

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN BUILDING CORPORATE REPUTATION: A
STUDY OF KINROSS CHIRANO GOLD MINES LIMITED**

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

We have read the university regulations relating to plagiarism and certify that this report is all our work and do not contain any unacknowledged work from any other source. We also declare that we have been under supervision for this report.

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We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision laid down by Christian Service University College.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	i
Statement of Authenticity.....	ii
Table of content	iii
Abstract	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
Dedication	viii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study.....	1
1.2 Problem statement	2
1.3 Purpose of the study	3
1.4 Objectives of the study	3
1.5 Research questions	4
1.6 Significance of the study	4
1.7 Scope of the study.....	5
1.8 Limitation of study	5
1.9 Definition of key terms	6

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction	7
2.1.1 Concepts and Origin of PR	7
2.1.2 Public relations in Ghana	9
2.2 Concepts of corporate reputation	9
2.2.1 How to build corporate reputation	11
2.3 Theoretical framework of corporate reputation	12
2.3.1 Impression management theory	12
2.4 Empirical review of literature	13

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	17
3.2 Research method	17
3.3 Research design	18
3.4 Study population	18
3.5 Sampling process	18
3.5.1 Non probability sampling	18
3.5.2 Purposive sampling	19
3.5.3 Sample Size.....	19
3.6 Data collection method	19
3.6.1 Data Collection Instrument.....	19
3.7 Data analysis	20

3.8 Ethical considerations	20
3.9 Profile of Kinross Chirano gold mines limited	21

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction	22
4.2 Background of Respondents.....	22
4.3 Assessment of whether Kinross Chirano gold mines utilizes PR in building the organizations corporate reputation	23
4.4 Assessment of PR activities performed by the PR unit of Kinross Chirano gold mines on building the organizations corporate reputation	25
4.5 Assessment of how the usage of PR activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization	29

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and Conclusions	35
5.2 Recommendations	37

REFERENCE	39
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APPENDIX	43
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ABSTRACT

There is a growing phenomenon about the positive impact of corporate reputation on the performance of an organization. The purpose of this study was to provide insightful information on the role of public relations in building Kinross Chirano gold mines' corporate reputation. The objectives of the study were to determine the public relations activities performed by the community and public relations department of Kinross Chirano gold mines in building the organizations corporate reputation and how the usage of public relations activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization. The impressions management theory was employed in this study because the theory argues that an organization must establish and maintain impressions that are congruent with the perceptions they want to convey to their publics. Qualitative research method was used in this study because it was more suitable in fulfilling the goal of this study which is to describe a phenomenon and portray the situation of the role of public relations in building a corporate reputation so as to enlighten the readers of the study. The results from the study showed that Kinross Chirano gold mines acknowledges the value of public relations and has utilised it in building and sustaining the organizations corporate reputation. Also, its public relations activities have immensely benefited and improved the lives of the indigenous of the host communities who are very appreciative of the effort of the organization.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to God Almighty and our parents for without them we would not have believed we could come this far, nor would we have had the persistence to go the distance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The chartered institute of public relations (CIPR) definition of public relation states “public relation is about reputation- the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between the organization and its publics”. It is the role of public relations to make sure that the organization is getting credit for the good it does. Great reputations are built on doing this consistently over a period of time in which a track record of delivering on promises and engendering trust is evident to everyone. All members of an organization have a contribution to make in building and sustaining reputation (Murray and White, 2004). Reputation scholar Charles Fombrun , Professor Emeritus, Stern school of Business, New York university , an editor –in-chief of the journal corporate reputation review, defines reputation as the sum of the images the various constituencies have of an organization. It must be however noted that performance and behavior as well as communication are components that constitute the sum of images which is critical to reputation.

Corporate reputation can be seen as the organizations’ character from the perception of its stakeholders. A good corporate reputation has been argued to have effects on the economic choices made by stakeholders’ and thereby direct influence on the financial performance of the organization (Rindova, Williamsson, Petkova & Sever, 2005).Shakespeare called it “the purest treasure mortal times afford.” Men have fought duels and killed for it. Organizations and other institutions have succeeded or failed because of it. Warren buffet said: “if you lose dollars for the

firm by bad decisions, I will be very understanding. If you lose reputation for the firm, I will be ruthless.”

(Argenti and Druckenmiller, 2004) argue that “organizations increasingly recognize the importance of corporate reputation to achieve business goals and stay competitive”. While there are many recent examples of organizations whose leadership and business practice behaviors have destroyed their reputations, such as Enron, Arthur Andersen, Tyco and WorldCom, the positive case for reputation is that it has fostered continued expansion of old stagers like Johnson & Johnson and Philips, and innovators such as Cisco Systems, who top recent rankings of the most respected organizations in the US and Europe.

Influential leaders from host communities have also paid tribute in letters to show their support and gratitude to the organization which is testament to the organizations positive reputation on their stakeholders. The AKOBEN EPA audit speaks volumes about the excellent reputation of Kinross Chirano gold mines. In the 2012 trend analysis conducted by the EPA on the performance of the mining sector Chirano gold mines received a green rating depicting a very good overall performance. The rating was also the highest of all the mining organizations in 2012 and 2013.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many industries including the mining industry suffer from serious corporate reputation problems. In the perception of various stakeholders, they are seen as exploiters, inefficient and have solely profit oriented motives. Also these mining organizations are alleged to be exploitive since the revenue acquired through their mining activities are not invested back into the host communities as well as some environmental issues associated with their mining activities. The researchers

observed that organizations of all types especially the mining organizations are under increasing pressure from a host of stakeholders to be more responsive to their needs and interests and as such have chosen Kinross Chirano gold mines one of the organizations at the pinnacle of the Ghanaian mining industry as an organization suitable to conduct this research about.

