a day as they did prior to being relocated. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We only eat once a day since coming here. What we get given by the mining company for a day is all we have to eat. Talking of extra food, if you don't have the money, because we don't have anywhere to plant these things, we cannot get them. But in Old Ferengbeya we were having vast land, we could even farm in our backyard, so we women were cooking and our families were eating three times a day. We women are responsible for feeding our children and now I cannot' (na, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

The polygamous family structure is notably altered by the loss of food and the way food is provided by the company, as multiple wives, in one house, are no longer able to each cook in their own cooking pot for their children. Now one woman per house prepares for everyone, in one cooking pot, once a day, in an attempt to make the food go further. As a result of the loss of food, women's lifeworlds have been altered, as they spend less time cooking, and they feel they are not providing enough food for their family. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'I am the second wife, I have seven children but my husband's first wife is doing all the cooking since we came here. This is because there is not enough

food for us to each cook, but my children's stomachs are still not full as they should be' (musuba, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'My husband has three wives, I am the last wife. We do not have enough food, so I am not cooking for my children, that is the job of the first wife now. I feel I am letting my children down' (musuba, Wondugu, 08/11/2016).

This illustrates the hierarchy between polygamous wives and arising tensions between them as a result of a change in resources caused by a non-organic trigger of social change, such as MIDR. The 'first wife' (who the husband married first and is often the eldest) has the authority to decide who does the cooking. My findings show since being relocated, first wives, in polygamous families have taken charge of the cooking, which is one of the most important responsibilities for women to be considered good wives and mothers. This has resulted in younger polygamous wives, not being able to fulfil this domestic duty and therefore losing pride in themselves and a sense of individual wellbeing. However, men have not lost respect for women who are not able to provide food and cook for their family because they did this pre-MIDR and they understand the post-MIDR situation. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The men are showing understanding because when we were up there we used to take care of the cooking and feeding the family. It has not changed anything about the way men see the women because they can just show understanding to us' (mama, Wondugu, 29/05/2017).

'It used to be, that when the man plays his own part, then the woman plays her own part but this has changed since moving here. We know that it is not the women's fault that they can't do all the things they did before and the women too know that it is not the fault of the man, so we are just trying to get by, through the love we have for each other' (fa, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

Some women from varying life phases have also **adapted to** the loss of the river that they use for *Segere*, by either borrowing a river from another village, or using a

room in their houses to perform *Segere* rituals, including *dimusu biriye* (initiation into *Segere*). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'We have to go to the people that have the rivers and say that we have Segere business and they will allow us to do it. Last year, Ferengbeya and Wondugu did it and they allowed them and this year again they will do it, so we will join with them this time to initiate our children' (mama, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'When we get chance, we do it in a room inside one of our houses' (musuba, Foria, 05/06/2017).

My findings show that *musubas* in particular, in the three relocated villages have **adapted to** the loss of specific culturally valuable natural resources such as the structure of the village and food and resisted the threat this causes to their reproductive responsibilities by changing their behaviour. In addition, some women of varying ages were found to **adapt to** the loss of river and bush used for *Segere*, in order to continue with their cultural practices. This shows how women have **adapted** in order to continue performing their sex-defined reproductive responsibilities. In so doing, they have contributed to maintaining sex-defined sociocultural norms and this aspect of the sociocultural system. However, in performing these reproductive responsibilities in different ways, they also defy sociocultural rules and in so doing alter the sociocultural system, to some extent (cf. Giddens, 1984). In comparison to the post-critical juncture economic system(s) being transformed through the process of MIDR, the sociocultural system has largely been maintained by women's reactions.

5.3.2 *Passive resistance*

In the previous subsection I show how *musubas* are **adapting to** the change in physical structure of the villages and the way in which food is allocated. In contrast, some *mamas* in particular, though not exclusively, are **passively resisting** the threat MIDR brings to their lifeworlds. This is caused by a change to certain resources associated with nature, such as the house and water. In so doing, *mamas* are shown to be agents in decolonising their lifeworlds, preserve their cultural identity and the

sociocultural system post-critical juncture, in their efforts to maintain and enable individual and collective wellbeing (cf. Habermas, 1987).

Through everyday modes of *resistance* *mamas* have *resisted* the 'Western modern' houses that have been provided by the mining company, and the 'Western modern' lifestyle they represent. For example, in contrast to *musubas* changing the way they perform their domestic duties (see subsection 5.3.1), some *mamas* have maintained the way they perform them. For example, some *mamas* have built an outdoor cooking space (see Figure 5), so as to continue performing this domestic duty as they did before, cooking outside with other women. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'In our origin we women did our duties like cooking outside. When we came here, some of us have built a place to carry on doing this. I cook on an open fire. I do not know how to cook inside' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).



Figure 5 Customary outdoor cooking space (Source: Own, taken in Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016)

In performing women's domestic work, such as cooking in public, makes women and their important and physically strenuous reproductive responsibilities visible.

Thus eliciting respect from men and enhancing women's status within the community.

In addition, some women in the *mama* life phase have also *passively resisted* the new houses and the 'Western modern' lifestyle they represent by building customary houses in the same style as their pre-resettlement houses (see Figure 6), in order to maintain their customary way of life. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'I loved the old house so much because it is a sign of a good memory. That is why my husband built me this one [(see Figure 6)]. Seeing this I can remember Old Ferengbeya and how I used to live' (mama, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).



Figure 6 Customary style house built in New Ferengbeya (Source: Own, 19/10/2016)

The findings presented in this chapter demonstrate a difference between the way people react to the change in certain resources and physical structures and the social change this incites, along life phase lines. For example, *musubas* were found more likely to *adapt to* the change in the structure of the village and the house by changing

their way of enacting their household domestic duties. In contrast, *mamas* were found more likely to **resist** the change in the way of performing certain domestic duties, that is incited by the change in the structure of the village and the house, in order to maintain their customary lifeworlds. I argue, that due to the length of time *mamas* have spent living in a place prior to being relocated, they have gained a greater sense of attachment to both the physical place and the way of acting in this place (cf. Roos *et al.*, 2014). As a result of this, *mamas* are reluctant to **adapt to** a change in physical structure and resources and more likely to recreate the customary version(s) of these, in order to preserve their customary way of behaving and therefore their lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987; Gilbert, 2006; Roos *et al.*, 2014). This shows how *mamas* are active agents in shaping the post-critical juncture sociocultural pathway.

In comparison to different women, along life phase lines, reacting differently to the change in certain physical structures (the house and the village) and resources (reduction of food), the majority of women from all life phases that I interviewed and observed have **resisted** using the toilets that have been built inside the houses as this is seen as dirty (see subsection 5.2.2). Instead, women use the indoor toilets as storage (see Figure 7), and people use outdoor latrines that they have built for themselves (see Figure 8), or the open bush, when they do not have space for an outdoor toilet. In so doing, people have decolonised their lifeworlds and are preserving their customary beliefs and values (cf. Habermas, 1987).



Figure 8 Traditionally built outdoor wash-yard (Source: Own, taken in Wondugu, 08/11/2016)



Figure 7 Toilet used for storage (Source: Own, taken in Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016)

Toilets inside houses is a particular concern for women, due to it being their responsibility to keep the house clean. As a result of this, the *dimusukuntigi* of Wondugu, who is responsible for the needs of the women, spent her own money on building toilets for the village, away from the houses. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The mammy spent her own money to construct new toilets' (fa, Wondugu, 08/11/2016, interview conducted in Krio).

Women have also *passively resisted* the poor quality and inadequate water provision from the mining company, by sourcing water from elsewhere. During the dry season, when women are unable to put their buckets out to collect rainwater, women have decided to get some of their water for some of their needs, such as consumption, cooking and cleaning clothes, from a distant natural water source. This is because the water the mining company delivers in tanks, is too dirty to be used for consumption and certain other duties. Due to the distance of this water source, some women are dependent on men either to fetch water for them, or to pay for them to be able to take transport to fetch water (see subsection 5.2.2). My findings show how men are now involved in the domestic duty of fetching water, which was described as being performed exclusively by women pre-MIDR. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The source of the water is in the man's pocket' (fa, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

This implies a change in gender roles post-critical juncture and the potential for change in gender relations in subsequent pathways. However, in contrast to men being involved in fetching water resulting in a social change of who is responsible for this domestic duty and related domestic duties, these remain a woman's responsibility. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'The women remain responsible for the cooking and fetching water. You can't cook without fetching water' (bimba, Ferengbeya, 25/01/2017).

'Finding water, taking care of the children remains the responsibility of the women. But we are finding it very difficult, more especially the water aspect' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

My findings show that although women have *resisted* the loss of resources and continue to be responsible for the same domestic duties as they were pre-MIDR, some women, who lack access to the necessary resources, feel that they are less able to fulfil certain social reproductive responsibilities, due to not being able to perform them in the same way they did pre-MIDR. This demonstrates how women being able to fulfil their domestic duties is an important aspect of women's sociocultural agency and individual and collective wellbeing in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. This is in contrast to the argument that sharing domestic duties with men and having less time consumed by domestic work such as collecting water enhances women's agency and wellbeing (Harcourt, 2009; Koolwal and Van de Walle, 2013).

I argue that although certain natural resources have changed and reduced women's ability to perform their domestic duties as they did pre-MIDR, the sociocultural expectations in terms of sex-defined reproductive responsibilities have remained the same. One reason for this may be due to the speed at which people's access to natural resources such as food and water has changed and sociocultural norms have been unable to change at the same pace. This may mean that social expectations, of who is responsible for different reproductive responsibilities and therefore the sociocultural system will change to match the change of resources over time. Alternatively, certain sociocultural expectations may be maintained by people continuing to aspire to abide by them. This raises questions about whether social systems (including economic, sociocultural and political) are solely enabled by people's actions or whether they can also be maintained by people aspiring to abide by the rules, even if they are unable to. For example, fetching water may remain a woman's duty, even if women are not able to fulfil this in practice. If sociocultural norms for women endure even though they cannot fulfil them, women would be likely to experience a reduced sense of wellbeing. This highlights the critical role of women's agency in maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing.

5.3.3 Active resistance

In contrast to predominantly *musubas* **adapting** and predominantly *mamas* **passively resisting** changes to different culturally valuable natural resources caused by MIDR, my findings also show that women from all life phases have **actively resisted** by protesting the loss of an accessible water source (see chapter 6). The *dimusukuntigi* from each of the three villages together organised relocated women to come together to protest the loss in access to a water source. In this sense women in the *mama* life phase have led this **active mode of resistance**, but women from all life phases have been involved. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We are leaders of the women because all of the women need representing. We organised all the women to come together to block the train line' (dimusukuntigi, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

In addition to protesting the loss of accessible water for their domestic duties, women are also particularly concerned by the loss of the river and the threat this poses to the maintenance of *Segere*, which is particularly important to women's status within the community. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'As a result of being relocated, initiation into Segere no longer happens as it did. The women's culture has died. That has effected more especially the women' (bimba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

Women's active mode of reaction to the loss in access to a water source compared to other resources and physical structures associated with nature demonstrates different patterns of reactions depending on the resource type, related to how important it is for maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing (Jackson, 1998; Akiwumi, 2003). A loss of water for women to be able to perform their domestic duties and *Segere* rituals acts as a barrier to women fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities. In this sense, the loss of a natural water source caused by MIDR poses a challenge to women's sociocultural agency. While this highlights the detrimental effect MIDR has on women and their sociocultural agency, my findings also show how women are performing political agency through their **active**

resistance to the loss of water. This demonstrates how women's relationship with nature enables women's political agency by legitimising their need to preserve it (Norgaard, 2000). I explore the political aspect of women's *active resistance* in chapter 6.

5.4 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter contribute to feminisation of mining theory by showing how different women have reacted in diverse ways to changes in access to resources and in physical structures associated with nature, that MIDR causes, to preserve their cultural identity and lifeworlds in their efforts to maintain individual and collective wellbeing (Giddens, 1984; Habermas, 1987).

In this chapter I show how MIDR creates a sociocultural critical juncture. In contrast to critical junctures and path dependency concepts that assume political elites are pivotal in shaping post-critical juncture pathway(s), local women are shown to shape the post-MIDR sociocultural system. I show how different women, along life phase lines, have reacted in different ways to the social effects of MIDR. My findings show that *musubas* are more likely to *adapt* their behaviour in response to a change in certain natural resources, such as the structure of the village, in order to maintain their reproductive responsibilities thereby abiding by the sociocultural rules of society, such as being responsible for cooking, and maintaining the sociocultural system. However, by abiding by 'Western modern' sociocultural norms, such as cooking inside, as opposed to performing domestic duties outside collectively with other women, *musubas* also, to some extent, defy the sociocultural rules and alter the sociocultural system (cf. Giddens, 1984; Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014).

In contrast, *mamas* are more likely to *resist* the change in the way of performing domestic duties incited by the change in physical structures and resources caused by MIDR and preserve the customary sociocultural system. For example, some *mamas* have *passively resisted* the change to the structure of the house, that poses a threat to their lifeworlds, by building customary structures to continue conducting their domestic duties in the same way as pre-MIDR. In this sense, *mamas* have

decolonised their lifeworlds by *passively resisting* the new houses and the 'Western modern' lifestyle they represent (Habermas, 1987). In addition, *mamas* have also organised protests against the loss of a natural water source, to preserve women's lifeworlds and maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing. Life phase is therefore shown to be a key factor in the performance of women's sociocultural agency and the maintenance and marginal transformation of the sociocultural system.

The findings presented in this chapter contribute to feminisation of mining theory in two prominent ways. First, in showing how women's agency is enabled by women fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities. Thereby challenging the argument that associating women with nature subordinates them and acts as a barrier to women's wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997). Second, in showing how different women, along life phase lines, have reacted in diverse ways to changes in resources and physical structures in order to preserve their reproductive responsibilities. Thereby showing that women are not a homogenous group dominated by the degradation of the natural environment for capitalist gain (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987, Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993; Nightingale, 2006) or vulnerable to the most detrimental social effects of non-organic triggers of social change such as MIDR (Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014).

By *adapting*, *passively* and *actively resisting* the change in access to resources and physical structures associated with nature, women have contributed to preserving their reproductive responsibilities, aspects of their cultural identity and the local sociocultural system. This is in contrast to the way in which women reacted to the economic effects of MIDR, that transformed the post-MIDR economy (see chapter 4). One potential explanation for this is that relocated women, and *mamas* in particular value their pre-existing sociocultural values and system over their pre-existing economic ones. Through women's efforts to protect their sociocultural agency, sociocultural customs and the sociocultural system are made more resistant to change (cf. OECD, 2005). Women's *active collective resistance* to MIDR also influences the political system, to which I now turn (see chapter 6).

