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International Association for Impact Assessment

Social Impact Assessment:

Guidance for assessing
and managing the social
impacts of projects



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SIA principles

International Principles For Social Impact Assessment

Frank Vanclay

The "International Principles for Social Impact Assessment" is a statement of the core values of the SIA community together with a set of principles to guide SIA practice and the consideration of 'the social' in environmental impact assessments generally. It is a discussion document for the impact assessment community to be used as the basis for developing sector and national guidelines. In the process of being developed explicitly for an international context, increasing pressure was placed on the conventional understanding of SIA and a new definition, with official imprimatur of an international professional body, has been formulated. "Social Impact Assessment includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment."

Keywords: social impact assessment, human rights, core values, principles, guidelines, international conventions, development, environmental impact assessment

This document was prepared over a five-year period for the IAIA by Frank Vanclay to whose feedback should be provided. Workshops were held at several IAIA and other conferences across six continents. Several hundred people were consulted and some 50 made substantial contributions. Rabel Hargreave initiated the project, and James Davies and Richard Morgan supported it along the way. The International Principles is a living document that will continue to be modified. Revised versions will be available on the IAIA website (www.iaia.org).

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Why have Principles for SIA?

There has been considerable interest in producing "International Guidelines and Principles for Social Impact Assessment". An international document produced under the auspices of a major organisation such as the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) could:

- Assist in the development of legislation and policy at the national level;
- Provide standards for SIA practice in international contexts (transboundary projects, development cooperation, foreign investments, international banking);
- Increase the appeal of SIA to a wider range of audiences, through increasing its legitimacy/standing;
- Establish minimum standards for SIA practice;
- Provide an articulation of best practice in SIA as a model to aspire to;
- Remove confusion over terminology by establishing a definitive glossary;
- Establish the appropriate scope of the social component of impact assessments;
- Promote the integration of SIA in all impact assessments (especially environmental impact assessment).

The process of developing international guidelines and principles however has been difficult. In a truly international context, there are many issues to consider and little can be taken for granted. The regulatory context varies, the cultural/religious context varies, and social and economic priorities for development vary. As the process of developing international guidelines and principles progressed, increasing pressure was placed on the conventional

International Principles launched IAIA'03 Marrakech

reviewed at IAIA'09 in Accra,
"the Principles are fine,
but we need Guidelines"

Meetings to discuss Guideline
development at IAIA
conferences in 2010, 2011,
2012, 2013 and 2014

Hundreds of people have been
involved in one way or
another.



Purpose of the guidance document

- provide advice about what is expected in good practice social impact assessment and social impact management processes, especially in relation to project development.

Target audiences

- SIA Practitioners/Consultants
- Project Developers/Proponents (private sector or government)
- Regulatory agencies
- Social specialists in the Multilateral Development Banks
- Social staff in other financial institutions, esp Equator Principles banks;
- Development cooperation agencies;
- Government planning agencies;
- Communities and local peoples;
- Civil society organizations;
- People responsible for SIA regulatory frameworks.

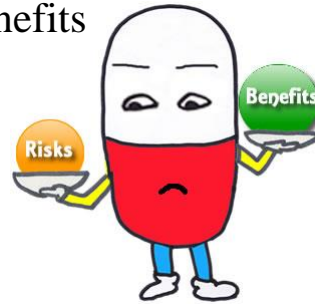
What business
are we in?

If the rate of
change on the
outside exceeds the
rate of change on
the inside, the end
is near.

Jack Welch

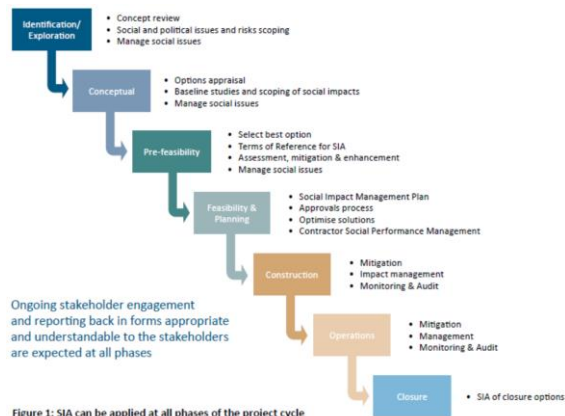
Not just regulatory impact assessment

- It is also about managing the social issues at all phases in the project cycle
- It is also about enhancing benefits for communities



SIA is relevant at all project phases

- Regulation alone does too little, too late



Industry body guidelines (soft regulation)



financial industry guidelines (soft regulation)