A good corporate reputation is seen as a valuable and competitive asset. How it evolves and how to manage the phenomenon is therefore interesting to investigate since it can give an organization the competitive edge in any business industry. Thus in this study, the researchers seek to establish the activities performed by PR professionals of Chirano gold mines in managing the corporate reputation of Kinross Chirano gold mines.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to provide insights on the role of public relations in managing the corporate reputation of Kinross Chirano gold mines.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine whether Kinross Chirano gold mines utilizes public relations in building the organizations corporate reputation.
2. To determine PR activities performed by the PR unit of Kinross Chirano gold mines in building the corporate reputation of the organization.
3. To find out how the usage of public relations activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent does the management of Kinross Chirano gold mines utilize public relations in building the organizations corporate reputation?
2. What activities do the PR practitioners of Kinross Chirano gold mine undertake to build the organization's corporate reputation?
3. How has the usage of public relations activities contributed to the reputation of Kinross Chirano gold mines?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research was conceived in full realization of the various interests it would serve to the various stakeholders of the mining industry. Mining owners and operators face many significant and complex environmental risks throughout the mining cycle including groundwork, handling hazardous substances, waste disposal and control which could potentially undermine their reputation. The findings will help management to appreciate the need for reputation management and how it can be used as a strategic tool to create favorable shareholder perception. This study can contribute to a theoretical body of knowledge in public relations about corporate reputation. Public relations scholars and practitioners alike have focused on relationships and reputation to demonstrate public relations effectiveness; several public relations theoreticians suggested a close link between such concepts.

We consider that public relations professionals will find the findings of this study useful in understanding organizational reputation as well as precursors of such concepts from the perspective of publics.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is concerned with the distinctive and effective role that public relations can play in managing the corporate reputation of multinational mining organizations. It is limited to Chirano gold mines limited a subsidiary of Kinross Gold Operation located in southwestern Ghana, approximately 100 kilometers southwest of Kumasi. The study was carried out at the headquarters of Kinross Chirano gold mines in Chirano. It sought the views of the public relations practitioners who were relevant because they had pertinent information for the study. The study was carried out between November 2014 and May 2015.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

The researchers attempted to expand the understanding of the role of PR in building an organization's corporate reputation. Although the endeavor was worthwhile, it was not without its limitations. Due to inadequate time and resources, the study could not cover a wider geographical area and as such views from other communities outside the catchment area of Kinross Chirano Gold Mines were not acquired. Furthermore, the findings may be limited to the context of Kinross Chirano Gold Mines and may not reflect the role PR plays in building and sustaining the corporate reputation of other organizations. Also, the study used a non-probability sampling method to select the respondents that limits understanding the benefit of the probability sampling such as "the resulting sample is likely to provide a representative cross section of the whole" Denscombe,(2002,p.12).

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Publics: Publics are specific groups of people who are linked by a common interest or problem (Heath 2005).

Public relations: Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their public (2011 and 2012 PRSA)

Corporate reputation: corporate reputation is a soft concept. It is the overall estimation in which an organization is held by its internal and external stakeholders based on its past actions and probability of its future behavior. (Kim Harrison 2013)

Stakeholder: Any identifiable group or individual who can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives (Freeman and Reed, 1983)

Corporate communication: an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible, with the overall objective of creating a favorable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent. (Van Riel 1995)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the concepts of public relations and corporate reputation management. It further sets out the theory which is relevant to the study. Literature related to similar studies is also reviewed to provide different perspectives and a wider understanding of the topic.

2.1.1 CONCEPTS AND ORIGIN OF PUBLIC RELATIONS.

According to Trevor Morris & Simon Goldsworthy (2012) for anyone intending to make a more serious commitment to a public relation career, it is worth pausing and reflecting a little on what PR is, how the discipline has developed, how it has been seen by others, and the role it plays in society and particularly how PR relates to various organizations. Trevor Morris & Simon Goldsworthy (2012) asserts that in 1976, one public relations scholar identified 472 definitions of PR and the number keeps growing.

Public relations as a profession evolved from public relations practice. The latter has been around from the primeval days but as a profession, public relations is quite modern. Public relations practice has existed and has been utilized from the ancient days to these contemporary times. The public relations practice dates back to ancient Babylonian and Egyptian times as proven by the clay tablet found in ancient Iraq that promoted more advanced agricultural techniques. This is sometimes considered the first known example of public relations. In a more aristocratic manner, in 50 B.C the public relation practice was applied when Julius Caesar publicized his military exploits in the first known political campaign biography to convince the Romans that would make an excellent head of state- a strategy still employed by political

aspirants today. In England, Lord Chancellors acted as mediators between rulers and subjects in the medieval time which is a basic form of the PR practice. Although the term "public relations" was not yet developed, academics like James E. Grunig and Scott Cutlip identified early forms of public influence and communications management in ancient civilizations. Edward Bernays, one of the pioneers of PR identified "The three main elements of public relations are practically as old as society: informing people, persuading people, or integrating people with people."

The book *Today's Public Relations: An Introduction* says that, although experts disagree on public relations' origins, many identify the early 1900s as its beginning as a paid profession. According to Barbara Diggs-Brown, an academic with the American University School of Communication, the PR field anchors its work in historical events in order to improve its perceived validity, but it didn't begin as a professional field until around 1900. Academic Stuart Ewen asserts that PR efforts in the US were aimed at damage control

Trade associations were formed first in the U.S. in 1947 with the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), followed by the Institute of Public Relations (now the Chartered Institute of Public Relations) in London in 1948. The International Association of Public Relations was founded in 1955. According to *The Global Public Relations Handbook*, public relations evolved from a series of "press agents or publicists" to a manner of theory and practice in the 1980s. Research was published in academic journals like *Public Relations Review* and the *Journal of Public Relations Research*. This led to an industry consensus to categorize PR work into a four-step process: research, planning, communication and action

2.1.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN GHANA

In Ghana, The Institute of Public Relations, Ghana (IPR) is the sole professional body for Public Relations practitioners. Amongst its roles, IPR exists to provide a professional structure for the practice of Public Relations and enhance the ability and status of its members as professional practitioners. The Institute was established in 1972 as the Public Relations Association of Ghana (PRAG). PRAG was re-organized and a new Constitution, Code of Ethics, Code of Professional Standards and Bye-Laws were adopted on December 6th 1991 which transformed PRAG into the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana (IPR). IPR was consequently registered as a professional body under the Professional Bodies Registration Degree, (NRCD 143) of 1973. The Governing Council headed by a President, holds office for a period of two years. It maintains a secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary.

