

**MARK-SINO STONE LIMITED AND CORPORATE SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY IN AWI COMMUNITY, AKAMKPA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA.**

EBORGU, Irene Chibuchi
University Of Calabar
Calabar, Nigeria
ireneborgu@unical.edu.ng

&

OMOROTIOMWAN Innocent Ikpoba
University of Benin
Edo, Nigeria

Abstract

Quarry operations, companies and their inclusivity have had an enormous impact on Nigeria's socio-economic landscape. Unfortunately, available literature shows that host communities that harbour the mineral deposit responsible for the quarry economy have been neglected in the share of benefits. The study interrogates the activities of Mark-Sino Stone Limited, a quarry company operating in the Awi Community of the Akamkpa Local Government Area of Cross River State. The study examined the socio-economic and environmental impact of the Company's corporate social responsibility initiatives on the host Awi community. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the research employs qualitative and quantitative methodologies, drawing on data from stakeholder informant interviews, field observations, and content analysis of government reports and academic publications. The research evaluates Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interventions in infrastructure, education, healthcare, employment and environmental management. Findings reveal Mark-Sino's CSR projects in school renovations, road rehabilitation, and scholarships that have improved access to services and local human capital, as well as direct employment, skills training, and small-scale business initiatives that influence income generation, livelihoods, and community development. However, these benefits do not translate into sustainable developments in Awi, and they coexist with adverse socio-environmental consequences. Issues that have been overlooked by the Company and the Cross River State government include severe water scarcity, power outages, disease, and air pollution. The study recommends that Mark-Sino's localised CSR should prioritise social needs in its corporate social responsibility practices, as well as sustainable mining, and that the terms of contracts between the company and the community should be made public for accountability.

Keywords: *Solid Minerals, Quarry Economy, Host Communities, Community development, Corporate Social Responsibility*

Introduction

The exploitation of natural resources plays a crucial role in the economic development of many nations, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. Among these resources, solid minerals have emerged as significant contributors to employment, infrastructure development, and local revenue generation. In Cross River State, particularly in the Akamkpa Local Government Area (LGA), quarrying has become a dominant economic activity due to the abundance of granite, limestone, and other mineral deposits. However, while quarrying contributes to local and national economic growth, its impacts on host communities remain a subject of growing concern. The activities associated with quarry extraction, such as blasting, crushing, transportation, and land excavation, often lead to environmental degradation, social disruptions, and health challenges.

Akamkpa LGA is richly endowed with solid mineral resources, especially granite, limestone, and laterite. Over the past two decades, numerous quarry companies have invested in exploiting these mineral resources. Prominent communities such as Awi, Akamkpa Urban, Njanchan, Ayemba, Obung, Ntem and Uyanga host several large-scale and artisanal quarry operations. Some of these companies include: Old Sterling Company, Old Julius Berger and Turks Companies, Vigo-Rock Company, Njanchan, Xin Xin Company, Veduta quarry Company, and Mark-Sino, Saturn and Two Brothers quarries.¹ The quarry industry in Akamkpa provides construction materials for projects across Nigeria and beyond, making it a vital part of the state's economy. Nevertheless, the rapid expansion of quarry operations has generated mixed reactions, given their varying effects on residents' livelihoods.

Furthermore, there is limited data on the quarry economy in Cross River State. In addition, though quarry mining contributes to the local economy by creating job opportunities, stimulating small-scale businesses, and supporting infrastructure development, the host communities remain highly underdeveloped, as these benefits

¹P. Itaya, 60+, Farmer, oral interview at Akampka-Urban, 21 October, 2025.

coexist with adverse socio-environmental consequences, including health hazards, air pollution, and ecological degradation. Issues which have been overlooked by both the companies and the Cross River State government have formed the basis of a contentious relationship between the communities and the companies.

This study focuses on Mark-Sino Quarry and the blocks company based in the Awi community. It aims to assess the extent to which Mark-Sino Quarry and Blocks Company have impacted the community through corporate social responsibility and development initiatives. Its specific objectives are to examine the impact of the mining operations on Awi's rural socio-economic growth, to identify the challenges associated with the mining operations and to proffer recommendations to these challenges.

