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**Community Development Agreements and the State’s Extractive Strategy in Mongolia: Participatory Governance or Governance Participation?**

**Abstract:** This paper analyses the emergence of a new institution of “accountability” in the governance of the Mongolian mining sector: Community Development Agreements (CDAs). While CDAs in the Mongolian context are part of a global ‘explosion in the negotiation of agreements between commercial developers and local communities’ (Faircheallaghi, 2013: 222), I focus on the particular ways in which this ‘global’ phenomenon functions within the specific juridical-political structure of the Mongolian state, at the local and national level. This paper is drawn from part of one of the author’s thesis chapters about the central state’s response to resistance to mining in rural regions of Mongolia by local communities and sub-national authorities. CDAs are an institutional solution devised by the central state to “remedy” the conflict-prone relationship between communities, local authorities and mining companies, where local residents and authorities have regularly obstructed mining projects through direct action and various forms of political bargaining. On paper (ie, the State Minerals Policy 2014-2025), CDAs are intended to ‘support local development and protect community interests’ (Article 3.5). However, this paper argues that the provision of economic benefits is a secondary function of CDAs, arguing that the strategic impetus for CDAs from the central state is to primarily constrain anti-extractive actions and thereby stabilise the extractive process for companies. While there are undoubtedly immediate economic benefits with CDAs and a certain level of recognition of socio-environmental impacts of mining, they function politically to fragment the base of local resistance. CDAs provide a concrete case study to see the ways in which the central state attempts to systemically subordinate resistant elements within the national political system and “civil society” to enable the extractive economy, yet without the appearance of domination through the use of financial mechanisms and legal institutions.