2.2 CONCEPTS OF CORPORATE REPUTATION

Depending on different perspectives, the concept of organizational reputation has been defined as assessments that multiple stakeholders make about the company's ability to fulfill their expectations (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2003), a collective system of subjective beliefs among members of a social group (Bromley, 1993, 2000, 2002), and representations in minds of multiple publics about an organization's past behaviors and related attributes (Coombs, 2000; J. Grunig and Hung, 2002). Fombrun and Van Riel (1997) introduced six distinct literature that currently converge in their emphasis on reputation. We summarize the following six perspectives on reputation from Fombrun and Van Riel and their citations (pp. 6-10):

- The economic view;
 - i. Game theory: Reputation of a player is the perception others have of the player's values (Weigelt & Camerer, 1988).
 - ii. Signaling theory: Managers can make strategic use of a company's reputation to signal its attractiveness such as their quality to the company's constituents (Shapiro, 1983).
 - iii. Capital and labor market: Companies rent the reputation of their agents to signal investors, regulators, and other publics about the firm's probity and credibility (Wilson, 1985).
- The strategic view: Strategies call attention to the competitive benefits of acquiring favorable reputations (Rindova & Fombrun, 1999).
- The marketing view: Reputation is often labeled as brand image; building brand equity requires the creation of a familiar brand that has favorable, strong and unique association (Keller, 1993).
- The organizational view: Reputations are rooted in the sense-making experiences of employees; a company's culture and identity shape a firm's business practices as well as the kinds of relationships that managers establish with key stakeholders.
- The sociological view: Reputation rankings are social constructions that come into being through the relationships that a focal firm has with its stakeholders in a shared institutional environment.
- The accounting view: Intangible assets build higher reputational assessments among observers; reputation, as intangible assets, needs to be included in financial reporting standards.

2.2.1 HOW TO BUILD CORPORATE REPUTATION

Corporate reputation is influenced by both operational and communication activities but more by operational activities. However, good communication programs are essential to beam awareness on the operational events or efforts of the company as well as enhance the organization's relationship with its stakeholders. So, both are very important. Below are the six steps discussed by Harrison. K, (2009) that can be used to strengthen corporate reputation through stakeholder relations:

- Research into your stakeholders for the purpose of getting acquainted to them. This research will more appropriately reveal their demographics and psychographics and thus explain who they are, what their preferences are, what they value most in a company, how they like to be related with by the company, et cetera.
- The research should be able to reveal the stakeholders' strengths and weaknesses. So, assess the strengths and weaknesses and then focus on the gap between internal realities of the company and stakeholder perceptions of the company. The aim is to minimize or eliminate this gap as much as possible towards reducing the forces that work against the company while increasing the forces that work or should work in its favor.
- Having been armed with a sound knowledge of your stakeholders, you have to do another research. This time it has to do with clearly identifying the main factors that comprise or underscore your organization's reputation. You will then align these factors with your company's mission, policies, strategies, programs and systems across all functional lines or operations of the company. This will no doubt produce a powerful reorientation of corporate priorities and behaviors.

- Having taken care of your stakeholders' expectations as revealed in the above research, you can then develop and implement plans and strategies that will help you focus on exceeding all stakeholders' expectations.
- The CEO must be directly involved in all aspects of the programs as the champion of the entire process.
- You must remember to measure regularly against targets while also working very hard to improve the results already obtained.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CORPORATE REPUTATION

2.3.1 Impression Management Theory

In sociology and social psychology, impression management is a goal-directed conscious or unconscious process in which people attempt to influence the perceptions of other people about a person, object or event; they do so by regulating and controlling information in social interaction Piwinger& Ebert (2001, pp. 1–2). It is usually used synonymously with self-presentation, in which a person tries to influence the perception of their image. The notion of impression management also refers to practices in professional communication and public relations, where the term is used to describe the process of formation of a company's or organizations public image. Impression management theory states that any individual or organization must establish and maintain impressions that are congruent with the perceptions they want to convey to their publics. From both a communications and public relations viewpoint, the theory of impression management encompasses the vital ways in which one establishes and communicates this congruence between personal or organizational goals and their intended actions which create public perception.

The study contributes to a body of work showing that far from being objective, our perceptions are shaped by unconscious brain processes that determine what we "choose" to see or ignore — even before we become aware of it. The findings also add to the idea that the brain evolved to be particularly sensitive to "bad guys" or cheaters — fellow humans who undermine social life by deception, theft or other non-cooperative behavior.

2.4 EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Otto Koskela (2010) in a study titled “The Corporate Image of Posiva” explored the importance of corporate image and reputation as integral parts in the pursuits of organizational goals.

Researcher Otto Koskela stated that corporate image and corporate reputation have been topics for academic discussion since the 1950s and they are as relevant today as they were back then, since the image or reputation of an organization can greatly influence its fortunes. The study investigated what the corporate image of PosivaOy is among two target groups; university students in the Satakunta region and Tampere, and municipal councilors from towns in the Satakunta region. The relevant theory in his thesis deals with the components of corporate personality, identity, image, and reputation.

After initial analysis of the questionnaire results was done, ten people, six practitioners and four municipal councilors, were interviewed using semi structured interviews. The analysis revealed that among the university students, Posiva is a fairly unknown company with no clear image in the minds of the respondents, except for a small minority. Among the municipal councilors, recognisability of the company is considerably better and a mostly positive image of Posiva has formed. The key recommendations of the study to the company was the incorporation of social media as a part of the communication strategy to better reach students, closer co-operation with universities regarding recruitment events and projects, and a realignment of the sponsoring and

corporate advertising efforts towards student magazines, organizations, and events. By utilizing the knowledge acquired from the study and taking into consideration the recommendations given, the company will be able to devise a strategy that can greatly improve its recognisability among university students and other young people.

In a journal by Alsop, Ronald J (2004) titled “The 18 Immutable Laws of Corporate Reputation: Creating, Protecting and Repairing Your Most Valuable Asset”, Alsop asserts that from WorldCom to the Catholic Church and Major League Baseball, reputation crises have never been more widespread (especially in the US) and, as a veteran Wall Street Journal executive specializing in branding and reputation management, he gives 18 “crucial laws to follow” in developing and protecting reputation. He cited an example in a simple decision made by a low-ranking employee when rescue workers at the World Trade Center site after 9/11 sought bottled water from a nearby Starbucks; they complained that an employee charged them for it. In a matter of hours, the Internet had picked up the story and Starbucks' worldwide reputation was damaged.