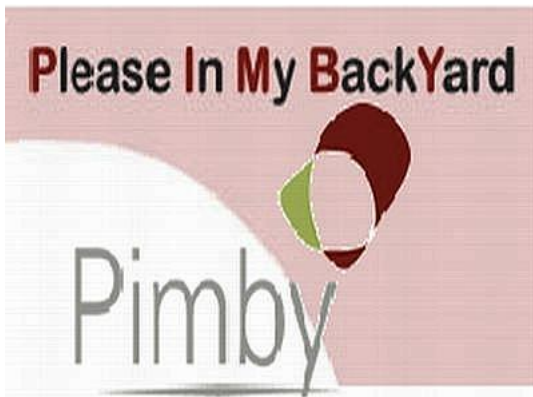




New age of social risks, not just technical risks



- *Labelling the opposition of local peoples as 'NIMBY' is not helpful*



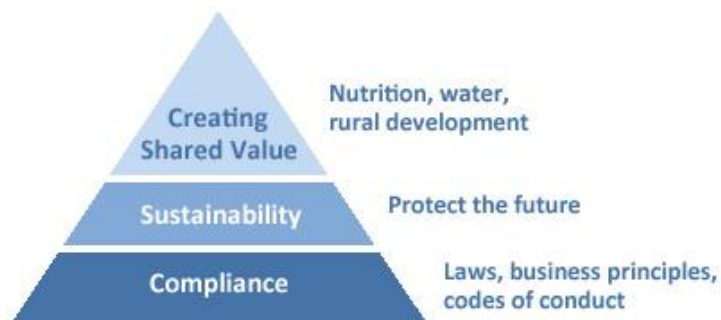
Going from NIMBY to PIMBY requires that businesses/projects rethink how they engage with communities.

- They need to treat communities with respect;
- They need to demonstrate the social value of the project;
- They need to provide local benefits;
- They need to earn their ‘social licence to operate’.



Shared value

- Redefining the role of the project



Local content and local procurement



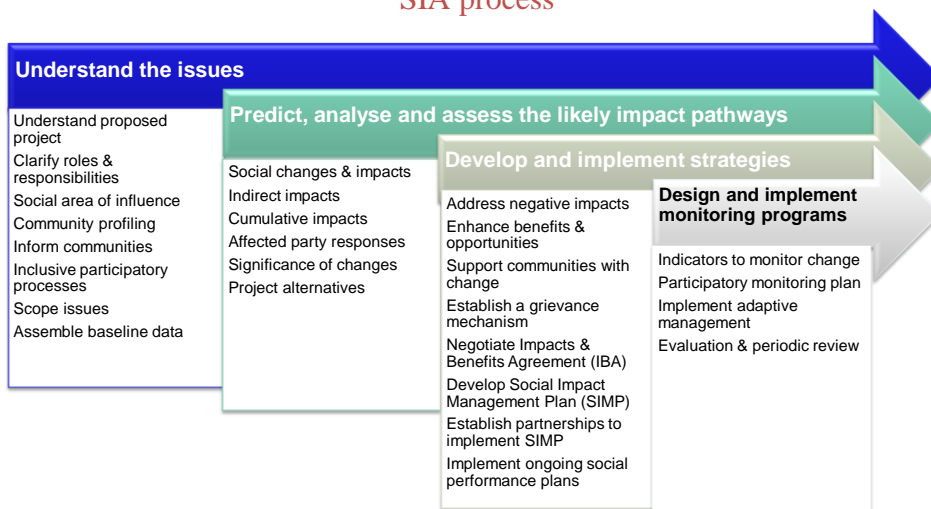
SIA adds value to all business drivers



SIA and social performance

- Ex ante assessment of social impacts
- Mitigation of social impacts
- Due diligence and human rights assessments
- Enhancement of benefits from projects
- Community engagement and FPIC
- Local content arrangements
- Monitoring of social issues
- Social investment (design, delivery, governance)
- Compensation mechanisms
- Grievance procedures
- Negotiating Impacts and Benefits Agreements
- Social Impact Management Plans

SIA process



SIA now conceived as having 26 tasks

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

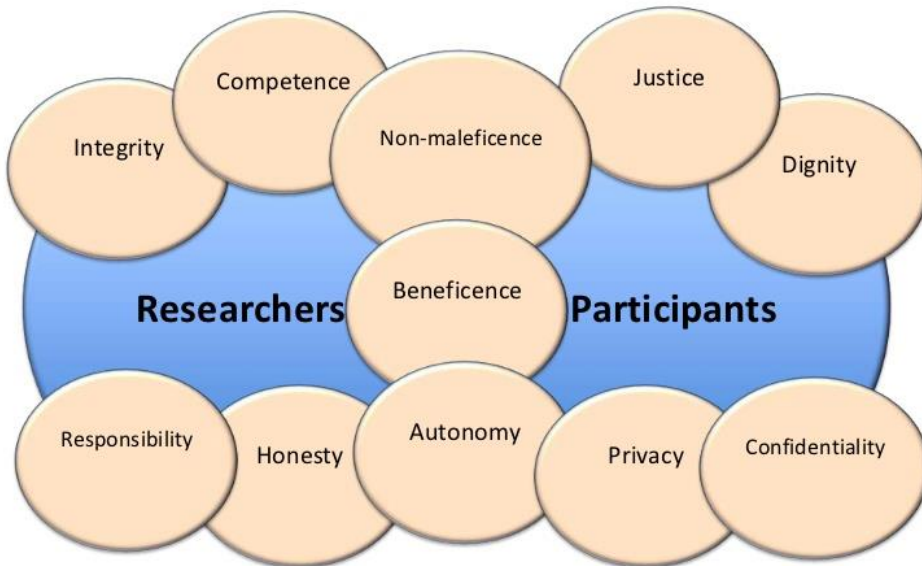


They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Human rights now must be considered within SIA



Ethical Principles of Research



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A photograph of a woman wearing a colorful, patterned headscarf, sitting in a snowy, mountainous landscape surrounded by reindeer. She is looking towards the camera.

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