**Title: Changes in the socioeconomic fortunes of households and communities in oil affected districts of Ghana.**

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Ghana discovered oil in 2007 and by late 2010, the country began to earn revenue from its oil resource. The literature on the development of natural resources in Africa lays a lot of emphasis on the governance and institutional issues surrounding the occurrence of a curse or blessing. A lot of such discussions has strongly influenced opinions and propelled a lot of research in predicting the path Ghana would take. The discussions again have implications for regions found closest to the oil resource. Six out of twenty-two districts in the Western region of Ghana are recognized as “oil affected districts”. This paper is part of larger study on the linkages between the institutional set up in Ghana’s oil sector and the socioeconomic fortunes of communities in oil affected districts. The discussion is derived from data collected from a questionnaire survey of 400 households, key informant interviews of opinion leaders and traditional authorities and focus group discussions conducted in six communities in two oil affected districts. The study finds that Ghana has an institutional framework governing the management of its oil which is highly centralized. Using a wealth index obtained from the households before and after oil discovery, the study finds that there was a change in the socioeconomic fortunes being experienced by households and communities in the affected districts. The change is however not positive for all households in the six communities and is significantly related to the main economic activities of households. The change also is found to have indirect links to the institutional management of the oil resource and revenue. The study concludes that it is essential that institutional provisions in the future take into account the spatial differences in oil affected districts. This will engender the growth of more forward and backward linkages for widespread and positive socioeconomic fortunes for households in the oil affected districts.