He talks of how corporate reputation can enhance business in good times, become a “protective halo” in turbulent times, and be destroyed in an instant by people at the highest (or lowest) levels of the corporate chain. He provides 18 documented “lessons” distilling the complex principles at the heart of reputation. He explains how to protect your reputation when the inevitable crisis hits, how to cope with the many hazards in cyberspace, how to create a reputation for vision and industry leadership, how to establish a culture of ethical behavior, how to measure and monitor your ever-changing public image, how to make employees your reputation champions and how to decide when it's time to change your name.

In another study by Teresa Pihlstedt titled “reputation management study of leading Finnish companies”, the researcher studied how companies may acquire good reputation. The theories studied according to the researcher suggests that good reputation is something that can be reached only by working hard and long, but at the same time reputation can be destroyed in a matter of minutes. The interviewees of the study agreed with these theories. Teresa also asserts that reputation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which means that in order to reach and maintain a good reputation all these dimensions must be accounted for. Culture, no matter if it concerns corporate or national culture, is a matter that is often not considered when it comes to reputation, but the fact that culture effects all business operations everywhere, reputation as well, should certainly not be underestimated.

Social responsibility is not just a way that concerns a company’s inner operations but it can also be a way of regarding the second research question the above sentence answers it rather thoroughly. Reputation in today’s extremely competitive markets is considered as a great competitive advantage theory-wise as well as according to the executives interviewed. And by economic benefits I do not mean only profit creation but also the fact that good reputation brings along quality work force as well as investors. The more attractive the company is perceived the more probable is the economic success. The third issue was about the necessity of management when it comes to reputation. Should companies have separate strategies and programs for reputation management or is reputation something that would take care of itself?

Industries, and the ways to operate in them, differ quite a lot from each other. This also means that reputation might be thought of as easier to acquire and maintain in some industries than it would be in others. For example, Nokia, one of the biggest mobile phone manufacturers in the world, is a global company that can be seen in the news (stock market news), on the streets

(advertising on bus stops and billboards), their products in homes all around the world, as well as enormous launching events when new products come to markets. They made too many mistakes right from the very start when the CEO was replaced in 2010 and now they are struggling in a way that Finns would never have expected their business leader to do. It took years and years for Nokia to build a globally appreciated reputation but only a few months to bring it down.

As their former CEO, Pekka Ketonen was interviewed in this thesis, we know that he appreciates their reputation and believes that managing it is necessary in order to succeed. They appreciate their customers, deliver what they have promised, and focus on their staff as well. The basic point to be made here is that corporate reputation these days should not be underestimated and it should be considered in the company's strategy and in all operations, inside the company as well as outside.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to (Miller & Brewer, 2007) research methodology connotes a set of rules and procedures to guide research and against which its' claims can be evaluated.

This chapter discusses the research methods and tools of data collection as well as the research design, population and sample size which is relevant in attaining answers to the primary objectives of this study. It also outlines the types and sources of data to be collected in order to embark on this research.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research method was used in this study because it was more suitable in fulfilling the goal of this study which is to describe a phenomenon and portray the situation of the role of PR in building a corporate reputation so as to enlighten the readers of the study.

Qualitative research describes in words rather than numbers the qualities of social phenomena through observation (direct and unobtrusive or participative and reactive), unstructured interviews (or 'exploratory', 'in-depth', 'freestyle' interviews usually tape recorded and then transcribed before analysis), diary methods, life histories (biography), group interviews and focus group techniques, analysis of historical and contemporary records, documents and cultural products (e.g. media, literature).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used Descriptive design. The aim of using descriptive design is to deliberately describe situation or occurrences. The researchers chose this design because the study aimed to describe the role public relations plays in building the corporate reputation of Kinross Chirano gold mine. This type of design is undertaken to ascertain and describe the characteristics of a variable in a situation.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION

The population of the study constituted the entire community and public relations department of Kinross Chirano gold mine and the opinion leaders who constitute beneficiaries of the organizations PR activities. The study respondents were chosen because of their background, experience, knowledge and qualification.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCESS

Sampling is a selection from the accessible population and is a device used to learn about the population without the expense of studying about every member of the population. The researchers used non probability and specifically purposive sampling for this study.

3.5.1 NON PROBABILITY SAMPLING

It enables researchers to use their judgment to select cases that will best enable the researchers answer their research questions and meet their objectives. This form of sampling is often used when working with very small samples such as case study research. According to (Saunders et al, 2003), judgmental or non-probability is more frequently used to case study research.

3.5.2 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

The sampling technique used for this research was purposive sampling. In this study, the researchers chose the public relations practitioners of Kinross Chirano gold mines because of their knowledge and qualification which is deemed valuable by the researchers to the research. The opinion leaders were also chosen due to the relationship they have with the organization. The opinion leaders were chosen because they are natives of the town and also they are consulted before any new project is been introduced into the community.

3.5.3 SAMPLE SIZE

Due to the nature of the study, there is a relatively small sample size which comprised of Six PR practitioners of Kinross Chirano gold mines and four opinion leaders who constitute the beneficiaries of activities performed by the community and PR unit of Kinross Chirano gold mines geared at building a positive corporate reputation.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

In this study, the researchers used written sources and interview to be able to answer the research questions. In-depth interviews were however the main data collection method used in this study. This is when researchers engaged respondents with formal questioning for thorough and comprehensive information.