The Awi community is located at 5 ° 15 ' 7 " N latitude, 8 ° 1 '39' E longitude in Akamkpa Local Government Area, Cross River state, Nigeria. It is predominantly inhabited by the Ejagham people, who share cultural and linguistic ties. The landscape around Awi is largely forest-rich, and the people have largely agrarian and forest-based livelihoods.²

Methodology

The research approach is interdisciplinary, drawing on data from many disciplines, including history, international relations, economics, political science, and environmental sciences. It employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, drawing on data from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were based on oral interviews with community stakeholders and members, quarry workers and local authorities. In sourcing primary data, purposive sampling was used to interview local mining merchants, key community stakeholders, government parastatals, geologists, economic analysts, environmental scientists, and other field experts. The Cross River State Ministry of Mineral Resources is the government authority overseeing solid

² "Awi, Akamkpa, Cross River state, Nigeria". <https://www.mindat.org/feature-2348780.html> Accessed 30 October,2025.

minerals operations in Cross River State. The ministry is an embodiment of information vital to this research. Interviews with geologists, environmental scientists, and other field experts focus on understanding the hazardous effects of mining operations on the atmosphere and local communities, and on ways to mitigate or reduce these hazards. While content analysis of secondary data from government reports, academic publications, ministerial reports and government open documents was also consulted.

Brief History of Akamkpa Local Government

Akamkpa Local Government Area is in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State and was created in 1976. It has a land area of 4,300 square kilometres. It is bounded by the Odukpani and Akpabuyo Local Government Areas to the west and south, the Biase and Yakurr Local Government Areas to the northwest, the Ikom and Etung Local Government Areas to the north, and the Republic of Cameroon to the East. There are ten wards in the Local Government Area, comprising Akamkpa Urban, Uyanga, Ikpai, Awi, Mbarakom, Ojuk South, Ojuk North, Oban, Eku, and Iko. The Local Government Area comprises 260 villages grouped into 30 clans for political and administrative convenience (see Appendix 1).³With the state's largest forest area and fertile land watered by many rivers, streams, and springs, the people are mostly agrarian. There are several agricultural estates in the area, such as Kwa Fall Oil Palm Estate, Ayip Eku Oil Palm Estate, CREL Rubber Estate, Calaro Oil Palm Estates and Oban Oil Palm Estate, formerly known as Oban Rubber Estate. There is also a vast tract of reserved forest, gmelina, and other pulpwood plantations, as well as privately owned rubber, oil palm, cocoa plantations, and other forest products that are essential for the industrial development of the entire state and country.⁴

An abundance of granite rocks has led to the establishment of many quarrying companies at Old Netim, Awi, Njachan, Ayemba, Uyanga, and Obung. There are other

³Ejagham Tradition. "Ejagham Akamkpa". <https://www.ejaghamtradition.org/ejagham-akamkpa/> Accessed 27 October 2025.

⁴ Ejagham Tradition. "Ejagham Akamkpa". <https://www.ejaghamtradition.org/ejagham-akamkpa/> Accessed 30th October 2025.

solid minerals, such as limestone and kaolin, yet to be exploited. Akamkpa Local Government Area offers vast potential for investment in agro-based industries, mineral exploration and research into secondary uses of these products, tourism, and education.⁵

The Awi community consists of about 14 villages: Ajonji, Ayaebam, Awi, Ekaghanka, Enia, Eranim, Esae, Etiokumi, Iranim, Mfam Efe, Mfame Koko, Nyane Mba, and Ojak Jen. It is located about 50 km north-east of Calabar. The different ethnic groups resident in Awi include the Efiks, Ibibios, Ibos, and Quas. The indigenous language of the area is Ejagham.⁶ The leadership of the Awi community is headed by the village head, with a council of chiefs, a women's leader, and a youth leader. Only indigenes of Awi, who rely heavily on paternal relations, are appointed to chieftaincy or leadership positions.⁷