CHAPTER SIX: WOMEN'S POLITICAL AGENCY EXPOSED THROUGH ACTIVE RESISTANCE

6.1 Introduction

Having demonstrated how women's sociocultural agency is affected by MIDR in the preceding chapter, in this chapter I address how women's political agency is performed in the post-MIDR context. In so doing I respond to my research aim:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

I achieve this by examining how different women's *political* agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's political agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing at the local level. The findings presented in this chapter particularly address research objective 3: to examine the diverse nature of *women's reactions*, which includes adaptation, avoidance, passive and *active resistance (including involvement in mining-related social movements) to MIDR* and its effects and how these reactions differ along life phase lines, interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. I do this by showing: (i) how relocated women have performed their women's political agency by *actively resisting* the rapid loss of an adequate water source caused by MIDR; (ii) how relocated women's protests draw on pre-existing modes of political agency including performing *Segere* rituals, which they performed on the trainline that is used to transport iron ore and (iii) how women's involvement in *actively resisting* the loss of water caused by MIDR varies along life phase lines, related to cultural beliefs and life experience.

However, in this chapter I also respond to objective 1: to demonstrate the *specific effects of non-organic triggers of social change* by examining how *women's agency is altered by MIDR, through the rapid change in access to resources and in physical structures it causes*, specifically the structure of the village and the house and access to land and *water*. I do this by showing how women draw on their pre-existing political agency to resist the rapid loss in access to water.

I also address objective 2: to examine the ways in which *exogenous, international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems shape MIDR* and the *conflicts and impacts this has on local economic, sociocultural and political systems*. I address this by showing how because women, on the whole, tend to draw on pre-existing modes of political agency, their participation in the anti-mining social movement in Kolansongoia chiefdom has not transformed the local political system to a large extent. However, I highlight how *musubas'* participation in the public protest signifies a slight change in the political system, due to young women not speaking out in public in front of men pre-MIDR. Additionally, how making *Segere* rituals public, as their mode of protest, could lead to a change in women's political agency and therefore the local political system, due to their political power related to *Segere* relying on the secrecy and fear of *Segere* rituals.

In this chapter I compare the relocated women's anti-mining protest to three other groups of protestors that are involved in the same broad anti-mining social movement in the Kolansongoia chiefdom. As a result of the negative effects of large-scale commercial mining at the Tonkolili mine, such as exploitation of mining employees, dispossession of relocated people of their land and other natural resources, an anti-mining social movement has emerged in the Kolansongoia chiefdom (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Within this social movement are a number of groups of different people with a diversity of grievances, related to the aforementioned negative effects that are broadly to do with mining (cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2008). These groups include, relocated women, relocated men and non-relocated men working for the mining company and their male and female relatives.

Significant to this thesis, is how these different groups have protested about mining and its social effects in different ways. Namely, relocated men alongside non-relocated men have created road blocks in Bumbuna town, non-relocated women alongside these men have performed their style of secret society rituals in town and relocated women have protested on their own, performing a *Segere* (specific Kuranko women's secret society) ritual on the trainline that transports iron ore for exportation (Human Rights Watch, 2014; own fieldwork observations, August 2016-July 2017). I compare the protests of the aforementioned different groups of people in three aspects, causal factors, style of resistance and outcome. Relocated women's unique modes of protest, namely protesting about the loss of water to preserve their customary women's gender roles, protesting as a women only group in the style of *Segere* rituals and their demands being met, are influenced by a number of sociocultural factors, including life phase, cultural beliefs and life experience. This shows that women's political agency is influenced by a number of sociocultural factors in addition to MIDR, demonstrating that it is not only MIDR that is influencing women's political agency.

This chapter is structured and contributes to feminisation of mining theory, as follows. First, I highlight the existence of women's political agency prior to MIDR in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria. Then I compare the trigger of the relocated women's protest to that of the relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's, showing that relocated women are protesting about their own unique grievances, relating to the loss of water in order to preserve their lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995). Whereas relocated men tend to be protesting being dispossessed of their land with limited remuneration (Harvey, 2003) and non-relocated women and men tend to be protesting the exploitation of mining employees (Harvey, 2003). Next, I discuss the style and outcome of the relocated women's protest compared to the relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's. In so doing, I show how women (both relocated and non-relocated) draw on their pre-existing power bases, such as older women's decision-making capacity and *Segere*, in their modes of resistance. In so doing, I highlight existing women's political agency within patriarchal systems. I then discuss why the women's protests are perceived to be more successful than the men's from different perspectives and

what this means for women's agency and the political system. I argue that while relocated women have been successful in mobilising and have had their demands met, they have not gained political agency outside of the social movement and therefore the political system has remained largely unaltered.

6.2 Women's political agency pre-MIDR

Within the mining discourse there is a lack of exploration into women's political agency prior to mining (Spence and Stephenson, 2009). Thereby enabling the assumption that prior to mining, women are largely confined to the private domain and men are active in the public sphere, thus women's pre-existing political agency is hidden (see Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2015). As a result of this, when women are involved in anti-mining social movements there is a tendency to exaggerate women gaining political agency and challenging their customary gender roles exclusively through their resistance to mining (see Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015). As such, other factors influencing how women perform their women's political agency, including pre-existing power bases in mining communities is largely unknown (Spence and Stephenson, 2009).

6.2.1 History of women's political agency

In Sierra Leone there is a long history of women publicly enacting their women's political agency, that predates the colonial period (Steady, 2006). For example, women in the south east of the country have been elected as Paramount Chiefs (Steady, 2006). Women in Freetown were involved in national movements for the decolonisation of Africa and civil-war peace negotiations (Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009). Women have taken lead positions in local and international NGOs working in the country (Steady, 2006). Women are involved in both local and national politics (Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009). Many women, excluding those from the Creole ethnic group and some living in major cities, are members of women's secret societies that enable women's political agency (Jackson, 1975; Steady, 2006). An example of this is, women reportedly performing secret society rituals to draw rebels

out of the bush during the civil war (Mazurana and Carlson, 2004; Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009; Abdullah, *et al.*, 2010).

A power hierarchy exists within Kuranko society that is demarcated by gender and also life phase (Jackson, 1977a; Coulter, 2009; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Prior to and post-MIDR, women gain status by fulfilling their gender roles, including giving birth and raising children, as well as from life experience (see chapter 5). As a result of this, *mamas* are respected by women and men and granted some decision-making power within the community (Coulter, 2009). This is demonstrated in each village having a *sutigi* (male village chief) and a '*dimusukuntigi*' (female village leader). The *dimusukuntigi* is elected to represent the needs of and make decisions on behalf of the women in the village (see chapter 1). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'I have been a dimusukuntigi for almost 12 years. The community selected me to become their dimusukuntigi. Some of my responsibilities are this, if any kind of programme wants to come to the community I will go there to know what is the essence of that programme and how this will affect the community [...] Often the women feel marginalised, so often I do stand up to agitate for that' (dimusukuntigi, Wondugu, 08/11/2016)

The long standing role of the *dimusukuntigi* and her involvement in community decision-making illustrates how some women in the *mama* life phase are regarded as community decision-makers prior to being relocated for mining. In contrast, *musubas* that are unmarried or do not have children lack political agency. This is because, when women have children they make decisions on behalf of their children, thereby increasing their decision-making power. Women's decision-making power increases with the amount of children they have, often in correlation with life phase and status within the community (Jackson, 1977a; Coulter, 2009; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

My findings show that women and men from Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria perceived women to have had political agency prior to MIDR. For example, some

nas and *mamas* had experience of taking political roles during the war, such as decision-making within the house and entering the labour force due to men being away (Coulter, 2009). As a result of this, women gained economic, sociocultural and political decision-making power within the community during the civil war and some women have maintained this political status to this day (cf. Steady, 2006; Coulter, 2009). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'We realised during the war that we can do what the men can do. We the women had to make decisions when the men were away fighting in the war and it is through that, women and men realised that women too can make decisions' (mama, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'Due to the war, they brought in some gender acts to help women. In those days (prior to the war) women were not encouraged to go to school. If you are the first born girl child they would send you to work on the farm. You are not to think of going to school but now we are sending our girls to school, so they will be able to get good jobs and speak out' (musuba, Foria, 02/02/2017).

This illustrates how limited formal education acts as a barrier to women's political power (Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009) and how women are attempting to overcome this by educating their girl (as well as their boy) children, as a result of the civil war. I thus argue that life experience, such as civil war, is also an influencing factor on women's political agency, in addition to MIDR (cf. Bellows and Miguel, 2009).

6.2.2 Pre-existing women's political collective agency

Research participants told me that women had political collective agency prior to being relocated. For example, women met in areas in the village, at the river and in the sacred bush, to discuss and make decisions about issues that concerned them (see chapter 5). *Segere*, as an example of a women's secret society, was a particularly significant power base for women in the pre-MIDR villages (cf. Steady, 2006). *Segere* acted as a power base for women in four prominent ways in the pre-relocated

villages. First, women that have been initiated into *Segere* are political agents because they have decision-making power within *Segere*. Second, women also gain collective (political) agency from *Segere* (see chapter 5). For example, women can unite against a grievance that one or more women have, together (Coulter, 2009). Third, *Segere* is a major vehicle in maintaining the local sociocultural system. For example, during the process of girls being initiated into a secret society, they are taught by *nas* and *mamas* about their customary domestic roles (see chapter 5) (Steady, 2006). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'During the society process we older women teach our girls how to behave as women. In terms of how to take care of their home, their children and their husband' (mama, Wondugu, 29/05/2017).

'Segere is where they taught girls how to take care of their houses, how to take care of their children. It is the training ground for women' (bimba, Foria, 28/11/2016).

This illustrates how *Segere* members are agents in enabling and maintaining the sociocultural system. Fourth, women that have been initiated into *Segere* are acknowledged to have authority in the community (Jackson, 1977a; Steady, 2006; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). Men accept women that have been initiated into *Segere* as decision-makers and see them as political agents as they believe women in their *Segere* capacity have power over men (Jackson, 1977a; Steady, 2006; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Women, when they are doing their Segere business, we men are afraid. We know they have power and can put a curse on us if we do something they don't like' (kemine, Foria, 02/02/2017).

Both women and men perceived women to have a political voice prior to being relocated. However, this was not considered in the MIDR negotiations by exogenous elite decision-makers, in which the mining company made assumptions about men

speaking on behalf of women in rural patriarchal mining communities. As a result of this, women were not invited to participate. This is illustrated in the following quotes from the *dimusukuntigi* of Ferengbeya, the *sutigi* of Wondugu, the male Chiefdom Councillor that represents the national government and the Company-Community Relations Officer:

'We the women have our own needs and opinions but the mining company is not interested in hearing them. They don't even ask us for our opinions' (dimusukuntigi, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

'Some authorities and stakeholders came to the meeting and discussed some of our problems with us, the men. The differences are women are seriously marginalised [...] They have not been given the voice to speak out. The company and the government authorities are considering the men more to that of the women' (sutigi, Wondugu, 08/11/2016).

'The men talk on behalf of the women in these relocated villages' (male Chiefdom Councillor, 13/07/2017).

'Kurankos and Limbas are strongly patriarchal. Men make the decisions, speak on behalf of the women and women follow. Men trample the women. That is why we don't ask the women' (male, formally educated, Sierra Leone national, Company-Community Relations Officer, 04/07/2012, interview conducted in English).

These quotes illustrate how local women and men perceived women to have women's political agency prior to being relocated, in contrast to the literature that assumes women lack political agency in patriarchal communities (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). Additionally it shows how exogenous elite decision-makers, such as the mining company and the state, make incorrect assumptions about women's lack of political agency.

Consistent with this misunderstanding of local women's pre-existing political agency, is what has been referred to as the 'cultural argument' (Keenan *et al.*, 2016). The 'cultural argument' refers to how elite decision-makers, such as mining companies, justify following local social norms versus attempting to encourage equality when organising decision-making processes (Keenan *et al.*, 2016). For example, whether local social norms, such as men speaking on behalf of women, should be followed or whether it is the responsibility of exogenous decision-makers to challenge local social norms and encourage gender equality, such as including local women in decision-making. When discussing the 'cultural argument', there is an underlying assumption that the local social norm in patriarchal society is that women do not participate in decision-making (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014; 2015; Keenan *et al.*, 2016). Thus the 'cultural argument' has been used to justify excluding women from decision-making processes (Keenan *et al.*, 2016).

I challenge the assumption that within patriarchal society women have no political agency, by showing how women had a role in decision-making processes prior to and after MIDR. I therefore argue that by excluding women from MIDR negotiations, elite decision-makers actually defy local social norms. For example my informants told me that women in the three villages had pre-existing modes of political involvement, including women discussing issues in women-only meetings and *mamas* representing the needs of women in decision-making processes (cf. O'Faircheallaigh's, 2013b). In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria the mining company has incorrectly assumed that women do not have political agency due to them not speaking out in public, in the same way that men do, and by failing to recognise women's unique modes of political agency.

In ignoring women's pre-existing decision-making capacity, the implementers of MIDR exclude women from formal negotiations and create a critical juncture for women's political agency (cf. Pandolfelli *et al.*, 2008). This results in women's needs being ignored and their lifeworlds and cultural identity being threatened (see chapters 4 and 5). For example, the importance of water to women and their lifeworlds was not adequately considered in the MIDR process. In the next section, I

show how relocated women have *actively resisted*, through both formal (letters) and informal (protesting) negotiation techniques (O'Faircheallaigh, 2011; 2013a), the negative social effects of the loss of water caused by MIDR. Thus showing how MIDR has created a critical juncture and incited women to protest and how women's political agency is being performed in a post-MIDR context.