3.6.1 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Interview guide was the data collection instrument that the researchers used. In interviewing the public relations practitioners, information regarding their respective roles in the effective building of the corporate reputation of Chirano gold mine was attained. In interviewing experts

from the organization's community and public relations department, more insight was gained into how efficient their PR initiatives were in ensuring that the organizations corporate reputation was regarded as positive by all relevant stakeholders.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected were analyzed manually. Data was gathered and analyzed according to the responses given by participants to various questions asked. The analyses were based on the questions that answer objectives for the study acquired from face to face interviews conducted on all participants. Answers provided by participants on questions asked were grouped according to the objectives set for the study. The researchers looked for similarities in the answers and compared them for the purpose of analysis.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to (Sacconi, 2004) ethics can be defined as "obedience to the enforceable". Ethical considerations relate to being clear about the nature of the agreement that researchers have entered into with the participants. Consent was sought from Kinross Chirano gold mine to interview the public relations department of their organization. Kinross Chirano gold mine issued researchers with permits which allowed researchers access and authority to conduct the study. Information obtained from the participants has been treated with confidentiality it deserves. Thus all participants of the study were assured of total confidentiality of the information they provided.

3.9 PROFILE OF KINROSS CHIRANO GOLD MINES LIMITED

Kinross acquired its ownership in the Chirano mine on September 17, 2010 upon completing its acquisition of Red Back Mining Inc. Chirano is located in southwestern Ghana, approximately 100 kilometers southwest of Kumasi, Ghana's second largest city. Chirano achieved its first gold pour in October 2005, and consists of 11 deposits: Akwaaba, Suraw, Akoti South, Akoti North, Akoti Extended, Paboase, Tano, Obra South, Obra, Sariehu and Mamnao.

The mine is within the Bibiani gold belt and the mining plan at the time of Kinross' acquisition of Red Back calls for the exploitation of 11 gold deposits spread along a strike length of approximately 10 kilometers by both open pit and underground mining methods. The second underground mine at Paboase is now in production and Kinross plans to continue underground development. Open pit and underground ore are processed at the Chirano plant. The capacity of the mill is approximately 3.5 million tonnes per annum. Processing involves crushing, ball mill grinding, leaching, and CIL. Gold is recovered by an elution circuit.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examines the role of public relations in building the corporate reputation of Kinross Chirano Gold Mines. To fulfill the purpose of the study, data were obtained from the public relations department of Kinross Chirano gold mines. The total number of respondents interviewed was ten (10). Interview guides were used in the collection of data from PR practitioners at the community and PR department to answer the research objectives of the study which were ; to determine whether Kinross Chirano gold mines utilizes public relations in building the organizations corporate reputation, to determine PR activities performed by the PR unit of Kinross Chirano gold mines in building the corporate reputation of the organization and to find out how the usage of public relations activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization.

4.2 BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents comprised of six Community and Public Relations personnel from Kinross Chirano gold mines and four beneficiaries of PR activities from three host communities. The personnel from the community and public relations department of Kinross Chirano gold mines comprised of five males and one female. The beneficiaries of PR were however all males. The five male participants had different job descriptions and roles assigned to them in the community and PR department. The titles of the participants are the Manager of Community and Public Relations, the Superintendent of the Community and Public Relations department, Social Development Officer of the Community and Public Relations department, Community Relations Assistant of the Community and Public Relation department, Community Programs Coordinator

of the Community and Public Relations department and Service Personnel from the Community and Public Relations department. The beneficiaries consisted of the Chief, Assembly man, Mmarentehene and the Assembly committee member of Akoti and Paboasi.

4.3 ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER KINROSS CHIRANO GOLD MINES UTILIZED PUBLIC RELATIONS IN BUILDING THE ORGANIZATIONS CORPORATE REPUTATION

The first question inquired if PR was a management function. Six respondents confirmed that indeed PR was a management function in the organization and elaborated that, it is an integral part of management. The second question asked what necessitated the organization to make PR a management function. The respondents indicated that, the organization needed to communicate to people and respond to the public's concern and expectations. They also revealed that, in modern times no organization survives without public relations so it's a global demand that every organization should have a PR section. It was also stated that, PR was made a management function in order to effectively relate to the organization's various publics in a way that is sustained.

The third question asked whether PR is tasked with building the organization's corporate reputation. Respondents stated that, the department is set up to expose to the wider world what actually happens in the industry and it is tasked with building the organization's corporate reputation because the PR unit has direct contact with the organization's publics who determine the organization's reputation. They also stressed that, the unit organizes activities that allow people to come on tour to learn at first-hand what they do. This allows the wider public to know how safely the organization conducts its operations, handles the environment and all nature that

is surrounding the organization. As these activities are in the realm of the PR domain, it is only prudent that PR is tasked with building an organization's corporate reputation.

The next question asked how the organization utilizes PR in building its corporate reputation. The Manager answered by saying "Through PR, the culture of the community is known and respected. The sensibility of the publics especially the community must be acknowledged and respected". The respondents stated that, various activities such as engaging with the community to project transparency and mutually beneficial relationships which are initiated by the PR unit are ways the organization utilizes PR in building its corporate reputation. They also stressed that, through research into community needs and wants, PR holds information as to what initiatives can be conducted to build and enhance the organization's corporate reputation.

The fifth question inquired about the challenges of practicing PR in the organization. It was asserted that, there were some dissonances where the community didn't understand the organization and vice-versa which caused friction between both camps but this challenge was dealt with a long time ago. The respondents revealed that employing people even when there are no vacancies and the awarding of contracts are basic challenges of practicing PR.

The last question solicited for recommendations on PR practice of the organization. The respondents indicated that, there were no recommendations on PR practice mainly because the organization has not fallen short on its core objectives which are making the publics know what the organization is about and its operations. Which includes providing the people with their basic needs and educating the people to be self-reliant when the mine is closed. They explained that, PR practice is at its peak in the organization and referred to the AKOBEN EPA audit which revealed that for three years running the organization has been the best in the country which is

testament to the high level of PR practice in the organization. The PR and community department has scored the highest which is the gold rating.

This affirms J.Grunig and Hunt (1984); J.Grunig (1992) who indicated that, public relations is a management function that involves planning and problem solving. This is also in sync with Rex Frances Harlow's assertion that, PR is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics. Combs (2001); J.Grunig and L.Grunig (1992) also expatiated that, it is critical for this management function to manage relationships with stakeholders

4.4 ASSESSMENT OF PR ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY THE PR UNIT OF KINROSS CHIRANO GOLD MINES IN BUILDING THE CORPORATE REPUTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION.