Brief History of Mining in Akamkpa

The emergence of stones, particularly limestone and granite, in the communities of Akamkpa was discovered in the early 1940s and 1970s, respectively. Granite was discovered in the old Netim community during the construction of the road from Calabar to Ikom by the RCC company, leading to rock (quarry) mining and the use of the rock as part of the road construction material. The granite stone in Old Netim has been in place for over 100 years. This led to the establishment of quarry companies in Akamkpa and to the search for stone in communities. The first official quarry company was Nigeria Industries, before the RCC quarry company began operations. This has led to various establishment and mining investments across the stone communities within the local government for over a century and has led to the discovery of other earth minerals, such as alluvial gold, manganese, and gold.⁸

⁵ Ejagham Tradition. "Ejagham Akamkpa". <https://www.ejaghamtradition.org/ejagham-akamkpa/>

⁶ Ejagham Tradition. "Ejagham Akamkpa". <https://www.ejaghamtradition.org/ejagham-akamkpa/> Accessed 30th October 2025.

⁷ M. Orok, 30+, Youth Leader of Awi, oral interview. 23 September 2025.

⁸ L. Edet, 60+, Senior Lecturer at the University of Calabar, oral interview at University of Calabar, 17 November 2025.

Limestone in the Mfamosing axis of Akamkpa was discovered during the road construction of Calabar to the Ekang border in the 1970s-1980s. The first company to mine limestone was CalCemCo, owned by the Cross River state government, for cement production.⁹ The Mfamosing plant, a modern production facility with an annual production capacity of 2.5MMT, was inaugurated in 2009. It was originally established in 2002, after acquiring the assets of the moribund Calabar Cement Company (CalCemCo), under the name United Cement Company (UNICEM), and a Greenfield cement manufacturing plant was constructed at Mfamosing, 40km northeast of Calabar, Cross River State. In 2012, it expanded its product portfolio and currently offers customers two cement products catering for general-purpose and specialised applications. To meet the increasing demand for its products, an additional manufacturing line with a production capacity of 2.5MMT has been constructed. The Plant, completed in 2016 and now owned by LafargeHolcim Africa, is part of the Holcim Group. The construction of a new plant has doubled the company's production capacity to 5MMT per annum, thereby consolidating its position as the leading cement company in Nigeria's South-South and South-East geopolitical regions.¹⁰

Brief History of Mark-Sino Quarry and Blocks Limited

Mark-Sino operates under the name Mark–Sino Stone Nigeria Limited, also referenced locally as Mark–Sino Quarry and Blocks. It was incorporated and registered on the 16th of June 2014; it is a Chinese-owned company. The company operates quarrying and crushing operations in the Awi community of the Akamkpa Local Government Area, Cross River State, supplying crushed stone, chippings, and concrete blocks for building, road, and drainage works. The company began operations in 2017, having fulfilled the following conditions:

⁹ L. Edet, 60+, Senior Lecturer at the University of Calabar, oral interview at the University of Calabar, 17 November 2025.

¹⁰ Lafarge Africa. *2017 Rating Report*. Augusto & Co. Publishers, 2017, p.3.

1. **Community Consent:** The company received approval and consent from the community to establish and exploit the rock mineral discovered on their land. It is worth noting that once a mineral resource is found on a person's land, that land becomes communal land and belongs to the community and the government. The community, after agreements and an MoU have been negotiated and signed with the company, provides the company with a letter of permission to begin operations.
2. **Consent Form:** The community letter of permission is taken to the federal government, and a consent form is collected, which shows the coordinates of the land to be mined.
3. **License:** after which a license to operate will be granted that shows the cadastral units; that is, the size of land, area and local government of the proposed mine site.¹¹

Quarry Traditions, Operations in the Awi Community

Quarry mining is a type of open-pit mining, or surface mining, that involves extracting and crushing stones, sand, or limestone. These raw materials are then processed into products such as cement, concrete and asphalt. Quarry mining is capital-intensive and requires specialised skills to ensure smooth operations and maximise profits. As a result, most quarry companies in Akamkpa are owned by foreign investors; more predominantly, today, Chinese-owned companies are dominant in this sector in the Akamkpa local government. Before these companies can begin operations, they must follow certain steps and traditions with the community, local government, state government, and federal government.

Quarry Traditional Rites

¹¹ Office of the Commissioner, Ministry of Mineral Sources, oral interview at the Ministry of Mineral Resources, 24 October 2025.