6.3 Gendered modes of resistance to MIDR

Since the commercial exploratory phase of iron ore began at the Tonkolili mine in 2005, an anti-mining social movement has developed in Kolansogoia chiefdom (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Within this social movement there are a number of different groups of people with different grievances about the same broad anti-mining issue (cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2008). This includes relocated women protesting about the colonisation of their lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995), relocated men protesting about accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003) and non-relocated women and men protesting accumulation by exploitation (Harvey, 2003). My findings show how within the same social movement, in the same context, different groups of people have protested about different issues, in different ways, such as relocated women on their own performing a *Segere* ritual on the trainline, relocated and non-relocated men building road blocks in Bumbuna town and non-relocated women alongside the men performing secret society rituals in town. My findings also show how these different protests have resulted in different outcomes, namely the demands of the relocated women being met and the other protests being violently quashed by the police and their demands being ignored. This is in contrast to the argument that within the same context, social movements will be similar in cause, method and outcome (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015), as I highlight disparities in these aspects for different protestors within the Kolansogoia chiefdom anti-mining social movement.

In this social movement, there are a number of groups of people with their own specific concerns about mining and the negative effects of the extractive industry at the Tonkolili mine. These different groups include the following. First, and most relevant to this thesis, is relocated women from Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria.

These women are resisting the loss of access to an adequate water source and the social effects of this, including it posing a threat to women's sociocultural agency (see chapter 5) (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995). The second group within the social movement are relocated men from Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria who are protesting about the loss of land and promises made, including fair remuneration for their land and good living conditions, as part of the resettlement agreement that have not been kept (Harvey, 2003; HRCSL, 2012; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). The third group involved in the social movement, is male mining employees and male and female relatives of mining employees, most of whom live in the main town of Bumbuna. This group is concerned with low wages and poor working conditions for those employed by the mining company (Harvey, 2003; HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). Non-relocated women were also involved in the protests in Bumbuna town. Consistent with extractive industries' literature, these women are protesting on behalf of male mine employees, asking for higher wages and better working conditions (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009).

In the following subsections I compare the relocated women's protests to the relocated men's protests and the non-relocated women's and men's protests in Bumbuna in three aspects - trigger, style and outcome - to show how MIDR incites gendered modes of resistance. In so doing, I also show how the way women's political agency is performed is influenced by specific contextual factors. For example, relocated women are drawing on their pre-existing power bases, this includes *mamas'* decision-making power and *Segere*, in their modes of resistance. Relocated women's political agency is therefore shown to be influenced by a number of factors, in addition to MIDR. These factors include life-phase, cultural beliefs about *Segere* and the post-civil war context.

6.3.1 *Trigger of protest*

According to my participants, the main cause for relocated women joining the anti-mining social movement was the loss of an adequate natural water source caused by MIDR and the negative social effects this has on women and their lifeworlds (cf. Harvey, 1989; Escobar, 1995). For example, a lack of water makes fulfilling

women's gender roles such as cooking more difficult (cf. Habermas, 1987; Agarwal, 1992; Bhanumathi, 2002; Jenkins, 2014). In addition being initiated into *Segere* is not possible without access to a natural water source (see chapter 1). Thus relocated women have protested in order to preserve their customary gender roles and the patriarchal system (cf. Jenkins, 2015).

More specifically, the cause for relocated women organising to block the trainline, in protest, was a delay in water being delivered by the mining company. The mining company is supposed to deliver water by tank every month as part of the mining agreement (Human Rights Watch, 2014). However, in September 2013, the water supply from AML was late in being delivered (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

Although the women are not satisfied by the water that is provided by the mining company (previously AML and currently Shandong) in tanks and would prefer to live within close proximity to a river as they did in their pre-resettlement locations, the lack of provision symbolised the lack of consideration the company has for women and their lives. As a result of women's dissatisfaction with the water provision and having to collect water from far away, women have collectively protested, by performing a *Segere* ritual on the railway track³⁵. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'It started from this water problem [...] We are protesting that we need help from the company. We need good water facilities' (dimusukuntigi of Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

'What will kill us now is this water issue. Water is the most difficult thing for us women, because we are responsible for taking care of the home and our family and we need water for that' (mama, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

This demonstrates how relocated women's **active resistance** is triggered by the critical juncture that MIDR caused to women's lifeworlds and cultural identity and their objective to protect this. This highlights how, if exogenous players at the

³⁵ Other than knowing that the protest was following the delay of water provision in September 2013 (Human Rights Watch, 2014), the exact date of the relocated women blocking the railway track is undocumented.

international and national level ignore local sociocultural norms this can affect people's lifeworlds and wellbeing. Relocated women are therefore protesting to protect their customary gender roles, such as being responsible for the house and the family's social needs, in order to maintain individual and collective wellbeing.

Comparing diverse triggers of protesting

While relocated women tend to be protesting about the loss of water, relocated men tend to be protesting about the loss of land and broken promises made by the company (Human Rights Watch, 2014). This is illustrated in the following quotes:

We, the men complained that we are unhappy about the situation, with the promises they made not being kept. In terms of the houses not being fine and our lives here not being good' (kemie, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

'They used to tell us that the land we will meet in New Ferengbeya will be a moist land, meaning it will have a good yield. This is the way they used to fool us by saying that when we move to New Ferengbeya we will see life as very easy, like those that are living in Freetown. But in reality, the only way that we can use the land is by receiving subsidies. They lied to us' (fa, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

On the one hand, both relocated women and relocated men tend to be protesting about the loss of resources needed to fulfil their gender roles, i.e. water for women to fulfil domestic duties and access to fertile land for men to fulfil their role as provider (see chapter 4 and 5 for detail on how different resources are drawn upon in the enactment of women's and men's gender roles).

On the other hand, women and men are concerned with the loss of different resources for different reasons. For example, women are protesting the loss of water and the colonisation of their lifeworlds (cf. Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995), while men are protesting being dispossessed of resources, such as land, that others are financially benefiting from (Harvey, 2003). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'They gave my father just 500,000Le for his land. That is small money for 3 acres of land and now the mining company and the government, are making money off our land' (kemie, Ferengbeya, 11/10/2016).

Relocated men's protests are therefore triggered by accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003).

In contrast, non-relocated women's and non-relocated men's protests in Bumbuna were triggered by accumulation by exploitation (Harvey, 2003), as they have protested about poor working conditions and low wages for mining employees (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). This shows how the relocated women's protest was triggered by women's unique grievances and objective to decolonise their lifeworlds and demonstrates the diversity of grievances along gender lines within the same anti-mining social movement. This is in contrast to the literature that argues women protest on behalf of men and their issues in anti-mining social movements (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009).

Water being central to relocated women's protests is consistent with the argument within ecofeminist literature, that women's relationship with nature, i.e. how certain natural resources are drawn upon in the enactment of their gender roles and therefore the maintenance of the patriarchal sociocultural system (see chapter 5), and desire to protect it enhances women's political agency (Shiva, 1988; Nightingale, 2006; Jenkins, 2015). This is further evidence for the argument that women's relationship with nature does not subordinate them (also see chapter 5). For example, in 1986, women in the Doon Valley, Uttarakhand, India, started a 'Chipko'³⁶ movement to blockade mining operations that were damaging the natural environment, that local women depended on to survive (Shiva, 1988). I argue that non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR, may incite gendered modes of *resistance* by causing a loss or degradation to valuable natural resources that are needed in the enactment of women's lifeworlds that they seek to preserve.

³⁶ The 'Chipko' movement, also known as 'embrace the tree' movement refers to an ecological movement with the objective of resisting forest degradation through non-violent political action (Shiva and Bandyopadhyay, 1986).

6.3.2 *Style of protest*

In addition to the triggers of protests differing along gender lines, my findings show how women and men also protest the loss of different resources in different ways. Modes of protest therefore vary along gender lines. How MIDR incites differing styles of protest are explored along the lines of gender, life phase and life experience in this subsection.

Women draw upon pre-existing power bases

According to my participants, relocated women's form of **active resistance** was non-violent and largely draws on pre-existing political power bases. These power bases include the political status of *mamas* and the power of *Segere* (see section 6.2). For example, *mamas* have pre-existing decision-making power and influence due to their status within society (Coulter, 2009). In addition, *Segere* acts as a political power base for all women that have been initiated in a number of prominent ways (Jackson, 1977a; Coulter, 2009; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017). This includes, women speaking out in front of other women in *Segere* meetings; women gaining collective agency through uniting about women's issues; women being recognised as agents in enabling and maintaining society by training girls how to be wives and mothers; and men being afraid of the power women have when performing *Segere* rituals (Jackson, 1977a; Steady, 2006; own fieldwork observations, August 2016 - July 2017).

My findings show how relocated women, in the three villages, draw on these pre-existing power bases in their anti-mining activism. For example, the *dimusukuntigies*, who have decision-making power, from each of the three relocated villages have formed a committee to represent the problems the women, in particular, are facing, as a result of being relocated. This is represented in the following quote:

'We, the three dimusukuntigies set up this committee because we are the leaders of the women. Thinking that all of the women need representing, but we must have someone that can write the letters to the company, so that is why we have Sulaiman' (dimusukuntigi, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

This quote illustrates both women's political initiative in seeking to represent women's grievances in an official manner and also their limited capacity and reliance on a man due to not being able to write. A lack of formal education is a common barrier to women entering politics at many levels in Sierra Leone, as well as in other African countries (see Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009, for a list of factors limiting women's participation in African politics, including female illiteracy). My findings show how women are attempting to overcome this barrier, at least in part, by employing a male literate secretary to enable them to formally communicate with decision-makers at the national and international level (see below).

Relocated women's modes of protest

The relocated women's first mode of protest was to send letters to the relevant authorities, including the national government's Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and the international mining company, outlining their grievances and demands. These letters were written and sent on behalf of the three *dimusukuntigies* by a male educated man in Ferengbeya. However, these letters did not result in any action being taken to resolve the water problem in the relocated villages. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'As part of my responsibility as secretary in this committee, I am writing letters on behalf of the women who are concerned with this water issue. However the Paramount Chief and the company did not come to any kind of solution about the water based on these letters' (educated, *fa*, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016, interview conducted in English).

As a result of the ongoing water problem, the three *dimusukuntigies* organised women from the three relocated villages to come together and protest, by blocking the trainline. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'We protested for the company to give us water by blocking the rail line. We organised all the women to come together to block the trainline' (*dimusukuntigi*, Ferengbeya, 18/10/2016).

'The three dimusukuntigies organised all of us women to come together and block the train because we need water' (na, Foria, 02/02/2017)

The relocated women sang and danced naked in the style of *Segere* rituals as their mode of protest. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'We women danced naked on the trainline because men are not allowed to see us doing our Segere dances. They are afraid of what will happen to them if they do, so we know this will move them to respond to our demands' (na, Wondugu, 29/05/2017)

'Women are doing it in line with Segere, so it is like they are doing Segere' (sutigi, Foria, 02/02/2017).

According to local culture, using *Segere* rituals as a mode of protest is a very powerful political tool because men are afraid of women when they are performing *Segere* rituals (Jackson, 1975; 1977a).

The relocated women's mode of protest, that was in the style of their female *Segere* rituals, is related to their main grievance, the loss of water. *Segere* embodies water, the cultural value of water to women and therefore, to some extent, the threat MIDR poses to women's cultural identity (see chapter 5). This is because water is an essential natural resource in *Segere* rituals. *Segere* rituals are central to women's cultural identity and this is being threatened by the loss of water caused by MIDR (see chapter 5). However, according to my participants, *Segere* rituals embodying their main grievance, water, is not the reason why relocated women used this as their mode of protest. This is in contrast to other social movements, in which women have drawn on symbols in their modes of protest to represent what they are protesting about. For example in a Chipko social movement in 1979, women came together in Tehri, India, with empty water pots, to symbolise and protest against the deepening water scarcity (Shiva, 1988).

In contrast, women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria used *Segere* rituals as their mode of protest not to represent their concerns over water, but because it is as *Segere* members that women have most political influence. This is comparable to women's anti-mining protests in Bolivia, in which women used domestic symbols as 'protesting tools', such as carrying children, broomsticks and pots and pans, as these represent motherhood, women's domesticity and women's role in the house, which is where women were respected as decision-makers and had power and influence (Mercier and Gier, 2007). The relocated women are therefore shown to draw on existing power bases in their modes of protest. Comparable to the relocated women, relocated and non-relocated men did not use modes of protest that symbolised their grievances. However, in contrast to the relocated women, they did not draw on pre-existing power bases such as their identity as male provider, that men gain respect and decision-making capacity from (see chapter 5). Instead, relocated and non-relocated men protested together, building roadblocks and causing disruption in town, that ended in a violent manner that has been likened to the civil war (HRCSL, 2012). This implies a distinction between the modes of protest that women and men use along gender lines.

Women drawing on secret society rituals in their modes of protest is common in Sierra Leone (Steady, 2006). For example, women used secret society rituals as part of their protests to contribute to ending the civil war in Sierra Leone and to gain political positions in local and national elections (Steady, 2006). I therefore argue that MIDR does not incite a new style of resistance, but triggers women to draw on their existing political agency and protest in line with cultural norms.

My findings show how Sub-Saharan African women draw on existing political power bases in their *resistance* to the effects of non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR (see also Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009). This contributes to feminisation of mining theory by shedding light on women's pre-existing political agency prior to MIDR. This is in contrast to the literature that largely presents women as being transformed from political "nobodies" to political agents through their involvement in decision-making and *resistance* to non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR (Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015;

Jenkins, 2014; Keenan *et al.*, 2016). This is likely to be because there is a lack of research into how women lived their lives and performed their women's agency prior to a non-organic trigger of social change. I argue that understanding women's pre-existing decision-making modes and capabilities would enable women's actual participation in both formal and informal negotiations concerning non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR. This contributes to the literature that recommends enhancing women's participation in development-related decision-making (see for example, Keenan *et al.*, 2016; UN Women, 2019; UNDP Sustainable Development Goals, 2019).

Relocated men's and non-relocated people's modes of protest

Similar to the relocated women, the relocated men's first mode of resistance was to report their grievances to the authorities. For example, according to my participants and the Human Rights Watch report (2014), in 2012, male residents and male village elders from Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria reported their grievances to the Paramount Chief, but their demands were ignored. However in contrast to relocated women, as a result of their demands not being met, the relocated male protestors joined the striking mining employees and their supporters' protest, that took place between the 16th and 18th April 2012, in Bumbuna. This is different from the relocated women who protested on their own.