The first question asked what the typical role of a PR practitioner in the organization was. The respondents stated that, the typical role of PR practitioner in the organization was to serve as an intermediary between management and the organization's publics to ensure that management's concerns and information gets to its publics and vice-versa. They elaborated that, the typical role of a PR practitioner in the organization varies but are interconnected. It varies in the sense that, the department is broken down into two sectors; the crop assessment and the community and public relations. The crop assessment and evaluation team have a role of assessing areas for operation of the mine while the community and public relations deals with the various publics and ensure there is a mutually beneficial relationship with the organization and its publics.

The second question sought to demonstrate the day-to-day activities performed by a PR practitioner in the organization. The manager stated that the day to day activities a PR

practitioner performed in the organization were responding to issues as they come. Therefore his team is deployed to the community where they hold meetings with indigenous and opinion leaders.

Another day-to-day activity performed by a PR practitioner in the organization is to receive guests who sought to collect data for research, receive guests on exertion and resolve issues that arise from their interaction with the communities. Also, if there is a complaint against any of the organization's operators, they investigate and resolve it. The respondents stated that, they organize community durbars constantly for the community to know the nature of the organization's operators in the process, learning from the community how they feel about the organization, what they expect of the organization and provide a concept for their future development. PR practitioners in the organization provide health and educational infrastructure, portable water, suppress dust on roads so that the environment does not get polluted, employment of members of the community who qualify to be employed and train those who do not to qualify to get qualification.

The next question inquired about the overall objectives of the PR unit of the organization which the Manager stated stems from the corporate values of the organization. He explained that, one of the objectives is ensuring that, the organization is a good corporate citizen by performing its role and responsibilities. The various roles and responsibilities the organization performs as part of the overall objectives are putting its publics first and ensuring that employees and the community interest comes first. The respondents in answering this question stressed that the community and PR unit's overall objective is identifying its public's concerns and needs through research and interaction with the publics and initiating activities that would address these concerns and needs with the aim of improving the corporate reputation of the organization.

The fourth question asked about the challenges in fulfilling these objectives. The manager stated that, there were no challenges in carrying out the overall objectives. This is because of careful planning and the highly qualified personnel which the organization has at its disposal to carry out various roles and responsibilities. Other respondents also answered this question by saying that, there were no challenges because everything is budgeted for which eliminates financial challenges.

The fifth question asked who the organization's main publics are. It was stated that, they are the media, the regulators, chiefs, assemblies, government entities like the police and fire service. The next question asked the specific activities performed by the PR unit in building the organization's corporate reputation. The Manager in response to this question said that, the community and PR unit initiate a lot of interactions through various activities that they organize. Events such as football matches and football gala are organized for all the communities within the area. Various CSR activities are performed by the community and PR unit to aid in building the organization's corporate reputation.

He further explained that, the CSR activities are geared toward sanitation, health and education. CSR activities initiated by the PR and community unit includes; building schools, providing schools with ICT libraries and building clinics. The service personnel in answering this question stated that, activities performed the community and PR unit in building the organization's cooperate reputation include abiding by the mining regulations. He said that, they obey the EPA regulations so as to make sure the organization is environmentally friendly and adhere to the accepted norms. They have also created a trust fund to aid in CSR projects, built four pre-schools, six primary schools, provided all schools with computer labs, ICT library, giving scholarships to brilliant and needy students (some to the second cycle and others to the tertiary

level), attachment and internships opportunities, twenty five bore holes, provided two communities with free electricity, maintenance of projects/ infrastructure. It was added that, the organization through the community and PR unit initiates activities in other communities that are not part of their catchment area. She gave an example of supplying tricycles during national farmers' day and support Independence Day celebrations with cash and items. She stated that, they also provide sporting equipment to schools.

The subsequent question asked about the routine in performing these activities. The respondents stated that, there is a routine in performing activities however; it depends on the type of activity or project being initiated. Routinely, every quarter the unit sets out to interact with the committees, and social activities. The unit sets out on annual basis to provide infrastructure for the communities and follow this routine till the cycle is completed. He stated that, most projects are annual routines divided into quarters for the purpose of evaluation. The Manager in answering this question stated that, there are no rigid routine because all activities were an ongoing process.

The next question asked about the organization's reputation management plan program where all the respondents admitted that, the organization did not have any reputation management plan.

The last question asked about the practices and procedures the PR unit put in place to anticipate stakeholders, expectations, concerns and issues. The response was that, the unit conducts community engagements where they give notice to the community to meet them and engage in various interactions. After that, the practitioners plan and implement. The Manager in relation to this question stated that, when the community needs the organization, they can send an invitation or visit the organization to discuss peculiar issues and concerns. The community relations assistant in answering this question stated that, the organization has a quarterly meeting with an

APEX body which is known as the (CCC) Community Consultative Committee where issues of mutual concern are discussed. J.Grunig and L.Grunig (1992) also expatiated that, it is critical for this management function to manage relationships with stakeholders

This correlated with Edward Louis Bernays definitions of the role of PR as an attempt by information persuasion and adjustments to engineer public support for activity, cause, or institution. Harrison. K (2005) in how to build corporate reputation states that, organizations should research into their stakeholders for the purpose of getting acquainted with them.

4.5 ASSESSMENT OF HOW THE USAGE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE CORPORATE REPUTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION

The first question inquired of the reputation the organization wants to project to its various stakeholders. They responded by stating that, the organization wants to project a reputation to its publics as a friendly and law abiding mining company which treats their host communities exceptionally. The Superintendent in relation to this question explained that the organization wants to be seen as a good corporate citizen.

The next question asked about how the respondent would describe the organization. The respondents described the organization as the company of choice. He further stated that, this is not just his view but also the view of the wider public because, a large number of people would want and seek employment with the company because of its good working conditions and other factors which give the organization a good reputation. The other respondents in answering this question stated that, the organization has a credible corporate reputation because of its transparency in its operations. He explained that, the organization does not hide anything from its publics and make the public know the reality. Other eminent respondents answering the question

stated that, the organization has a very good corporate reputation because they endeavor and have actually helped the host communities by the activities and projects they have initiated and established. He heaped praise on the organization stating that, they have helped the community enormously with countless developmental projects and initiatives that they have established. The last respondent was however skeptical when asked how he would describe the organization as he explained that, even though the organization has a fairly good reputation, there is room for improvement.