The people of Awi and the whole Akampka Local Government mining community believe that the rock mineral is a gift from the goddess of Rock, “Ndem”. Thus, they believe that before mining production can commence, the goddess of the rock must be appeased and also ensure that the company maximises profits with little or no challenges. A ritual is conducted by the maidens of the goddess, “Aalum, Anum,” in the presence of the village head, Ntufam, Chiefs, cultural groups, women, youth, religious persons, and members of the community, all adorned in their respective groups' traditional attire. This ritual consists of the slaughtering of an animal, the pouring of libations, prayers, and incantations, to thank the goddess for the rock, for the provision of more rocks, and for the smooth operation of the company. The people believe that performing this ritual will ensure that the discovered stone remains rather than disappearing mysteriously, and that the company will not have issues during operations.¹²

Mark- Sino Quarry and Corporate Social Responsibility in the Awi Community

Job Creation: Quarry mining provides both direct and indirect employment for residents, ranging from marketers, manual labourers, truck drivers, and machine operators to vendors and artisans who supply services to quarry workers. The community's youth are actively engaged in marketing and buying granite, although the company mines and crushes granite into various sizes; however, marketers or dealers are needed to purchase the granite stones. This serves as a link and intermediary partnership between the company and dealers.¹³ This has increased household income and people's welfare. It has also spurred the increase of other commercial activities and businesses in the community, such as markets, transportation, boutiques, kiosks, and canteens. Also, the company employs the locals on a professional basis for construction and administrative operations.¹⁴ This helps increase local government revenue through taxes and levies and

¹²A.N. Orok, 60+, Farmer, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

¹³ O. Etta, M. Orok, J. Itaya. 35+, Business Owners, Group Interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

¹⁴ A.N. Orok. 60+, Farmer, oral interview. 23 September 2025.

ensures a diverse, thriving community by stimulating ancillary businesses such as hospitality, transportation, and small-scale trade.

Revenue Generation: Mining is exclusively under the prerogative of the Federal government. Under the Nigerian Minerals and Mining Act (2007), all mineral deposits belong to the Federal Government, which then allocates revenues back to the states, in a formula similar to that used to share out oil and gas revenues, with a special allocation (representing 13 per cent of derived revenue) going to states that yield the mineral revenues. The federal government collects revenue from royalty or fee payments through the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development (MSMD) from mining entities. (see Appendix 3).¹⁵

Mark-Sino company also pays rent or lease to the community for the use of the land. This lease could be a short-term (minimum of 5 years) or a long-term agreement, subject to renewal. The request for access to the terms of the agreement between the company and the Awi community was denied; thus, the exact amount of rent could not be ascertained. However, it was affirmed that rent is paid as a lump sum rather than annually.¹⁶

Also, for every fully loaded truck that leaves the company, the community and the Local Government collect a levy, which is then distributed to community stakeholders. For long trucks, about 15,000 naira, and for small trucks, about 8,000 naira per truck, is collected by the community. At the same time, the Local Government charge is about 5000 naira per truck, with over 200 fully loaded trucks leaving the company daily.¹⁷ The researcher's request to be furnished with the revenue figures accruing to the Awi community and the Akamkpa local government was not granted. Still, interactions with

¹⁵ G. Okunola. "A Survey of the Solid Minerals landscape and endowments in Nigeria." NEITI Occasional Paper Series, Issue 5, January 2020, p. 10.

¹⁶ A.N. Orok. 60+, Farmer, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

¹⁷ M. Orok, 30+, youth leader, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

community and local government representatives indicate that these revenues are collected daily.¹⁸

Quarry operations contribute to local and state government revenue through taxes and levies, such as PAYE and withholding taxes. This revenue supports public development projects and local commercial activities.¹⁹ The researcher's request to access the amount figures from the Cross River State Internal Revenue Service on the company's tax was not granted, as of the time this study was undertaken.

Infrastructural Development: Mark Sino Company has contributed to road construction, community water supply, and school blocks as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR). Interaction with some Awi stakeholders reveals that the community signed an agreement with the company, on certain infrastructure projects to be carried out by the company. Although access to the MoU was not granted to ascertain whether these terms have been met, interactions with community stakeholders and field observations affirm the construction of school blocks and the promised provision of school facilities and equipment to the Government Technical College Awi (see Appendix 2).