The protest in Bumbuna was a larger anti-mining public demonstration compared to the relocated women's protest, the former of which turned violent when protestors and state police met up (HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014). Male protestors set up a roadblock in the town and non-relocated women danced through town in the style of women's secret society rituals (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Specifically, on 18th April 2012, at the height of the tension, a group of non-relocated women from Bumbuna performed a secret society ritual in an attempt to limit the violence. The women urged the men indoors as they moved peacefully through the streets of Bumbuna (HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014). According to Amnesty International and the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL), both regarded as independent institutions, neither women nor men protestors carried any weapons or used violent protesting methods until the police

used tear gas and live ammunitions against them (Human Rights Watch, 2014). In response to this, some male members of the community threw sticks and stones (Human Rights Watch, 2014). This highlights the unique style of women's active social resistance, i.e. both relocated and non-relocated women protested peacefully and less disruptively in the style of secret society rituals compared to relocated and non-relocated men, who caused disruption in town by setting up roadblocks. It should be noted that relocated women also blocked transport links, in the form of protesting on the trainline, however this caused less disruption to both mining and civilian lives. This is due to the trainline only being used to transport iron ore, whereas roads in Bumbuna are used for all other mining and civilian transport, therefore blocking roads in Bumbuna caused a greater level of disruption. This is in contrast to the argument that within the same context, modes of protest will be consistent (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015).

While both relocated and non-relocated women's modes of protest were in line with their women's secret society rituals and were similar to the way women protested to end the country's civil war and bring about peace (Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009), the non-relocated women's protests were met with violence from the state police. The protest in Bumbuna, that included non-relocated women, non-relocated men and relocated men, was likened to the violence of the civil war (HRC SL, 2012). This demonstrates how the violent and non-violent nature of protests cannot be attributed to gender alone.

There is an argument that the violent or non-violent nature of a protest is a significant influencing factor in the outcome of a protest. For example, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) argue that non-violent protests are more likely to be successful in terms of having their demands met, compared to protests that involve physical violence. This argument could be used to explain why the demands of the relocated women's non-violent protest were met, compared with the demands of the relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's protests, that were violent in nature. The literature assumes that it is the protestors that dictate the violence of a protest and therefore control whether it is violent or non-violent, thereby suggesting that the protestors dictate the outcome (Stephan and Chenoweth, 2008). However, in the case

of the relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's protests in Bumbuna, the protestors were described as using non-violent modes of protest and the state police ensuing violence in their modes of response (HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014). This challenges the argument that non-violent modes of protest are more likely to be successful, in terms of having their demands met. Therefore it is not the non-violent aspect of the relocated women's protest alone that dictated the outcome. The differing outcomes of the protests are discussed in the following subsection.

6.3.3 Outcome of protest

My findings show that within the same anti-mining social movement, the responses to different protests and protestors varied significantly. This is significant because within the same context, the overall outcome of a social movement is assumed to be the same for all protestors (Bebbington, *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). This is related to the argument by social-movement scholars (such as Bebbington, *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015), that the outcome of anti-mining social movements depends on factors such as the strength of the protest, the capabilities of the mining company and the position of the state. The latter of which often depends on the importance of mining in the national economy (Bebbington, *et al.*, 2008). One would therefore assume that all protests that come under the anti-mining heading, would be quashed by the state in Sierra Leone. This is due to large-scale mining being encouraged by the government as an economic development strategy to become a so-called 'developed nation' (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012).

However, the relocated women protestors had their demands met by the company, unlike the other protestors, relocated men and the non-relocated women and men, in the same broad anti-mining social movement. A number of different factors have influenced the outcome of the different anti-mining protests. This is consistent with the argument that context-specific institutions and circumstances influence social interactions and outcomes (Flint and Shelley, 1996; Akiwumi, 2012).

Relocated women's demands met

Both women and men participants perceived the relocated women's protests to have been more successful than the relocated men's and non-relocated people's protests. The relocated women's protests are perceived to be more successful because their demands were met, at least in part, by AML providing water to the three villages and Shandong continuing to do so, to some extent. In contrast, the relocated men's grievances continue to be ignored. Similar to the outcome of the relocated men's protests, mining employees' and their relatives' demands about improving employment conditions for workers have been unsuccessful. The mining company promised to address their workers' demands, including a 16% pay increase, however changes to company management has enabled them to avoid these agreements (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Steinweg and Römgens, 2015). In contrast, the relocated women's demands have been met by the company in the form of water being delivered by tank to Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria since the protest and the company agreeing to look for a sustainable solution to the lack of water in the relocated villages.

One explanation for relocated women protestors' demands being met over others, may be due to the economic cost of meeting their demands being less than that of other protestors' demands. For example, delivering water to the relocated communities is likely to be less costly compared to meeting the relocated men's demands, of providing additional remuneration for land, or increasing wages and improving working conditions for company employees. Thus, meeting the demands of the relocated women protestors may be simply an affordable business decision. Cost-benefit analysis assumes that the economic cost of meeting the demands of a social movement defines the outcome, in which capital corporations always prioritise maximizing economic profit (Ross, 1999; Luders, 2006). In contrast to this, I argue that the reason for relocated women's demands being met likely goes beyond a simple cost-benefit argument. The divergent outcomes of the different protests cannot be explained by the cost-benefit argument alone, because there was no need for the mining company to meet the demands of any of the protestors. If the outcome of the protests were dictated by cost-benefit, all protestors' demands would have been denied and all protests should have been quashed by state police.

My findings indicate that there were a number of factors that influenced the relocated women's demands being met. One such factor was the male Paramount Chief recommending that the company meet the relocated women's demands. The Paramount Chief, as the custodian of the land (see chapter 1), is an intermediary between the local people and the mining company and influences how the company responds to local people's demands (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Therefore, protestors are directing their demands and appealing to the Paramount Chief as much as the mining company. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Because of the women protesting naked on the trainline, the Paramount Chief went to the company and told them if you do not help these people, it will come with problems. Just because of those strikes, those riots they [the company] start to make some moves, in terms of meeting the water demands of the women' (dimusukuntigi, Foria, 18/10/2016).

This is in contrast to the relocated men's protests and the non-relocated women's and men's protests in Bumbuna that were quashed by the police through violent means (HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014). This is demonstrated in the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone setting up the Bumbuna Inquiry, to investigate the resultant brutality of the protest in Bumbuna (see HRCSL, 2012).

My research highlights increasing tensions between relocated men, the mining company, state police and the male Paramount Chief, related to commercial mining and its effects in Kolansogoia chiefdom. For example, the HRCSL (2012) reports that the mining company paid state police for their loyalty to them. However, the mining company reported to Human Rights Watch that the state police demonstrated unnecessary levels of force towards community members (Human Rights Watch, 2014). In addition, a number of relocated men blamed the Paramount Chief for giving the police orders to respond violently to resistance from host communities. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'For men, nowadays the company men and us local men don't like each other' (kemine, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'When we [the men] want to protest, they stigmatised us and they beat us. Like this man [stood next to me] is a victim, he was locked up because he wanted to protest. The company and the police are to blame for the violence, but the police were ordered by the Paramount Chief. And the police went with the company vehicle and flogged us and took us to the police station and we were locked up for three months consecutively. It comprised of 142 claimants, including 12 from Ferengbeya' (fa, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016).

'The overall feeling is that the Paramount Chief is not on our side' (fa, Ferengbeya, 08/10/2016)

'The fact is we don't have the power to fight it, because you cannot fight someone with an RPG if you only have a knife, it's not possible, you will not win such a war, so we are the way we are because we have no other choice' (fa, Wondugu, 02/11/2016).

These quotes illustrate relocated men feeling powerless against the state and the mining company. This shows how non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR, can have negative consequences for social relations between players at different levels of society, including local, national and international (Muradian *et al.*, 2003; Massey, 2004; Akiwumi, 2012; Larmer and Laterza, 2017). In contrast, women are perceived to be able to influence elite decision-makers.

Both women and men in the relocated villages believe that relocated women's protests have been more successful due to women having power when performing *Segere* rituals, that local men are afraid of. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'Women have to take the lead role because men fear the women more, they have this in them that whenever the women are protesting they normally do something extraordinary, like stripping themselves naked. Of course, they

are not only stripping themselves naked they are having some ceremony. For African men, if you set eyes on them, you will have some kind of curse placed on you. That is why we men are taking the back bench while the women take the lead role. The women have the power and the company listen to them very much' (kemine, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'The point here in Africa is that we are afraid here of women because of the culture, the society. This protesting in Africa, they will just [...] protest naked [...] because the men cannot face that, they cannot be seeing that because seeing that is a taboo [for men]. The women are happy to do it, because they know they have more power in this. The last time when the company was not listening to us, the women protested and after they started giving us supplies again, so if they want to forget about us, the women are ready to do the same thing again' (sutigi, Foria, 02/02/2017).

This illustrates the fear that local men have of *Segere* and thus the belief that this fear influenced the Paramount Chief's decision to recommend the relocated women's demands be met by the international mining company. In contrast to this, the Company-Community Relations Officer explained that the company had met the relocated women's demands because these were legitimate grievances (cf. Tilly and Tarrow, 2015). This is illustrated in the following quote:

'The women protested on the rail line due to the water issue and now the company is looking for a sustainable solution because they appreciate that this is a problem for the women' (male, educated to undergraduate degree level, Company-Community Relations Officer, 04/07/2017, interview conducted in English).

This highlights divergent belief systems of local communities and exogenous players, including for example, international mining companies and formally educated (in this case to undergraduate degree level) Sierra Leoneans. The mining company not fearing *Segere* is further evidenced by the company not meeting the demands of the non-relocated women who also protested using secret society rituals

(HRCSL, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2014). While relocated women who protested in the style of *Segere* rituals, had their demands listened to by the state (seen in the Paramount Chief recommending their demands be met) and the mining company (seen in their demands being met), the non-relocated women's protest in Bumbuna, that was also in line with women's secret society rituals, was violently quashed by state police (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

Police marched behind the non-relocated women performing their secret society ritual, physically and emotionally intimidating them, thereby disrespecting the women's secret society (HRCSL, 2012). As a result of this, non-relocated women's efforts to restore peace and calm in Bumbuna failed (HRCSL, 2012). Drawing on the reasons for the relocated women's protests being successful, i.e. financially reasonable, legitimate demands and fear of secret society rituals, non-relocated women's protests may have failed due to their demands being deemed unreasonable by the state and mining company and the fact they were protesting alongside men may have diminished the power of their women's secret society style of protest (that men are not meant to see).

The HRCSL (2012) reports that the violations of women's and men's human rights that took place during the protests on 16th to 18th April 2012, are part of a systemic problem that results in human rights violations when there is active social resistance to private companies from host communities (HRCSL, 2012). This re-emphasises the significance of the unique peaceful and successful outcome of the relocated women's protest.

Broader social outcome of relocated women's protest

My findings show how relocated women protestors have been successful in two prominent ways. First, they have been successful in mobilising on their own. Second, they have been successful in terms of having their demands met. The latter of which shows how relocated women have been able to influence elite decision-makers more so than men. Drawing on the notion that the outcome of a social movement is influenced by the power and agency of involved players, the relationship between them and the structure and systems of mining societies, this

would suggest that relocated women have greater power and political agency than relocated men in this context (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015; Middeldorp *et al.*, 2016; Larmer and Laterza, 2017). This challenges the argument within extractive industries literature that women are left out of mining negotiations and decision-making (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014), therefore contributing to feminisation of mining theory.

On the one hand, women being more able to influence mining-related decisions, than men, would suggest that women's political agency, women's customary gender norms and therefore the political system of patriarchal society are being transformed through women's *active resistance* to MIDR. Put simply, MIDR heightens women's (political) agency. This is consistent with the argument that women involved in anti-mining social movements are resisting patriarchy as well as capitalism (Mercier and Gier, 2007). This is due to the assumption that women do not have a public political voice prior to mining in patriarchal society (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015). In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, some women's political status has been strengthened as a result of successfully mobilising and influencing mining-related decisions. For example, women are now acknowledged and encouraged by men to take the 'lead role' and have become the voice of the community in certain mining negotiations. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

'That is why we think the women should take the lead role because they, the mining company, can adhere to them more than the men' (kemine, Foria, 02/02/2017).

'The company wants to ban food and supplies, all those things. That is what we are just hanging on for, the day they say 'we will not give you any supply' then we women will know what to do again' (dimusukuntigi, Foria, 18/10/2016).

This is particularly significant for *musubas*, who lack decision-making capacity (see section 6.2). Therefore, I argue that *musubas*' political agency has been enhanced by protesting, to some extent. However, it should be recognised that this is limited, as

all women have always had political agency (varying in degree related to life phase) when performing *Segere* rituals. Additionally, *musubas* were instructed by older women to protest and therefore were not performing political agency independently.

It should not be assumed that when women are involved in anti-mining social movements, all women gain political agency, resist patriarchal norms and transform the political system, as a result of being exposed to the patriarchal, capitalist extractive industry, as is the tendency within the anti-mining social movement literature (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015). The extent to which women resisting MIDR has transformed different women's political agency needs further consideration. For example, *mamas* had decision-making power and influence within the community prior to MIDR (see section 6.2), I therefore argue *mamas'* political agency has not been enhanced as *musubas'* has in the three relocated villages. Additionally, the fact that all women have drawn on pre-existing political power bases, reduces the extent to which women's protests have transformed women's political agency and the political system of society. This includes, *mamas* leading the **resistance** and the style of protest being in line with *Segere* rituals, both of which women gained political agency from pre-MIDR. This shows that women's political agency has not been enabled solely through women's **resistance** to MIDR. I therefore argue that non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR, prompt some women to draw on their pre-existing power bases to resist the negative social effects they cause.

Additionally relocated women did not report experiencing political change in other parts of their life as a result of the relocated women's protest (cf. Denov, 2006; Steady, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007). In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, *musubas* have proven themselves as capable political agents within the social movement, but they have not gained decision-making power in other aspects of their life. Therefore their customary gender role has remained outside of the protest. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'Even though we are doing this protest and men have seen us do it, my life has not changed from protesting. Our freedom to make decisions has

actually reduced as a result of being relocated here' (musuba, Ferengbeya, 19/10/2016).

This may be, in part, due to women's modes of protest being largely in line with customary gender norms, related to *Segere* in this case, that limits women's political status and political agency beyond a certain point (Spence, 1998; Tripp *et al.*, 2009). Similarly *mamas* have not experienced a transformation in their gender role, as they already had decision-making power and influence prior to MIDR. This is illustrated in the following quote:

'We already had this status, as old women we had respect from the younger ones. We can make decisions because we have life experience, so we know what is right. We also have power from doing our Segere business as women. That has not changed as a result of this protest that we did. Life is just the same in terms of making decisions. If anything we have less freedom to make decisions here because of lacking some things we need, compared to the old villages where we were able to live more freely' (mama, Wondugu, 18/10/2016).