The next question asked how PR has contributed in establishing this corporate reputation. The superintendent in answering the question stated that, through the various activities such as providing infrastructure, scholarships, employment, social amenities as well as engaging the community in various operations and activities of the organization has lead PR to contribute to establish the organization's corporate reputation. The Community Programs Coordinator in response to this question stated that, most people have a good perception about the organization because of PR units' efforts to interact and understand the community as well as working hand-in-hand with them to solve issues and concerns. The Assembly man of Akoti and Paboasi in answering this question remarked that, the organization has good reputation because of the immense efforts to help and provide a good living condition for the community.

The next question inquired about what impact the PR activities of the organization has had on its publics. The Manager answered this question by stating that, the impacts of the organizations PR activities are enormous. The PR activities have given the organization a social license which ensures that there is peace between the community and the organization. The Superintendent in answering this question said that, though PR activities both skilled and unskilled indignant of the community have been unemployed. The unskilled are trained invariably improving their

knowledge and providing a livelihood for them. He stressed that, the impact on the public has been substantial as the PR activities have aided in opening up and expanding the rural communities creating a city in the process. The communities have barbering shops, filling stations all using electricity, bakeries, eating joints, transport services and mechanical workshops.

The community relations assistant in answering this question also stated that, the PR unit through various activities has assisted in the increase in the number of people who hold educational qualifications in the host communities. He stressed that, through the PR unit's educative initiatives, there has been a rise in the number of people who have enrolled in schools and other educational institutions and have received education subsequently leading to the employment of a significant number of people in the various communities. The Assemblyman of Akoti and Paboasi electoral area in answering this question stated that, through various PR activities, there has been a significant level of development in the community.

He further elaborated that, through the provision of basic amenities, employment and infrastructure, the lives of the people in the community are better than it used to be. He also said that, trade has been improved which has helped mainly the women in the communities to earn a living and support their families. The Committee Chairman in answering this question elaborated that, the impact of PR activities on the public especially the community is tremendous because it has helped transform the communities. There have been road constructions and educational facilities which have helped in the development of the community. He said that, the organization has helped many community people to provide for themselves by offering them employment and putting them through various training programs. The chief of Akoti and Paboasi in answering this question stated that, PR activities has been significant as some crucial needs such as

employment; portable water and road construction have been met to make life more comfortable for the indigenous. The Mmranthene's view on this question was that, the impact has been mixed. He elaborated that, some lives have been positively impacted while others have been negatively impacted. Those whose lands have been taken over by the mines and have spent their compensation have a hard time taking care of their families and as such, have poor living standards while those who have been employed by the organization have been positively impacted because they earn income that helps them cater for their families.

The next question asked how the impact of PR activities on the public can be improved. The Assemblyman of Akoti and Paboasi electoral area answered by saying that, the employment of indigenous should be increased. He stated that, at least sixty percent of the employees of the organization should be indigenous of the host communities. He also stressed that, the organization should improve drastically its maintenance activities of roads and bore holes. He mentioned that, the call for recreational facilities such as football fields have gone unheeded by the organization and should be attended to by the organization. He called for the organization to give members of the community especially expatriates contracts to help them earn a living.

The Committee Chairman in relation to the question stated that the roads can be improved upon and at least the roads in the town should be tarred because the rain leaves it unbearable and impossible to use. He also stated that, the expatriates of the organization who have prematurely retired should be awarded contracts apart from their compensations to ensure they cater for their families. The Mmranthene of Akoti and Paboasi in answering this question stated that, the organization should not pay out compensation to indigenous whose lands have been taken over but seek to enroll them in various schemes. Thus, offer them employment to help them cater for their families. He added that, the organization should create an educational fund for the children

of the indigenous of the communities where the organization can help the parents in the financial aspect of their children's education. He added that, the indigenous also needed more employment than what is already on offer. He stated that, about sixty-five percent of all employees of the organization should be indigenous of the host communities. He further elaborated that; the maintenance of bore-hole projects should be ramped-up.

The next question asked how the organization has sustained the positive reputation as projected by EPA audits over the past three years. The Superintendent answered that, their yearly budget makes provision for all activities that help build the organization's corporate reputation. The EPA audit is not restricted to only the community and PR unit but the whole organization. The Manager in response to this questions stated that, the organization's corporate reputation is sustained because of the excellent rapport the organization has with its stakeholders. The Social Development Officer in answering this question stated that, the PR and community relations unit performs an induction activity which is meant for visitors, contractors, employers and employees returning from their annual leaves. Quoting her, she stated that "someone may be in the organization but would not know what is going on in the community. So based on the induction, individuals are sensitized on what the organization is doing for the community so every employee knows what is happening".

The last question asked about the challenges in building and sustaining a positive corporate reputation of the organization. The Superintendent stated that, the only challenge the organization faced was that, they could not contain the employment requests and they had difficulty explaining to individuals that the employment capacity is full. The good corporate reputation of the organization means that, a great number of people want employment with the organization.

In line with this, the ABC Excellence study (1985) suggests that public relations can add value to an organization by cultivating high quality relationships with strategic publics. The ABC Excellence study justifies PR as an effective and indispensable tool in building an organization's corporate reputation.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study concluded that, Kinross Chirano Gold Mines acknowledges the value of PR and utilizes it to its maximum in building and sustaining the organization's corporate reputation. The study reveals that, PR activities have immensely benefited and improved the lives of the indigenous in the host communities. The beneficiaries are hence very appreciative of the effort the organization has made through PR activities in the development of their community and the transformation of their lives. The researchers' conclusion is that, PR plays a vital role through the various strategic activities that strengthens the community's quality of life. This appeal to other stakeholders subsequently portraying the organization as a credible and responsible entity, thereby enhancing its corporate reputation.

The first objective was to assess whether Kinross Chirano Gold Mines utilizes PR in building the organization's corporate reputation. The findings obtained from the respondents indicated that, public relations is a management function in the organization. The respondents revealed that, public relations is a vital tool in creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the organization and its various publics/stakeholders. Thus, public relations serve as a pivot between the organization and the public and seek the benefit of both parties. The respondents made it clear that, PR serves as a medium for the organization to reach out its publics and vice-versa.