Scholarships: Evidence indicates that the Quarry company operates a scholarship scheme for students of the Awi community at the tertiary institutions. One person is chosen per family until every member of the community is a recipient of this scholarship and bursary. The bursary is paid monthly for the duration of the educational years, and the scholarship funds half of the recipients' tuition fees. This initiative has boosted the youth's educational drive and helped them pursue their careers and dreams.^{20 21} The exact number of youths who have benefited from this scholarship scheme was not recorded. Still, narratives indicated that almost all families in the community have benefited from it, and it remains an ongoing benefit scheme.

¹⁸ S. Ukam, 35+ Geologist, oral interview at Awi, 22 October 2025.

¹⁹ P. Itaya, 60+, Farmer, oral interview at Akamkpa, 21 October 2025.

²⁰ O. Asuquo, P. Orok and V. Etam, 25+, Scholarship recipients. Group Interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

²¹ V. Etam, 25+, Student, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

Skills Acquisition: The presence of the Mark-Sino company has helped Awi youths acquire artisanal skills, including block moulding and rudimentary construction. They are employed as menial labourers by companies, where they gain construction skills that they can also use to render commercial services to society.²²

Socioeconomic and Environmental Challenges

Despite Mark- Sino's economic importance and contributions to the community, quarrying and its miners have created several socioeconomic and environmental challenges in Awi.

1. **Pollution of Farmlands, Streams or Natural Sources of water:** Quarry mining produces dust that settles on the surfaces of the streams and farmlands. During the dry season, dust levels are higher, making streams undrinkable and killing crops. The Awi people rely extensively on their streams in Ebanga, Essai, and Kerekere as a source of water for drinking, cooking and other household activities. With stream contamination, the community faces a water crisis. Due to stream pollution, borehole systems have become an alternative source of water; however, people complain that, because of the abundance of rock minerals, drilling for water is often difficult, and in most cases, the water stops flowing even after the borehole is drilled. They are confronted with water scarcity and have to rely on sachet water from other local governments or communities. Coupled with the lack of electricity in the area, the severity of water scarcity is profound. Their farms and crops are not left out, as the dust is chemically reactive, affecting soil acidity and damaging crops or reducing crop yields, threatening agricultural productivity.²³
2. **Health Hazards and Diseases:** Residents of Awi are exposed to noise and dust pollution, which causes respiratory diseases and hearing problems. The chemical-prone dust released during blasting and production pollutes the air, leading to

²² A. Etim, 20+ Scholarship recipient, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025. A. Etim, 20+ Scholarship recipient, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

²³ M. Orok, 30+, youth leader of Awi, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

- respiratory issues, cancer, and other health hazards. The blasting of rocks into large pieces generates noise, shaking, and vibrations that are felt far beyond the pit sites. This can lead to shock that causes heart attacks or spikes in blood pressure. This dust also causes skin irritations and allergies.²⁴ Also, research has shown that the Awi community has high exposure to *Schistosoma haematobium* infection. This bacterium is predominant in rural communities where residents lack access to safe drinking water. To control this disease, the provision of piped-borne water is essential.²⁵
3. **Lack of Electricity:** The inhabitants of Awi Community decried that there has been no electricity in their community for more than seven (7) years. They rely on generators and solar-powered lights in their homes. A community that houses mineral resources serving all states in Nigeria lacks access to electricity. The youths complained that it affects businesses and their households. It also increases household expenditure. “We do not have water, no light, we are not recipients of the revenue we generate for the government.” Another youth holds that the government has recently brought in three (3) transformers, one at Awi, Mma Effa, and Ekometa Junctions. He questions whether three transformers will be enough to power Akamkpa. Not all transformers are yet operative”²⁶
 4. **Lack of adequate infrastructure:** It was observed that there is an immense lack of school resources needed to teach the students at Government technical college, Awi, such as blackboards, chairs, tables at the secondary arm of the technical college, no staff tables and chairs, no hygienic restrooms for teachers and students, absence of Laboratory and technical facilities in the secondary school, no security personnel to secure building materials, school facilities and pupils. It

²⁴ Office of the Commissioner, Ministry of Mineral Resources, Cross River State, oral interview at Ministry of Mineral Resources, Cross River State. 24 October 2025.