This illustrates how women's gender roles and the patriarchal system of society, that women were seeking to protect through protesting MIDR, have by and large been maintained. This is in contrast to the argument that when women take part in political activism they challenge their customary gender norms (Merithew, 2006; Steady, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015).

I argue that the local political system has largely remained the same because outside of the protest(s) women have not gained decision-making capacity. This is because both *mamas* and *musubas* have largely protested in line with existing local political norms and expectations, therefore not transforming their political agency. For example, *mamas* are accepted as decision-makers and are entitled to speak out in public. Additionally, all women that have been initiated into *Segere* have a degree of political agency. However, although women's *active resistance* is largely in line with local cultural and political norms, the fact that women have made *Segere* rituals

public as a form of protest is particularly significant, as this challenges certain cultural norms. For example, the essence of women's secret society rituals is that they are not to be seen by non-secret society members, particularly men (Steady, 2006). Men's fear of the consequences of not abiding by this secret society rule, enables women's political power (Steady, 2006). I therefore argue that by performing *Segere* rituals in public, as a mode of political protest, women risk threatening their existing *Segere* power base. This then has the potential to reduce women's political agency that is related to *Segere* and the existing political system of society with time.

6.4 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter contribute to feminisation of mining theory, by showing how women that have been relocated for mining perform their women's political agency, as active players in anti-mining social movements in patriarchal, rural Sub-Saharan Africa. In so doing, I challenge three prominent arguments within the extractive industries discourse and the social movement literature. These are, first, women protest on behalf of men (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009). Second, women lack decision-making power and political agency in patriarchal society (Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Jenkins, 2014). Third, through protesting, women challenge their gender roles (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015).

In this chapter I show how MIDR incites gendered modes of protest by comparing relocated women's protests to relocated men's and non-relocated women's and men's protests, within the same anti-mining social movement, in three aspects, cause, style and outcome. My findings show how relocated women's protests are caused by their own distinct grievances. While relocated women and men were both protesting to protect their customary gender roles, at least in part, their grievances were different. For example, women were protesting about the loss of an adequate source of water in the new villages, as this is central to women's lifeworlds. Relocated women's protests were therefore caused by the threat of colonisation of women's lifeworlds, caused by MIDR (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995).

Comparatively, relocated men were protesting about the loss of land, being poorly remunerated for their land and broken promises made by the company (Harvey, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2014). In contrast, non-relocated women and men have protested about low wages and poor working conditions for mining employees (Harvey, 2003).

My findings also show how different women draw on their different pre-existing political power bases in their style of protest. In so doing, I highlight two aspects of women's political agency, first, that women had existing political agency pre-mining. Second, that different women have different political power bases that they draw on in performing their political agency. This includes the status and political agency of *mamas* in particular and women more generally having political agency related to *Segere*. For example, *mamas* led women's **active resistance** and organised women to protest in the style of *Segere* rituals. This illuminates the fact that women have political agency prior to a non-organic trigger of social change, such as MIDR. In contrast to the literature that suggests women's involvement in mining negotiations, and therefore mining, transforms women's political agency, I argue that MIDR acts as a trigger for women to perform their pre-existing political agency. My findings show that women's pre-existing political agency differs for different women and is shaped by a number of sociocultural factors, including life phase, cultural beliefs and life experience, that vary for different women and by context, thereby reemphasising the heterogeneity of women. I argue that understanding women's pre-existing decision-making modes and capabilities would enable women to participate meaningfully in negotiations concerning non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR.

The findings presented in this chapter show that relocated women's protests are perceived to be more successful than men's and other women's protests in terms of outcome, as their demands, to have water provided by the mining company, were met subsequent to them protesting (longevity of this remains to be seen). However, the reason for the relocated women protestor's demands being met is less clear. This is related to a number of different theories concerning the success of a protest from a number of different perspectives, including scholars on the topic, the state, the

mining company and relocated women and men. For example, relocated women and men believe this was due to Sierra Leonean men fearing *Segere* rituals. In contrast, representatives of the state and the mining company believed women's demands to have been met due to them being legitimate. In addition, it is worth considering the financial aspect of the different demands from a business perspective. For example, delivering water, is likely to be less costly than providing additional remuneration for land as demanded by the relocated men or increasing wages and improving working conditions for company employees. Therefore the company meeting the demands of the relocated women protestors is likely to have, at least in part, been influenced by the cost-benefit factor (Ross, 1999; Luders, 2006).

I have argued that relocated women from different life phases have proven themselves to be capable political activists within the anti-mining social movement in Kolansogoia chiefdom. However, in contrast to the literature that suggests women gain political agency and threaten their customary gender roles through their involvement in anti-mining social movements (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015), I show how *mamas* in particular, have drawn on pre-existing political power bases in their political activism, therefore showing that MIDR has not transformed women's political agency for women in the *mama* life phase. On the other hand, *musubas*' political position has been enhanced by proving themselves as successful anti-mining political activists. However, despite women being acknowledged as political agents in influencing mining-related decisions, I argue that MIDR has not reshaped women's political agency for *musubas*, *nas* or *mamas* as they had political agency as *Segere* members and outside of the anti-mining social movement their decision-making capacity has not been altered up to now and therefore the local political system remains largely unchanged. This is comparable to *mamas* in particular, although not exclusively, preserving the sociocultural system by performing their sociocultural agency, for example their reproductive responsibilities, in the same way as pre-MIDR (see chapter 5). This is in contrast to the local economic system being transformed through women changing the way they perform their economic agency in response to MIDR (see chapter 4).

In the next and final chapter, I conclude my findings.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In this thesis I have shown:

How women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

While MIDR, as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change is shown to create a critical juncture and threaten women's agency, my findings demonstrate how different women react to this and perform different aspects – economic, sociocultural and political - of their agency in a diversity of ways in a post-MIDR context. In this thesis different women are distinguished on the grounds of life phase in particular, which is interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. Through their diverse reaction to MIDR and its effects, women are shown to play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing for themselves and their community.

I have further shown how MIDR is a unique example of a non-organic trigger of social change worthy of independent research to better understand the role of women in mining zones and highlight three important factors to consider. First, MIDR initiates a critical juncture through the rapid change - loss, transformation and provision - in access to certain resources and physical structures it causes. This rapid change in resources includes the loss of access to a natural water source, which has threatened women's ability to fulfil a number of their reproductive responsibilities. The rapid change in the physical structures, includes the provision of 'Western modern' houses, which are incompatible with local sociocultural norms. For example, these houses are not conducive to women performing certain domestic duties communally with other women outside of the house. My findings show that

some of the resources and physical structures provided through the process of MIDR are inappropriate both in terms of the resource or physical structure itself, for example the ‘Western modern’ house being adverse to women’s customary lifeworlds, and the way in which certain resources are provided, such as food being allocated to men instead of women. In this thesis I have shown how the rapid change in resources and physical structures, causes a critical juncture for women’s lifeworlds and individual agency, to which they may react in different ways.

Second, how MIDR is shaped by exogenous international and national capitalist, ‘Western modern’ and patriarchal systems that are disparate to local economic, sociocultural and political systems. As a result of this, local, national and international agents and systems are found to conflict throughout the MIDR process. For example, the capitalist market-driven economy that MIDR is a part of conflicts with the local subsistence-based economy. This is particularly significant in the context of globalisation, in which interaction between different countries, agents and systems is increasing (Lechner and Boli, 2012).

Third, different women *adapt*, *avoid*, *passively* and *actively resist* the effects of MIDR in myriad creative ways in order to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing. For example, some women, who have existing financial or social capital, have *adapted* to the capitalist market-driven system that MIDR imposes. Some women, who have access to the necessary resources, have *avoided* this by leaving the village(s) to continue with their subsistence-based lifestyles. *Mamas* in particular have *passively resisted* the ‘Western modern’ way of life that the provisioned houses represent by building customary mud-thatch houses. Many relocated women have *actively resisted* the loss of access to water and the threat this poses to women’s social agency by drawing on pre-existing modes of political agency to protest. Significantly, although different women particularly along life phase lines react differently to the effects of MIDR, the outcome(s) of women’s reactions collectively, in terms of preserving or diversifying the corresponding social systems, illustrate the value of certain resources, physical structures and aspects of women’s agency over others. For example, through their actions, including *passive* and *active resistance* women preserved their sociocultural agency and the sociocultural system of society on the whole, compared to many women

transforming their economic agency and the local economy. This implies that the sociocultural aspect is the most valuable element of women's agency as this is central to women's status in the community, which in turn enhances their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

These three factors show how this non-organic trigger of social change can create a critical juncture and how women react to this in a diversity of ways. For example, women with access to resources needed to maintain their subsistence-based lifestyles left the village. In contrast, women with existing financial or social capital, predominantly *nas* and also some *musubas*, ***adapted to*** the change in economic resources to become agents within the imposed capitalist market-driven system. *Musubas* were also found most likely to ***adapt to*** the change in sociocultural resources, namely the structure of the house. In contrast, *mamas* were found to resist the change in structure of the house. Additionally, all relocated women were found to ***actively resist*** the change in access to their most important resource, water, led by *mamas*. This illustrates that women are not a homogenous group that is monolithically vulnerable to the most detrimental effects of mining, instead showing them to be agents in shaping the outcome of MIDR in order to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing.

I have drawn on decolonising methodologies, including feminist and indigenous ideologies (outlined in chapter 2), for example conducting research methods in line with local cultural norms, as far as possible, in order to reveal the agency of local women who have experienced MIDR. The empirical chapters provided the evidence and analysis to demonstrate the critical role of women's agency in relation to my research objectives.

In chapter 4, I showed how different women, on the grounds of life phase and interrelated with status and existing social and financial capital, have enacted their economic agency in different ways, through their diverse responses to the rapid loss of certain resources, namely land and water caused by MIDR and related to the international and national capitalist and patriarchal systems by which it is bound. For example, some women with existing financial or social capital have ***adapted*** and become agents in the capitalist market-driven system. Other women who lack access

to this capital, have become dependents of the capitalist market-driven system. Additionally, some women who have access to the necessary resources, have *avoided* the imposed capitalist-dependency system by leaving the village to continue with their subsistence-based lifestyles. In so doing, women are shown to be agents in the (re)shaping of the post-MIDR economic system(s).

In chapter 5, I examined how women's reproductive responsibilities, including both giving birth and domestic duties, are central to women's cultural identity and status. I show how MIDR poses a critical juncture to this through a change in resources and physical structures, including the structure of the village and the house, access to food and an accessible water source. I show how different women on the grounds of life phase seek to preserve their cultural identity in different ways and to varying extents. For example, some *musubas*, while still being responsible for customary domestic duties, perform some of these in different ways, namely cooking inside the house. In contrast, older women perform their domestic duties in the same way as they did pre-MIDR, namely cooking outside in the company of other women. On the whole, women's sociocultural agency and the sociocultural system is shown to be largely maintained through women still performing the same domestic duties, including cooking and feeding their family, whether in a new way or the customary way. Therefore women's pre-existing sociocultural agency is shown to be valued, or resistant to change, more than women's pre-existing economic agency, as the former is preserved and the latter is transformed.

Chapter 6 examined how local people's modes of *active resistance* to MIDR are gendered in the following aspects: trigger, style and outcome. I show how women draw on pre-existing political power bases in their modes of *resistance* to demonstrate how women's political agency is performed in a post-MIDR context. For example, *mamas* leading the protest as they have pre-existing decision-making power. Additionally, although I show *musubas* are performing their political agency in a slightly new way, by speaking out in public in front of men, they do so as a member of *Segere*, in which they have always had political agency. I therefore argue that women's political agency and the political system is largely unchanged by women's active resistance, as this existed pre-MIDR.

In this part of the conclusion I return to my overarching research aim:

To show how women's agency is critical to maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing after experiencing a non-organic trigger of social change.

The findings presented in the three empirical chapters offer an original theoretical contribution to feminisation of mining theory. First, by showing how different women perform their economic, social and political agency in different ways in the post-MIDR context in order to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing. This illustrates that women are not a homogenous group and that women should not be presented as vulnerable victims to the most detrimental aspects of mining and MIDR. Cultural factors are shown to influence the way agency is performed, thereby emphasising the importance of understanding the cultural context when planning and orchestrating a development initiative, such as mining. For instance, life experience can both enable and limit women's agency. In the case of Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, the civil war influenced the way in which some *nas and mamas* in particular performed their agency. For some, their experiences during the war have enhanced their agency, for instance taking a more active role outside of the domestic sphere, including farming and speaking at public meetings that they did not do prior to the war (Coulter, 2009). Additionally, some women who became heads of their households as a result of the war, have experienced a reduction in their economic agency due to the mining company only providing food to male heads of households. This shows the diversity of women's needs and abilities that should be considered when implementing a development initiative.

Second, I have shown how resources and physical structures associated with nature, namely the structure of the village and the house, land and water, embodied women's agency pre-MIDR and the critical juncture that MIDR initiates through the rapid change in access to these, is central to the way women perform their post-MIDR agency. My findings show how women's reproductive responsibilities, including giving birth and domestic duties that are associated with nature, give women status, pride and agency. Women's agency is therefore shown to be dependent on their relationship with nature and access to natural resources (see

chapter 5). This challenges the nature/culture debate, which argues that associating women with nature subordinates women and acts as barrier to women's wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997).

Third, I have shown how the change in these resources is bound in contrasting international and national capitalist, 'Western modern' and patriarchal systems and how women react to this in a diversity of ways, including *adaptation*, *avoidance*, *passive* and *active resistance*. In so doing women are shown to be agents in both preserving and transforming different aspects of their agency and the local economic, sociocultural and political systems of society (Giddens, 1984). For example, I observed women on the whole have changed the way they enact their economic agency in response to the change in cash-economic resources, although this is done in a diversity of ways (see below), which has resulted in a transformation of the local economy.

In contrast to this, women on the whole have maintained their pre-existing sociocultural agency, in terms of continuing to abide by customary sociocultural norms, including performing their domestic duties such as cooking and cleaning (although they do this in different ways), thereby preserving the customary sociocultural system. Similarly, women's political agency has not been significantly transformed as a result of *actively resisting* MIDR, as women drew on pre-existing political power bases in their modes of protest. Although *musubas*' political agency has been enhanced by speaking out in public in front of men, they have not gained political agency outside of the social movement. Therefore the political system has remained unchanged. These findings demonstrate how the economic system is more vulnerable to change, compared to the sociocultural and political systems that are more resistant to change.

