



# The Political Economy of Natural Resource Extraction in Sierra Leone: A Survey Research

Fula Kamara<sup>1</sup>, Sakandu Sowe<sup>2</sup>, Dakuba Bundowa<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Research, Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology

<sup>2</sup> Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone

<sup>3</sup> Njala University

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**Correspondence:** [fkamara@yahoo.com](mailto:fkamara@yahoo.com)

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## Author notes

*Fula Kamara is affiliated with Department of Research, Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Sakandu Sowe is affiliated with Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Dakuba Bundowa is affiliated with Njala University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

## Abstract

The political economy of natural resource extraction in Sierra Leone has been a subject of significant interest within African Studies. The country's abundant mineral wealth, including diamonds and rutile, has attracted substantial foreign investment since independence. The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews among stakeholders including government officials, industry representatives, and community members. Data collection was conducted through structured questionnaires and semi-structured discussions in urban and rural areas of Sierra Leone. Findings indicate that while diamond mining has contributed significantly to GDP growth, it also exposes vulnerable communities to environmental degradation and socio-economic disparities. In contrast, the rutile sector, although less prominent, demonstrates higher levels of community engagement and sustainable development practices. The research underscores the need for robust regulatory frameworks that balance economic benefits with social equity. It highlights the importance of transparent governance in natural resource management to mitigate negative impacts on local populations. Policy recommendations include strengthening community participation in decision-making processes, enhancing environmental protection standards, and fostering equitable distribution of wealth generated by mining activities.

**Keywords:** *Geographical Indicators, Central Africa, Political Economy, Resource Dependency, State Capabilities, Corruption, Informal Sector*

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