²⁵S. Akpan and G.C. Ejezie. “Prevalence of Urinary Schistosomiasis in Awi, Akamkpa Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.” *HSOA Journal of Nephrology & Renal Therapy*, 2017, vol 3, no 013. DOI:10.24966/NRT-7313/100013, p.14.

²⁶O. Etta, M. Orok, J. Itaya. 35+, Businessmen, Group Interview at Awi. 23 September 2025..

was noticed that teachers have to darken the school walls to use them as blackboards in classrooms.²⁷

Observations also show that there are no tarred roads in most villages of the Awi community, despite the availability of substantial grant resources. The heavy-duty trucks that ply the roads have further damaged them. There are no good health medical centres in the community. Most medical cases are referred to the medical centres in Calabar.²⁸

5. **Land degradation and landslides:** Quarry mining leads to land degradation and landslides. The mining of the rocks leaves an open hole in the land, which cannot be recovered or reclaimed when mining companies pull out or stop operations. Some quarry companies shut down or pull out without notice to the government, abandoning pit sites. Unclaimed pits can lead to loss of life, especially during rainy seasons when the pits are filled with water and grass grows, making them hard to spot. This has led to loss of lives.²⁹ The Awi people seem unaware of the consequences of such abandoned or unclaimed pits.
6. **Deforestation:** the discovery of the rock mineral leads to the cutting down of trees or the clearing of the sites to allow for the mining and production process to take place. The cost of cutting down a tree is harmful to health, the environment, and the climate.³⁰ The people of Awi seem not to be concerned about the deforestation of their community, as mining companies signify a flow of resources and other benefits into the community, thus a small price to pay.
7. **Communal and Company Disputes:** Quarry companies also fail to implement sustainable CSR programs, leading to community dissatisfaction and occasional conflicts. If the mining company has failed to carry out the community development project it agreed to and signed, the community stakeholders send or

²⁷E.S. Esuong, 40+, Principal of Government Technical School, Awi, oral interview at Awi, 21 October 2025.

²⁸ L. Agbor. 60+, Farmer, oral interview at Awi. 21 October 2025.

²⁹ Office of the Commissioner, Ministry of Mineral Resources, Cross River State, oral interview at Ministry of Mineral Resources, Cross River State. 24 October 2025.

³⁰ Office of the Commissioner of Mineral Resources, Cross River State, oral interview at the Ministry of Mineral Resources, 24 October 2025.

- relay a message to the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) in the Company about the breach of agreement. The CLO is the messenger or public relations officer between the company and the community. When dialogue fails, community stakeholders can engage the youth leader to mobilise the youth for a peaceful demonstration, such as locking the company gates or blocking access until the terms of the agreements are met. Such an occurrence is rare, as the people of Akamkpa are generally peaceful and avoid conflict; the company has, over time, complied with and responded to the community's dialogues. Also, communal clashes between villages for financial benefits gained from the company occasionally arise.^{31 32}
8. Additionally, the influx of non-indigenous quarry workers sometimes results in cultural erosion, social vices, and rising living costs, such as the high cost of foodstuffs and housing.
 9. **Lack of Safety Measures:** Observation shows that there is a lack of safety measures and materials for the markets and dealers of the mining companies in Awi. They lack personal protective equipment (PPE), such as facemasks and protective clothing, and access to clean water. Without the marketers and dealers, quarry mining companies won't be able to market or distribute their products nationwide. So they are a symbiotic duo and need each other to survive. The dealers complain that the lack of safety measures for them is astonishing, as the expatriates take their safety measures and kit very seriously and don't care about them.³³

Government and Community Responses

The Cross River State Government, through its Ministry of Mineral Resources Development, regulates quarry operations via licensing and environmental compliance

³¹ Office of the Commissioner of Mineral Resources, Cross River State, oral interview at the Ministry of Mineral Resources, 24 October 2025.