Additionally, these findings show how after the critical juncture that MIDR initiated, local women are crucial agents in (re)shaping the post-MIDR systems (pathways), for example, transforming the post-MIDR economic system and maintaining the sociocultural and political systems. This challenges critical junctures and path dependency concepts that assume post-critical juncture path dependencies are dictated by political elites (Mahoney, 2000).

Fourth, women's different responses to the effects of MIDR signifies how relocated women valued different aspects (economic, social and political) of their agency more than others. For example, all women said they prioritise their reproductive responsibilities, including their domestic duties as this informs identity and enables status, in contrast to the way they perform their economic agency, that they were prepared to diversify. This is exemplified in relocated women's protests, that drew on pre-existing modes of political agency, being triggered by the loss of access to a water source and the threat this poses to women's sociocultural agency. Relocated women's *active resistance* is therefore found to be an act of preserving sociocultural agency. This demonstrates that the sociocultural aspect is the most valuable element of women's agency. Women's reproductive roles are central to maintaining the sociocultural system of society and fulfilling these gives women status in the community and a sense of satisfaction. Women's sociocultural agency is therefore critical to individual and collective wellbeing. These findings contribute to anti-mining social movement discourse that has largely focused on Latin America and assumes that when women are involved in anti-mining social-movements they are protesting on behalf of men and male grievances (Mercier and Gier, 2007). In addition to this, women drawing on pre-existing modes of protest challenge the assumption that women involved in anti-mining social movements challenge their customary gender norms, that are assumed to include women not having pre-existing political agency (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015).

My findings make a particularly important contribution to feminisation of mining theory that assumes women in mining-affected communities lack pre-existing agency prior to mining, MIDR and mining-related social movements (see Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007; Perks, 2011; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015; Jenkins, 2015) and discourse on women's agency in Africa that assumes women in Sub-Saharan Africa lack pre-existing agency prior to non-organic triggers of social change more broadly (Swai, 2010, see for example Coulter, 2009; Abdullah *et al.*, 2010).

I have shown that while development initiatives, such as large-scale commercial mining, are promoted to have a number of benefits, including improving the lives of beneficiaries, the change in access to certain resources these initiatives cause can

have inadvertent negative social consequences. However, my research also shows that women react to these negative social consequences, by *adapting, avoiding, passively* and *actively resisting*, in order to preserve their lifeworlds and maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing. Development initiatives, such as large-scale commercial mining and MIDR as an aspect of this, are thereby shown to offer an opportunity for women to perform their pre-existing agency. Overall my findings contribute to mining discourse and development discourse more broadly, within which how women are affected by and react to non-organic triggers of social change, such as MIDR, beyond women being presented as passive victims of the most negative effects or as vulnerable beneficiaries being saved by international aid (Warrick *et al.*, 2017; Brown and Westaway, 2011), is underexplored, particularly in the Sub-Saharan African context.

The proceeding sections of this chapter are structured as follows. First, I outline my empirical findings. Second, I outline the theoretical contributions I make primarily to feminisation of mining theory and the secondary contributions I offer to critical junctures and path dependency concepts, the nature/culture debate and in terms of the underexplored phenomenon of how women perform their agency post-MIDR in the Sub-Saharan African context. Third, I outline policy implications. Fourth I make recommendations for further study stemming from my research. Fifth, I make my concluding remarks.

7.2 Empirical findings

The point of departure in the empirical chapters was the examination of how different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency is shaped by MIDR in the context of national strategies towards economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how women's agency shapes MIDR and its effects in different ways. The findings show that different women perform these aspects of their agency in myriad ways. The social effects of MIDR are found to centre on rapid change, including loss, degradation and provision of resources and physical structures, including land, water and the structure of the village and the house, that women drew upon in the enactment of their agency pre-MIDR. The ways in which women have

reacted to the effects of MIDR includes *adapting, avoiding, passively resisting* and *actively resisting*. Therefore some aspects of women's agency have been maintained, while other aspects have been transformed. In this way the post-MIDR economic, sociocultural and political systems are both preserved and altered to varying extents.

7.2.1 *Women's roles in the transformation of the post-MIDR economy*

MIDR causes a rapid change in cash-economic resources. This includes the loss of land and water that were used in women's and men's subsistence-based lifestyles and the provision of food and money. The change in resources that MIDR causes creates a critical juncture for subsistence-based livelihoods.

Through the process of MIDR, a new capitalist market-driven system is imposed on those that experience it. This is in part due to large-scale commercial mining being inherently capitalist and being encouraged by the Sierra Leone government as an economic strategy to become a so-called 'developed (capitalist) nation' (see Agenda for Change, 2008; SLPP, 2012). MIDR as a(n inevitable) consequence of large-scale extraction is therefore part of the global extractive industry that is a driver of capitalism. I have argued that the state and mining company orchestrated a critical juncture and opportunity for social and economic change (Mahoney, 2000) at the local level. This is in contrast to critical junctures and path dependency concepts that assume the opportunity is for national and international agents to affect national social and economic change (Mahoney, 2000).

Extractive industries discourse and the critical junctures concept would assume a monolithic capitalist market-driven system would come to dominate in the post-MIDR villages because elite decision-makers are assumed to control post-critical juncture pathways (Mahoney and Snyder, 1999; Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Isham *et al.*, 2005; Mehlum *et al.*, 2006; Idemudia, 2010; Akiwumi, 2011; 2012; 2014; Hilson, 2012; Wilson, 2015). In Sierra Leone, the state is invested in transforming the local subsistence-based system to a capitalist market-driven system, as part of the process of the country becoming a so-called 'developed (capitalist) nation'. In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria, local women, through the diverse ways in which they perform their economic agency, have successfully resisted a monolithic capitalist market-driven system and contributed to shaping the post-MIDR economy, that includes

three interconnected economic systems, subsistence-based, dependency and capitalist market-driven. My findings therefore make a secondary contribution to critical junctures and path dependency concepts, in addition to my primary contribution to feminisation of mining theory (see subsection 7.3.2).

Different women performing their economic agency in a diversity of ways have created three interconnected economic systems in the post-MIDR villages. For example, some women have become dependent on the food and money that the mining company provides and have therefore become dependent on the capitalist market-driven system. A post-MIDR dependency system has therefore developed. Within this system, some women, namely those who lack access to financial or social capital, have become more dependent on men than they were prior to MIDR, due to the mining company only giving provisions to male heads of households. This has limited some women's, in particular female heads of households and second and third wives in polygamous marriage units, economic agency in a post-MIDR context.

In contrast, women who have access to financial or social capital have *adapted to* the loss of resources needed to maintain their subsistence-based livelihoods and have assimilated into the capitalist market-driven system by abiding by the social norms of capitalism. These women have changed their behaviour from subsistence farming and selling the surplus, to profit-driven activities, such as buying and selling food from the market and working for the mining company. Some *nas* and *mamas* in particular explained that as a result of their experiences during the civil war, they had learned to *adapt to* social change including the ability to diversify their livelihoods (see chapter 4). This highlights how life experience, such as men being absent during the war, can influence women's agency (Coulter, 2009). In abiding by capitalist norms, such as buying and selling food, some women are enabling the capitalist market-driven system to exist at the local level and have become agents within the global capitalist market-driven system.

Women's ability to become agents within the capitalist market-driven system is restricted to those that either have enough financial capital to buy food or those that have relationships with women market sellers in Bumbuna town, with whom they

have set up a credit system to take food to sell and pay for later. Women have also shaped the local capitalist market-driven system by rejecting the market that was provided for them by the mining company in Ferengbeya and building their own.

Other women who have access to the necessary resources such as land, have *avoided* the imposed capitalist market-driven system and becoming dependent on it, by leaving the villages to continue their natural resource-based subsistence-based livelihoods elsewhere. I argue that these women have enabled a subsistence-based system to continue alongside the dependency system and the capitalist market-driven system. Some of these women have left the villages with their families to find a new place to live where they can continue their subsistence-based livelihoods, by living off this land as they did pre-MIDR. In contrast, other women have left the villages without their husbands and children. While some men believe these women are going in search of a new husband who they could depend on financially, thereby abiding by dependency-capitalist social norms, some women believe that women were leaving in search of a more independent lifestyle and to *avoid* becoming dependent on the mining company. Since being relocated, women (and men) leaving the village acts to maintain the subsistence-based system while at the same time breaking up the community, thus transforming the social structure.

These findings contribute economic data to feminisation of mining theory by showing first, the diverse ways in which different women have responded to the influx of a cash economy and associated resources, including *adapting*, *resisting* and *avoiding*, illustrating that women are not a homogenous group of vulnerable victims to the negative economic effects of mining. Second, that women are agents in enabling and maintaining local economic system(s). For example, different women performing their economic agency in a diversity of ways has created three interconnected economic systems. Third, how women are active economic agents not only at the local level in mining-affected communities but also at the national and international level. For example, women buy food that is influenced by national and international food prices as a result of MIDR.

7.2.2 *Sociocultural agency and natural resources*

While the ways different women have reacted to the economic effects of MIDR demonstrates a change in women's economic agency and the economic system(s) of society, women have on the whole maintained their sociocultural agency and the sociocultural system of society post-MIDR. MIDR causes a critical juncture by altering people's access to resources and physical structures associated with nature, including the structure of the village, the mud-thatch house, food and water, that were central to the way women in particular enacted their reproductive responsibilities and lifeworlds pre-MIDR. My findings show that natural resources are central to women's social agency, status and therefore wellbeing, which challenges the nature/culture theory that assumes associating women with nature subordinates them to men and acts as a barrier to gender equality and development, including wellbeing (see subsection 7.3.3). Due to the importance of resources and physical structures associated with nature to women's cultural identity, women's sociocultural agency and the sociocultural system of the village are threatened by the rapid change of certain resources and physical structures MIDR causes. For example, the loss of access to an adequate water source threatens women's ability to perform domestic duties, including laundering their family's clothes, which is important to a woman's identity and status. Therefore not being able to perform domestic duties threatens women's sociocultural agency.

My findings show how different women react to the social effects of a loss of these resources in order to carry on fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities, including their domestic duties in order to maintain their cultural identity, agency and to a large degree the customary sex-defined aspect of the sociocultural system. Therefore women resist the threat MIDR poses on colonising their lifeworlds (Habermas, 1987; Escobar, 1995). In demonstrating how all women in Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria resist the negative effects of the loss of resources and physical structures associated with nature, I challenge the argument that women's relationship with nature makes them vulnerable to the destruction of nature (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987; Shiva, 1988; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991; Mies and Shiva, 1993) (see subsection 7.3.3).

Beyond this, my findings show how different women, along life phase lines in particular, have responded to the loss of different culturally valuable resources and physical structures associated with nature in a diversity of ways. For example, *musubas* in particular are **adapting to** the change in certain resources and physical structures such as the village structure and the loss of food and are now conducting their domestic duties associated with this in different ways. Due to the change in the structure of the village and the house *musubas* are shown to be performing some of their domestic duties inside alone in a different way to pre-MIDR. These women are shown to be abiding by and accepting new social norms and therefore to some extent enabling a ‘Western modern’ lifestyle. However, due to these women still being responsible for the same domestic duties, I argue that their cultural identity and the customary sex-defined sociocultural system has remained unchanged.

All the women in the relocated villages that I spoke to have also **adapted to** the loss of food that MIDR has caused and accepted the way the mining company allocates food to the male head of the household. While women remain responsible for cooking and feeding the family, the way in which they perform these domestic duties has changed because they have less food. The way in which polygamous wives perform these duties has undergone significant change as there is no longer enough food for each wife to cook for her family. As a result of this, the eldest wife is now primarily responsible for cooking. This reduces the status of wives that do not cook. This highlights how exogenous assumptions about patriarchal norms, namely that men make all the decisions, including about cooking and feeding, can threaten certain women’s sociocultural agency.

In contrast to *musubas* **adapting to** the change in resources by conducting their domestic duties in a different way, some *mamas*, though not exclusively, are **passively resisting** the effect of these changes. For example, some *mamas* have **resisted** performing their domestic duties in a new ‘Western modern’ way, such as cooking alone inside, by creating a space outside where they can cook with other women, as they did pre-MIDR. Other *mamas* have built customary mud-thatch houses, thereby resisting the new ‘Western modern’ houses and the way of life they represent. This demonstrates how life phase is a contributing factor to the different ways women react to the change in resources and physical structures and the

sociocultural change this incites. For example, I show that *mamas* are more likely to resist sociocultural change that a change in resources and physical structures causes, due to them having gained a greater attachment to a physical space, such as a type of house, and the way of acting in this space, due to having lived in a certain way for longer (Roos *et al.*, 2014).

While *mamas* and *musubas* are found to react in diverse ways to some of the social consequences of MIDR, women from all life phases have *passively resisted* using the toilets that have been built inside the houses as this is seen as dirty (according to female and male participants). People either use customarily-built outside wash-yards or the open bush. This shows that certain cultural norms are profoundly important to women from all life phases and should be understood by exogenous decision-makers before trying to change them.

Many women who have the physical or financial capacity have also *passively resisted* the inadequate water provision from the mining company, by sourcing it from elsewhere. Due to the distance and cost of this, men are now involved in the collection of water, in a way that they were not pre-MIDR. However, despite men's involvement, women remain responsible for this and the domestic duties associated with water. Although some of women's actions have changed, such as fetching water independently, the sex-defined sociocultural system of society has remained the same. I have argued that one reason for this is that the non-organic rapid change in resources is quicker than social norms are able to change. Therefore it may be that the sociocultural norms and system of society will transform to match people's new way of behaving, over time. Alternatively, certain social expectations may be maintained by people continuing to aspire to abide by them even if they cannot enact them. For example, although women are unable to fetch water from a natural water source independently as they used to, they remain responsible for water collection and the domestic duties associated with this. This is in-line with the argument that sociocultural norms are more resistant to change (OECD, 2005).