The response to the question whether PR is tasked with building the organization's corporate reputation revealed that, PR is the ideal tool to expose the organization's publics, activities and also carry the publics issues and concerns to management because of the contact it has with both management and its publics. The participants made it clear that, PR is tasked with building the

organization's corporate reputation because of certain core activities which are embedded in the PR practice. The researchers realized that, Kinross Chirano Gold Mines are cognizant of and appreciates the value and utilize PR to its full potential in the process of building and sustaining the organization's corporate reputation.

The second objective was to assess the public relations activities performed by the PR unit of Kinross Chirano Gold Mines in building the corporate reputation of the organization. Data analyzed from the various participants indicated that, the role of a PR practitioner was to inform management of its stakeholders concerns and foster understanding from them in regards to management prepositions. Information solicited from the participants revealed a wide variety of activities performed by the PR unit ranging from compensation of properties taken over by the organization, communicating information on job vacancies, research to find the community's basic and pressing needs, providing development to communities through the building of various kinds of infrastructure, informing the general public of all the organizations relevant information through press releases and write-ups, organizing cultural forums and ensuring employees and the organization as whole to abide by government and environmental regulations.

These activities are performed to foster mutually beneficial relationships with the organization's publics which comprise of the media, government, regulators community/ Assemblies. Thus the organization's PR activities are geared towards the above publics. From the findings, the researchers concluded that the organizations main publics were the community. Since majority of the PR activities performed by the organization were aimed at addressing community expectations, needs and concerns. Majority of the PR activities performed to build the corporate reputation of the organization were in the form of CSR activities pertaining to community

involvement, development and investment, health and safety, involvement of and respect for diverse cultures, corporate philanthropy and employee volunteering.

The third objective was to assess how the usage of PR activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization. The findings showed that, the aim of the organization which is to project a superb corporate reputation to its various stakeholders has been achieved through the positive corporate reputation rating from its publics and the EPA audits from the government which places the corporate reputation of the organization in uncharted territory.

Responses indicated that, the enormous impact PR activities has had on the organization's publics in terms of development and the rise of the standard of living of the community inhabitants has made PR a stand out contributor to the positive corporate reputation of the organization. Public relations activities have aided in changing a significant number of lives in various host communities which has led to the acceptance and the good relationship between the organization and its publics. The researchers assessed that, the organization uses PR to address the concerns and expectations of its publics in the process of establishing goodwill between the organization and the stakeholders. The drastic improvement of life of inhabitants, the sustenance of development and the consistent level of abiding by mining regulations through PR initiatives have contributed to the positive corporate reputation of the organization.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings made regarding the status of Public Relation practice at Kinross Chirano Gold Mines (PR helps the organization build their corporate reputation), the researchers recommend that PR is continually given prominence in the firm since it helps enhances corporate reputation. It is believed that PR helps build corporate reputation through the PR activities

organized. It was also observed that the usage of PR activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization. If possible the organization can set aside a section who will manage the corporate reputation of the Company.

Kinross Chirano Gold Mines should ramp up their maintenance of established projects that is when they increase in amount established projects set up by the PR Unit. The PR unit must also engage in verbal interaction when communicating to the community about job vacancies rather than communicating through the internet because of the high rate of illiteracy in the community. Lastly, they should broaden the CSR activities to communities beyond their catchment area that is when they help other communities who do not host Kinross Gold mines limited.

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APENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PERSONNEL OF THE COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF KINROSS CHIRANO GOLD MINES.

1. To determine whether Kinross Chirano gold mines utilizes public relations in building the organizations corporate reputation.
 - Please tell us about yourself and your professional career.
 - Briefly describe your responsibilities and roles in this organization?
 - Is PR a management function?
 - What necessitated the organization to make PR a management function?
 - Is PR in tasked with building the organizations corporate reputation? (If yes what are the reasons)
 - How does the organization utilize PR in building its corporate reputation?
 - What are the challenges of practicing PR in this organization?
 - What are your recommendations on PR practice in this organization?

2. To determine PR activities performed by the PR unit of Kinross Chirano gold mines in building the corporate reputation of the organization.
 - What is the typical role of a PR practitioner in this organization?
 - What are the day to day activities a PR practitioner performs in this organization? (job description)
 - What are the overall objectives of the PR unit of this organization?
 - What are the challenges in fulfilling these objectives?
 - What are the specific activities performed by the PR unit in building the organizations corporate reputation?
 - Is there a routine in performing these activities? (How often do you perform these activities?)
 - Who are your main publics? (Why?)
 - Do you have a reputation management plan/programmes?(if yes, describe this plan/programme)

- What practices and procedures have the PR unit put in place to anticipate stakeholders/ main public's expectations, concerns and issues?
3. To find out how the usage of public relations activities has contributed to the corporate reputation of the organization.
- What reputation does this organization want to project to its various stakeholders?
 - How would you describe this organizations corporate reputation? (Who are you?)
 - How has PR contributed in establishing this corporate reputation?
 - What impact has the organizations PR activities had on your public?
 - How can this be improved? What measures are or are being put in place to improve this?
 - EPA audits over the past three years have projected a positive corporate reputation of this organization. How have you sustained this reputation through PR?
 - What are the challenges in building and sustaining a positive corporate reputation of this organization?

APENDIX II
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your profession?
2. How long have you lived in the community?
3. How would you describe the reputation of Kinross Chirano Gold Mines?
4. What role does in the organization play in the lives of the people in the community?
5. What activities does the organization undertake/initiate in the community?
6. Are the operations/activities of the organization satisfactory?
7. How has the organization's activities impacted your life and those in the community?
8. What are some of the pressing needs of the people in the community?
9. What is the organization doing about this?
10. How would you describe the communication between the community and the organization? (one-way, two-way,etc)
11. How does the organization deal with community concerns, issues and expectations?
12. Have the organization's activities improved the standard of living in the community?
That is, has the organization brought about development in the community?
13. Recommendation for improvement by the organization