³² Office of the Ministry of Mining and Steel Development. Group Interview at the ministry of mining and Steel Development. 19 November 2025.

³³ Mark –Sino Market dealers, 35+, Group Interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

measures. However, weak enforcement and limited monitoring have allowed unsustainable practices to persist. Community leaders and youth groups have engaged in dialogue to demand fair compensation and welfare packages, though conflicts occasionally arise due to unfulfilled promises and poor communication. In response to regulating the sector in the state, the Governor of Cross River State, Senator Prince Bassey Edet Otu, signed an executive order that enforces existing laws and protects the mining community against insecurity, exploitation, and the collection of surface rent by mining entities. This order was signed on the 14th of August, 2024. This executive order provides a framework for the state to regulate the sector, protect mining communities against exploitation, and ensure that mining entities fulfil their due rights to these communities. Mining under the prerogative of the federal government puts the state in a back seat in the sector, despite the state being the recipient of issues and challenges that might arise from mining operations. Such an order crushes the vices of mining entities, curbs illegal mining, and regulates environmental challenges.³⁴

The adoption of Sustainable Quarry Practices will enable the quarry economy to remain beneficial without compromising the well-being of host communities; a sustainable framework must be adopted. This includes strict enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes, and regular stakeholder meetings between quarry operators, community representatives, and local government. Investment in green technologies and effective government oversight will ensure compliance with mining regulations and equitable revenue distribution.³⁵

Conclusion

The Mark-Sino Quarry and Blocks company in the Awi community plays a significant role in local and state development, generating revenue, creating employment

³⁴ Office of the Ministry of Mining and Steel Development. Group Interview at the ministry of mining and Steel Development. 19 November 2025.

³⁵ S. Ukam, 35+, Geologist, oral interview at Awi, 21 October 2025.

opportunities, and providing infrastructure. However, the community's socioeconomic and environmental challenges highlight the need for a balanced, sustainable strategy. Through collaboration amongst the government, the mining entity, and the community, the benefits of the quarry economy can be maximised while minimising its adverse effects.

Recommendations

This study proposes the following recommendations:

1. Access to policy documents and agreements signed between the community and investors or multinational corporations should be made public to ensure accountability and transparency.
2. Strengthen regulation through government enforcement of strict environmental and social standards—the enforcement of the executive order in the community and across the state.
3. Prioritise community development projects or CSR, especially in water systems, electricity, education, healthcare, roads, and employment.
4. The state government should actively take up infrastructure projects in the community and local government, as the quarry firms cannot take the place of the government nor carry out all projects of government responsibility. CSRs are meant to assist the government, not take over its responsibilities.
5. The adoption of sustainable quarry practices will enable the quarry economy to remain beneficial without compromising the well-being of host communities; a sustainable framework must be adopted to ensure implementation.
6. Communities should continue to promote dialogue and establish community company liaison committees to manage grievances and build trust.
7. Environmental restoration by quarry companies to rehabilitate exploited lands, implement reforestation programs and quality air initiatives.
8. Public Awareness: Educate residents on the benefits and risks of quarry operations to foster cooperation and environmental stewardship.