My findings show that different women, along life phase lines, have reacted differently to the change in culturally valuable resources that MIDR causes. However, on the whole women have either *adapted to* or *resisted* the change in

culturally valuable resources in order to continue performing their reproductive responsibilities, including their domestic duties. This demonstrates that while MIDR creates a critical juncture at the local level, in this case an opportunity to live in a more ‘Western modern’ way, it has not changed the previous sociocultural system (pathway), due to *mamas* in particular and *musubas* and *nas* to some extent resisting this. In so doing, women from all life phases have preserved their women’s sociocultural agency and the customary sociocultural system. This is in contrast to women in the three villages changing the way they perform their economic agency and thereby transforming the post-MIDR economy.

7.2.3 *Active resistance and women’s political agency*

In addition to *adapting* and *passively resisting* the effects of the change in resources and physical structures, women have also *actively resisted* the loss of an adequate water source. In so doing, women are shown to perform their political agency in the post-MIDR context.

Relocated women are found to *actively resist* MIDR in a unique way compared to others involved in the same broad anti-mining social movement in the Kolansogoia chiefdom. For example, relocated women have their own unique grievances about the loss of water. This shows first, how women’s relationship with nature enhances their agency, as opposed to suppressing it. In the sense that women used the relationship they have with water and the threat the loss of access to water poses to their lifeworlds to justify protesting. Second, that women do not always protest on behalf of men in anti-mining social movements (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Spence and Stephenson, 2009). Third, relocated women protested collectively in the style of *Segere* rituals and had their demands met, in terms of water being provided by the company subsequent to their protest, thereby proving themselves as successful agents in informal mining negotiations.

In their modes of protest women drew on their pre-existing power bases that were found to differ for women, depending on life phase, life experience and cultural beliefs. For example, *mamas* have pre-existing decision-making power due to their life experience, such as raising children and grandchildren, and the status this grants them. *Mamas* drew on this to mobilise the women in the three relocated villages to

protest. In contrast, *musubas* who do not have children, lack decision-making power and are not expected to speak out in public. Therefore, by protesting, *musubas* gain political agency and alter the political system, that dictates young women do not speak out in public, in front of men, to some extent. That being said, all Kuranko women who have been initiated into *Segere* have a degree of political power (Jackson, 1975; 1977a). Within *Segere*, women have collective agency, are agents in maintaining and changing the sociocultural system, have power over men and have decision-making power within women-only *Segere* meetings (Jackson, 1975; 1977a; Steady, 2006). Although it is worth noting here, that women's decision-making power related to *Segere* is restricted to speaking out in front of women. All relocated women who protested drew on their *Segere* power base, by performing *Segere* rituals as their form of protest. My findings show that women's political agency is influenced by a range of factors, including age, life experience and cultural beliefs, and that women have pre-existing political agency in patriarchal Sub-Saharan African culture.

While *musubas* have altered their political agency by speaking out in public, I show that (i) by doing this in the form of *Segere* rituals, in which they have political agency, (ii) this being under the direction of older women and (iii) their customary gender role not being changed outside of the social movement, the transformation of *musubas'* agency is minimal. Older women's political agency has not been changed as they were in possession of decision-making power pre-MIDR. I have therefore argued that as a result of **actively resisting** the effects of MIDR, overall women's political agency and the political system of society have remained largely unchanged, but become more visible.

Exogenous decision-makers, including the state and the mining company, under the guise of the 'cultural argument', incorrectly assume that women in patriarchal Sub-Saharan African villages lack decision-making power and thus exclude them from formal mining negotiations (Perks, 2011). This shows how MIDR threatens women's existing political agency. However, my findings demonstrate that women have political agency at the local, national and international level, as they have been able to shape international mining agreements, such as having water provided by the mining company, through informal negotiations, defined as protests. My findings

show that women have their own pre-existing culturally specific modes of political agency that if understood and used will include women in formal mining negotiations in a meaningful way. This shows cultural norms do not need to be threatened in order to include women in patriarchal society in decision-making processes, because they already prescribe forms of women's political agency, such as older women speaking out in public and all women having a voice in *Segere* meetings.

I have shown that on the whole, non-organic triggers of social change, here: MIDR, do not necessarily change women's political agency or the political system, but can act as a trigger for women to draw on and perform their pre-existing political agency, therefore making it more visible. I show that by successfully, ***actively resisting*** the loss of water, relocated women have protected their customary gender roles and the patriarchal structure of society, in contrast to the argument that when women in patriarchal societies are involved in social movements, they challenge their gender roles and the patriarchy (Steady, 2006; Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015).

In response to the overarching research aim, I have shown how women's agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects as part of women's efforts to maintain and enhance individual and collective wellbeing in a diversity of ways. First, in each empirical chapter (4, 5 and 6) I have shown how a different aspect: economic, sociocultural, political, of women's agency is performed in the post-MIDR context. Second, cutting across the empirical chapters, I have shown the diversity of different women's reactions - ***adaptation, avoidance, passive*** and ***active resistance*** - to the change in resources and physical structures caused by MIDR and how women are critical agents in both transforming and maintaining the social systems of society.

The ways in which women perform the political, social and economic aspect of their women's agency is influenced by a number of factors. This includes: life phase in particular, which is interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience. These factors can both enable different aspects of women's agency and reduce them. For example, being a first wife in a polygamous marriage, often comes with decision-making power, which can enable

political, social and economic agency. In contrast, being the last wife can reduce agency. For example, the loss of food as a result of MIDR and the way in which it is allocated by the mining company has resulted in wives in polygamous relationships becoming reliant on their husband and the first wife for food for their own family. This also highlights a recurring theme in my findings about how exogenous assumptions about women's agency in patriarchal society, threatens to reduce women's pre-existing agency, highlighting how development initiatives can have inadvertent negative consequences (see subsection 7.4).

My findings demonstrate that mining, and MIDR as an aspect of this, does not directly initiate sustainable or economic development at the local level, due to the loss of resources it causes (Hilson, 2006; Kirsch, 2010; Gilberthorpe, 2013). However, my findings show that many women have *avoided* becoming passive victims of the most detrimental effects of MIDR and that the ways women perform their economic, social and political agency is crucial in maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing in the post-MIDR context.

Turning now to the theoretical debate, the next section will examine the primary contribution this thesis has made to feminisation of mining theory and the secondary contributions it has made to critical junctures and path dependency concepts, the nature/culture debate and emphasising women's agency related to non-organic triggers of social change in Sub-Saharan Africa.

7.3 Theoretical debate

This thesis set at its core the ontological exploration of how local women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context. My findings contribute to feminisation of mining theory, that seeks to unearth women's agency within the mining industry by going beyond the assumption in extractive industries literature more broadly, that women are most vulnerable to the detrimental aspects of mining (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015).

The main theoretical contributions I make are as follows. First, I challenge the argument that mining turns women into one homogenous group of vulnerable

victims, by showing how different women resist the negative effects of MIDR, perform their agency in different ways and are agents in shaping social systems of society. Second, in so doing, I show how MIDR initiates a critical juncture and how women shape the post-critical juncture pathways(s), in contrast to theory that assumes political elites dictate post-critical juncture pathways (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015). Third, I show how women's agency and status are inextricably linked to material resources and physical structures associated with nature, therefore challenging the theory that women are subordinated by associating them with nature (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997). Fourth, by conducting this study in Sierra Leone, I contribute to the debate about extraction in Sub-Saharan Africa where the ways in which women's economic, sociocultural and political agency are performed is underexplored.

7.3.1 Feminisation of mining theory

The theoretical point of departure for my framework for analysis was feminisation of mining theory, as I drew on this to examine how women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context. As discussed in chapter 3, I both draw on and contribute to feminisation of mining theory by addressing a number of its limitations, including: i) a tendency to focus on women's economic agency only; ii) the reluctance to acknowledge the beneficial relationship women have with nature and how this is influenced by mining; iii) the lack of exploration into local women's involvement in mining negotiations; iv) assuming that when women are involved in anti-mining protests they are challenging their gender roles; and v) the lack of exploration of feminisation of mining theory in the Sub-Saharan African context. I contribute to feminisation of mining theory by showing not only how different women's economic agency is influenced by MIDR, but also how different women perform their sociocultural and political agency after experiencing MIDR in Sub-Saharan Africa.

My research, in line with that of Bhanumathi (2002), Downing (2002), Jenkins (2014) and Owen and Kemp (2015) shows that women are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of mining and MIDR, through the loss of certain resources. However, there has been limited research into the complexities of this, including why women are most vulnerable to the loss of resources caused by MIDR, how this

differs for different women and how women react to the loss of these resources and the effects of this. I address these limitations in the following ways.

First, by illustrating how certain resources and physical structures embody women's economic, sociocultural and political agency and how the loss of these through the process of MIDR threatens to colonise women's lifeworlds and reduce their agency. For example the pre-MIDR mud-thatch house was conducive to a woman's reproductive responsibilities and the change in this through the process of MIDR has changed the way *musubas* in particular perform their domestic duties, thereby threatening their pre-existing sociocultural agency.

Second, by demonstrating how different women in the Sub-Saharan African context, on the grounds of life phase in particular and interrelated with status, cultural beliefs, existing social and financial capital and life experience, experience and react to MIDR in different ways, thereby showing that women are not a homogenous group of vulnerable victims of mining.

Third, by showing the diversity of different women's reactions, including ***adapting to, avoiding, passively*** and ***actively resisting*** the change in access to resources and physical structures MIDR causes. Women enact their agency, through their reaction(s) to the change in different natural resources and physical structures, as these are needed to enact agency (Giddens, 1984). For example, women need food to enact their social responsibility of providing food for their family. A loss of land to grow food therefore threatens this aspect of women's agency. By accepting the provision of food by the mining company some women who lack the means to grow or buy food, have changed the way they enact their domestic duty of providing food. This is an example of how some women ***adapt to*** the loss of certain resources and provision of others, thereby ***adapting to*** and accepting a different, more dependent, way of life. In contrast, relocated women have also ***passively*** and ***actively resisted*** the change in certain resources and physical structures and the effects of this. For example, some *mamas* have ***passively resisted*** the provision of new 'Western modern' houses by building customary mud-thatch houses. Additionally, women from all life phases have ***actively resisted*** the loss of access to a natural water source in order to maintain their pre-existing lifeworlds, cultural identity and the pre-

existing sociocultural system. Different women are therefore shown to perform their economic, sociocultural and political agency in diverse ways.

Fourth, I address what the effects of women's reactions to MIDR are by showing how this transforms and preserves different aspects of different women's economic, sociocultural and political agency and systems of society. This includes women transforming the economic system of post-MIDR society through their reactions to the economic effects and women successfully *actively resisting* the sociocultural effects of MIDR. The latter of which illustrates women as agents in informal mining negotiations. Significantly, women were not found to have challenged their customary gender roles or the patriarchy by protesting, as the literature assumes (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015), as they drew on pre-existing political agency.

I also contribute to feminisation of mining theory by emphasising women's pre-existing economic, sociocultural and political agency prior to MIDR. For example, in chapter 4, I show how many women in the pre-MIDR villages were able to make money from ASM by selling surplus food they and their husbands had grown. In chapter 5, I show how women gained sociocultural agency through the relationship they had with nature and natural resources. In chapter 6, I emphasise women's pre-existing political agency, related to life phase and *Segere*. I argue that mining and MIDR does not transform women from invisible entities to political agents of the global capital system, as some of the literature suggests (Fallon, 2008; Perks, 2011; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; 2015; Jenkins, 2014; Keenan *et al.*, 2016). Rather MIDR reveals women's pre-existing economic, sociocultural and political agency either by threatening it or by offering an opportunity for women to perform it more publicly.

My findings also contribute to the economic, social and political aspects of feminisation of mining theory. In relation to the economic, I show how mining can influence women's economic agency, beyond gaining employment, directly or indirectly from mining. I show how MIDR changes women's access to certain cash-economic resources (those being the resources people draw on to sustain their livelihood(s)), such as land and water, the way they have responded to this and how this shapes both their agency and the local economy.

In relation to the sociocultural aspect, I show how the resources and physical structures that are associated with nature influence women's lifeworlds, cultural identity and sociocultural agency (see subsection 7.3.3). I show how these are changed by MIDR, how this threatens to colonise women's lifeworlds and how women resist this in a diversity of ways, thereby decolonising their lifeworlds.

My findings contribute to the political aspect in the following ways. First, I show that women involved in anti-mining social movements are not always protesting on behalf of men (Mercier and Gier, 2007; Jenkins, 2015), by showing that women have their own distinct anti-mining grievances. Second, I show the gendered modes of *resistance* at the local level, namely women successfully protesting about water, in the style of *Segere* rituals. Third, I show that women do not necessarily challenge their customary gender roles and resist the patriarchy by protesting. Fourth, I highlight women's distinct role in informal mining negotiations in Sub-Saharan Africa that are in line with local cultural norms and beliefs, showing that these do not need to be challenged to include women in mining-related decision-making (see section 7.4).

In this subsection (7.3.1) I have outlined my primary contribution that is to feminisation of mining theory. In the proceeding subsections (7.3.2, 7.3.3 and 7.3.4) I discuss the secondary contributions I make.

7.3.2 *Female agency in post-critical juncture systems (pathways)*

My findings show how MIDR creates a critical juncture at the local level through the change in access to resources and physical structures it causes (Mahoney, 2000). In Ferengbeya, Wondugu and Foria the economic system has been changed from subsistence-based to three interconnected economic systems, through the different ways women reacted to the change in cash-economic resources, caused by MIDR. In contrast, the post-MIDR sociocultural system has remained unaltered as a result of women's actions to preserve their customary gender roles and the sociocultural system and resist the 'Western modern' sociocultural system. This shows, in contrast to critical junctures and path dependency concepts (Mahoney, 2000; Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007; Capoccia, 2015), that while international and national capitalist,

‘Western modern’, patriarchal systems are imposed by powerful elite decision-makers, local non-elite women are central to (re)shaping the social systems of society at the local level.

7.3.3 *Nature/culture, female/male debate*

In my examination of women’s agency, I explore women’s lifeworlds, that is the way people live beyond economic means (cf. Habermas, 1987; Mtero, 2017), the resources and physical structures that women draw upon to enact their lifeworlds, the rules that influence their behaviour and how MIDR has influenced this. In so doing, I show how women fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities, including giving birth and performing their domestic duties, gives women status and enhances wellbeing. I show how resources and physical structures associated with nature embody women’s sociocultural agency and enhance women’s status within the community. These resources and physical structures are both drawn upon in the enactment of reproductive responsibilities, for example water being central to women’s domestic duties, and symbolize the importance of women’s reproductive responsibilities in society, for example the mud-thatch house being representative of women’s reproductive organs.

My findings show that women gain status within their communities from fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities that are associated with nature. For example, women gain decision-making power by fulfilling their biological role of having children. As a result of this, older women with more children have more decision-making power than younger women without children (see chapter 6). Moreover, women gain status from fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities, including their domestic duties, such as keeping a clean house and cooking (see chapter 5). I argue women are not suppressed by culture, but gain agency, status and wellbeing from fulfilling their reproductive responsibilities that are associated with nature, including giving birth and performing their domestic duties prescribed by culture, thereby showing how both nature and culture in symbiosis enable women’s agency, status and wellbeing. This challenges the nature/culture debate that commonly assumes women’s relationship with nature subordinates them to men and acts as a barrier to women’s wellbeing (Lévi-Straus, 1969; Little, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1997).

Second, my findings demonstrate how women resist the negative effects of the loss of nature and natural resources caused by MIDR in order to preserve their lifeworlds and are therefore not dominated by the destruction of nature. Moreover, women's relationship with nature enables their political agency to resist the degradation of nature and the related social effects of this (Shiva, 1988; Nightingale, 2006). For example, the threat a loss of access to water poses to the enactment of women's reproductive responsibilities, triggered women to perform their political agency. I show that the relationship women have with water influenced women's successful active mode of protest. These findings challenge the theory within feminist political ecology, that women's relationship with nature makes them vulnerable to the destruction of it (by men) (Merchant, 1980; Warren, 1987; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Plumwood, 1991). Overall my findings illustrate how nature and natural resources can enable women's agency.

7.3.4 *Emphasising the heterogeneity of women*

By researching how women's agency is performed in a post-MIDR context in Sierra Leone, I expose a number of the specific social effects of mining that different women experience in the Sierra Leonean context. Research about international commercial large-scale mining including MIDR as a consequence of this and how this affects women's agency in Sub-Saharan Africa is limited within the academic literature (though see Akiwumi, 2011; 2014).

Within the limited research that has been conducted about women and mining in Sub-Saharan Africa, women are commonly presented as the passive recipients of the most detrimental effects, due to the patriarchal norms and structures associated with both mining and Sub-Saharan African culture (Akiwumi, 2011; 2014; Perks, 2011; Kelly *et al.*, 2014). The complex particularities of patriarchal cultures, such as women having unique modes of performing their political agency (including decision-making) and certain aspects of women's agency stemming from this unique culture is underexplored. My findings highlight a number of unique factors that are common to the Sierra Leonean context that influence, in terms of both enabling and limiting, women's agency. These factors include, experience of violent conflict, low female literacy rates, strong customary values and secret society beliefs.

The limited research into women's agency in mining affected communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, has resulted in women's political agency and how this influences mining negotiations being largely hidden within the mining discourse. This includes women's unique modes of participation in social movements in Sub-Saharan Africa (though see Steady, 2006; Tripp *et al.*, 2009). I address this gap by showing how women in Sierra Leone participate in informal mining negotiations, defined as protests, and how women from all life phases draw on pre-existing power bases that are in line with local cultural norms and beliefs in their modes of protest. For example, *mamas* who had the most pre-existing decision-making power have led the relocated women's protests and women from all life phases have performed *Segere* rituals, as their form of protest, in line with cultural norms of when and where women have decision-making capacity.

Beyond MIDR and mining, countries in Sub-Saharan Africa host a number of other non-organic triggers of social change, many of which are defined as 'development initiatives', often including as one of their aims 'the empowerment of women' (see chapter 1). However, a number of these so-called 'development initiatives' fail in achieving economic and/or sustainable development, including wellbeing, and in the worst cases cause further inequalities and detrimental consequences at the local level, particularly to women (Dedu *et al.*, 2011; Akiwumi, 2014). I contribute to the discourse concerned with this by showing how the economic, sociocultural and political effects of non-organic triggers of social change centre around resources that are particularly important for women to fulfil their reproductive responsibilities in rural Sub-Saharan African villages.

Moreover, I demonstrate how different women at the local level in Sierra Leone react to the social consequences of the loss of resources caused by non-organic triggers of social change in different ways. I argue that, in so doing, women decolonise their lifeworlds and preserve their customary lifestyles and wellbeing. This challenges a number of assumptions about how women in Sub-Saharan Africa are suppressed by patriarchal rules and 'backward' and 'barbaric' cultural norms (Bjälkander *et al.*, 2012; Sagna, 2014), first, by showing that women have agency within patriarchal society; and second, by demonstrating how some aspects of women's agency both shapes and is shaped by customary cultural norms, such as

being initiated into women's secret society (Njambi, 2004). My research challenges assumptions that women are either passive victims of non-organic triggers of social change or the recipients being saved by exogenous development initiatives (Brown and Westaway, 2011; Warrick *et al.*, 2017), by showing how women are active agents of social change, by *resisting* unwanted social change and shaping the effects to their advantage. My findings therefore demonstrate how different women in Sierra Leone are active agents in different ways in maintaining and enhancing individual and collective wellbeing.

Having summarised my empirical findings and the contributions I make to relevant theory, in the next section I outline recommendations for policy.

7.4 Policy implications

Relevant to policy, my research findings highlight: (i) the heterogeneity of women and their experiences of MIDR, as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change; and (ii) women to be critical agents in maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing in their communities. Policies, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the African Mining Vision, Sierra Leone's country strategy paper and future frameworks that make various development recommendations, need to acknowledge local socio-cultural norms and beliefs in order for development benefits to be realised. This includes recognising the diverse roles different women play in communities experiencing so-called development initiatives including mining. Additionally, women should be included in decision-making processes by respecting women's pre-existing modes of decision-making.

Having outlined the policy implications of my findings, in the next section I discuss recommendations for future research.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

The focus of my research was on how women's agency is shaped by and shapes MIDR and its effects, in response to the limited attention women's agency has

received within the mining literature and the call for further investigation (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). Although in parts of this thesis I explore and present male agency, this is mostly done for comparative purposes. Relocated men's agency, like women's, is affected by MIDR in a diversity of ways that deserves further empirical investigation. Additionally, during my fieldwork I became aware that the social effects of MIDR are not confined to those that have been relocated. For example, villages that are located close to the relocated villages are also affected in a number of ways. Due to the complexities and focus of my study I was unable to include this in my analysis. I believe that the effects of MIDR on non-relocated communities is worthy of further attention and deserves a separate study.

Throughout this thesis, I have presented MIDR as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change. While I acknowledge the unique nature of MIDR, including the temporary and finite nature of mining, that can make the MIDR process uncertain, I also argue that certain aspects of MIDR and its effects, such as resources and physical structures associated with nature being changed by exogenous players and the social effects of this are comparable with other non-organ triggers of social change. This includes development initiatives such as building hydro-electric dams and NGO projects, including water wells, schools and health centres. Given that the essence of a development project is to improve the lives of the so-called 'beneficiaries', it is vital to understand how well-intentioned changes to resources and physical structures can have unforeseen social consequences. I therefore argue that further research is needed into how other non-organic triggers of social change, such as NGO projects in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, shape and are shaped by women's agency.

7.6 Concluding remarks

In this thesis, I have presented findings that show how different women perform their agency in a post-MIDR context in different ways, by reacting differently to the change in resources MIDR causes. This illustrates that women are *not a homogenous group* of vulnerable victims to the most detrimental aspects of MIDR, as an example of a non-organic trigger of social change.

The findings show the *important role of resources and physical structures associated with nature* in women's economic, sociocultural and political agency. Thus the value of nature and natural resources to women is illuminated, challenging the notion that associating women with nature is detrimental to development, including wellbeing. Additionally the diverse ways women have reacted to the loss of different resources suggests *different values for different resources* and *different aspects of their agency*. This also differs for different women.

My findings also highlight the fact that women had economic, sociocultural and political agency prior to the non-organic trigger of social change. In my analysis I show how women's pre-existing agency influences the way they react to the social effects of MIDR and therefore the shape of post-MIDR social systems. *Economic, sociocultural and political agency and systems have been affected in different ways* by the diversity of ways women have reacted to the change of related resources. This shows women have capacity to shape their own agency and systems of society in patriarchal, small-scale social settings. The most significant element of this to our understanding of the impact of large-scale capitalist institutions is that women are critical agents in shaping the effects and through this maintaining and enabling individual and collective wellbeing .

ACRONYMS

APC	All People's Congress
AML	African Mineral's Limited
ASM	Artisanal and Small-scale Mining
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DELCO	Sierra Leone Development Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DIDR	Development Induced Displacement and Resettlement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HDI	Human Development Index
HRCSL	Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone
MIDR	Mining-Induced Displacement and Resettlement
MMA	Mines and Minerals Act
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
UNITA	The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

APPENDIX ONE:

KURANKO TERMS

Kuranko term	English translation
<i>bila kore</i>	boy
<i>bimba</i>	grandfather. In this thesis used to refer to an older man with grown up children and possibly grandchildren
<i>bire muse</i>	female initiate
<i>biriyela</i>	initiator of female initiation rituals
<i>dimusu</i>	girl
<i>dimusu biriye</i>	initiation into <i>Segere</i>
<i>dimusukuntigi</i>	Mammy Queen (female village leader)
<i>fa</i>	father. In this thesis used to refer to a middle-age man with children of school-going age or older
<i>fafei</i>	A house where female and male initiates go after having undergone their initiation-operation to receive training in being women and men
<i>fisa</i>	higher or superior to another, for example ‘I am a <i>fisa</i> than you’
<i>fisa mantiye</i>	Concept connotes hierarchy between categories of people, expressed as being <i>fisa</i> than another
<i>fule</i>	initiation-operation site (male or female)
<i>ke dugu</i>	male domain
<i>kemine</i>	young man. In this thesis used to refer to a young adult man who is unmarried or recently married with no children or children below the school-attending age (4 years)
<i>koiyige</i>	crossing the water <i>or</i> going down stream (another name used to refer to female or male initiation)
<i>koroya</i>	middle-aged or elderhood
<i>lakira</i>	ancesthood
<i>na</i>	mother. In this thesis used to refer to a middle-age woman with children of school-going age or older

<i>mama</i>	grandmother. In this thesis used to refer to an older woman with grown up children and possibly grandchildren.
<i>musubannu</i>	initiated women
<i>musuba</i>	‘woman big’ (used to describe a young initiated woman). In this thesis used to refer to a young adult who is unmarried or recently married woman with no children or children below the school-attending age (4 years)
<i>musubaye</i>	womanhood
<i>musu dugu</i>	female domain
<i>namui</i>	custom
<i>nyeman’ tigi</i>	Paramount Chief
<i>Segere</i>	most important women’s secret society
<i>sumafen</i>	secret society (male or female)
<i>sutigi</i>	male village chief

APPENDIX TWO

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

FOR RELOCATED PARTICIPANT FROM FERENGBEYA

Demographics

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Religion
4. Number of siblings and place of birth (in birth order)
5. How long have you lived in Ferengbeya? Why did you move here?
6. Have you ever lived anywhere else, but Ferengbeya (old or new)? Eg. Where did you live during the war?
7. At what age did you get married?
8. What is your level of education?
9. How many children do you have?
10. Have/do all your children attend school?
11. What chores do your children have (are there any differences according to gender and if so why is this)?
12. If they are past school age, where do they live and what profession are they?

Pre-relocation

13. Can you describe to me what Old Ferengbeya was like?
14. What was life like in Old Ferengbeya and how is that different from now?
15. What did you do for work and recreation in Old Ferengbeya?
16. What was your house like?
17. Who made the decisions for the family?
18. Who made the decisions for the community?

Post-relocation

19. What are the main differences between Old Ferengbeya and New Ferengbeya?
20. What is your life like in New Ferengbeya?
21. What do you do for work and recreation in New Ferengbeya?
22. What is your house like now?
23. Who makes the decisions for the family now?
24. Who makes decisions for the community now?

The Relocation

25. When did the relocation take place for you?
26. Can you describe the relocation process?
27. How did you first find out that you were going to be relocated from the Old Ferengbeya site to this one?
28. What did the relocation agreement look like?
29. Has anyone you know been employed by African Minerals or Shandong?
30. Who was involved in the relocation decision-making process?
31. Since Shandong has taken over from African Minerals, have you noticed any changes?
32. Did everyone from Old Ferengbeya move to New Ferengbeya?
33. How far is Old Ferengbeya from here?
34. Has the community changed as a result of the relocation?

APPENDIX THREE:

ETHICAL CLEARANCE FORM



REVIEW REPORT AND DECISION - PART B

UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPLICANT INFORMATION

To be completed by the applicant

Forename	Jessica
Surname	Jones
Student ID number (if applicable)	100139661
UG, PGT or PGR (if applicable)	PGR
Supervisor (if applicable)	Dr. Emma Gilberthorpe
Project Title	An investigation into how large-scale mining affects women's gender roles in post-conflict Sierra Leone

RESUBMISSIONS – IF YOU ARE ASKED TO RESUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION FOLLOWING REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE PLEASE ALSO ATTACH A **LETTER** WITH YOUR REVISED APPLICATION DETAILING HOW YOU HAVE RESPONDED TO THE COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS. **Students please ensure your supervisor has approved your revisions before resubmission.**

REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATION (✓)

To be completed by the Ethics Committee

Accept	✓
Request modifications	
Reject	

REVIEWERS' CHECKLIST

Delete as appropriate

Risks and inconvenience to participants are minimised and not unreasonable given the research question/ project purpose.	✓	
All relevant ethical issues are acknowledged and understood by the researcher.	✓	
Procedures for informed consent are sufficient and appropriate	✓	

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS


Section 3 Risks or costs to participants The researcher makes a good point about possible 'obligation' felt by respondents if their authority figure has given consent. Perhaps it would be useful if the researcher emphasises to the gatekeeper/power figure that 'non-participation' is indeed 100% acceptable as an option – and there is absolutely no value attached to either 'participating' or 'non-participating'. It is also a good point to warn persons in authority/outspoken critics that, even though data will be anonymised and not attributed, the uniqueness of their views may well be recognisable in the report.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

Ethical clearance granted (although you may also want to take into account the comments from the reviewer above)

REVIEW REPORT AND DECISION - PART B
 UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA
 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

**SIGNATURE (CHAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ETHICS
 COMMITTEE)**

Signature	Date
	13/05/16

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