9. Prioritise needs according to the challenges of the community by the company, government and community leadership.

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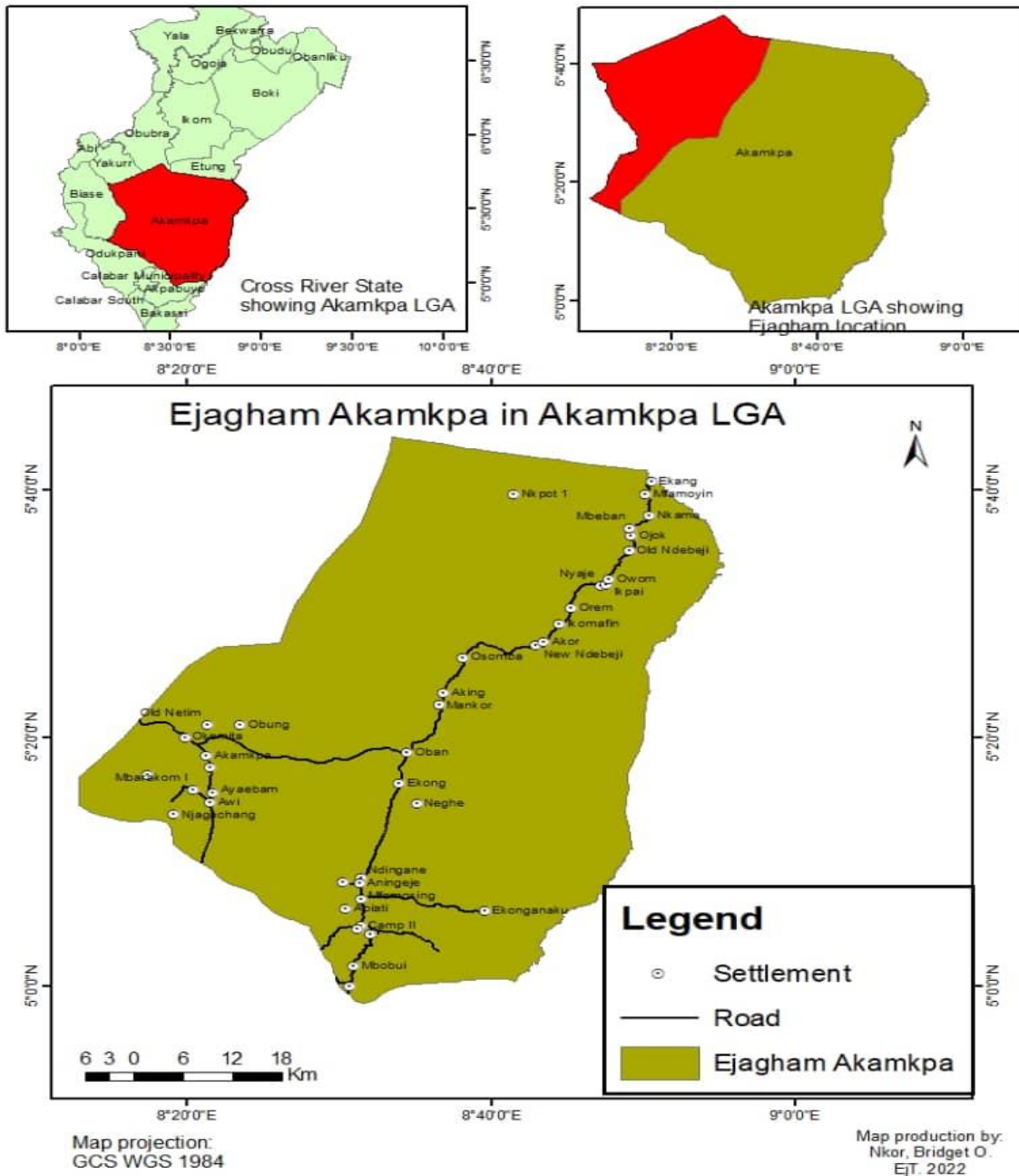
Orok, M., 30+, Marketer, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

Orok, M., 30+, Youth Leader of Awi, oral interview at Awi. 23 September 2025.

Ukam, S., 35+, Geologist, oral interview. 21 October 2025.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Map of Ejagham communities in Akamkpa.



Source: Ejagham Tradition. “Ejagham Akamkpa”.
<https://www.ejaghamtradition.org/ejagham-akamkpa/> Accessed 30 October 2025.

Appendix 2: Some School Blocks constructed by Mark–Sino Quarry Company in Government Technical College, Awi, Akamkpa Local Government Area



Source: Authors' fieldwork, 21 October 2025.

Appendix 3: Summary of Revenue Generation from Mark-Sino Quarry Stones Ltd.,
2017- October 2025.

Year	Amount (N)
2017	3,428,213.30
2018	4,485,000.00
2019	10,662,204.50
2020	5,428,600.00
2021	5,567,500.00
2023	9,100,000.00
2023	8,785,000.00
2024	12,285,000.00
Jan-Oct, 2025	21,200,000.00
Grand Total	80,941,517.80

Source: Office of the Ministry of Mines & Steel Development. 19 November, 2025.