

Assessing social impacts of mine closure

Session 60: Social license and impact assessment of energy transitions

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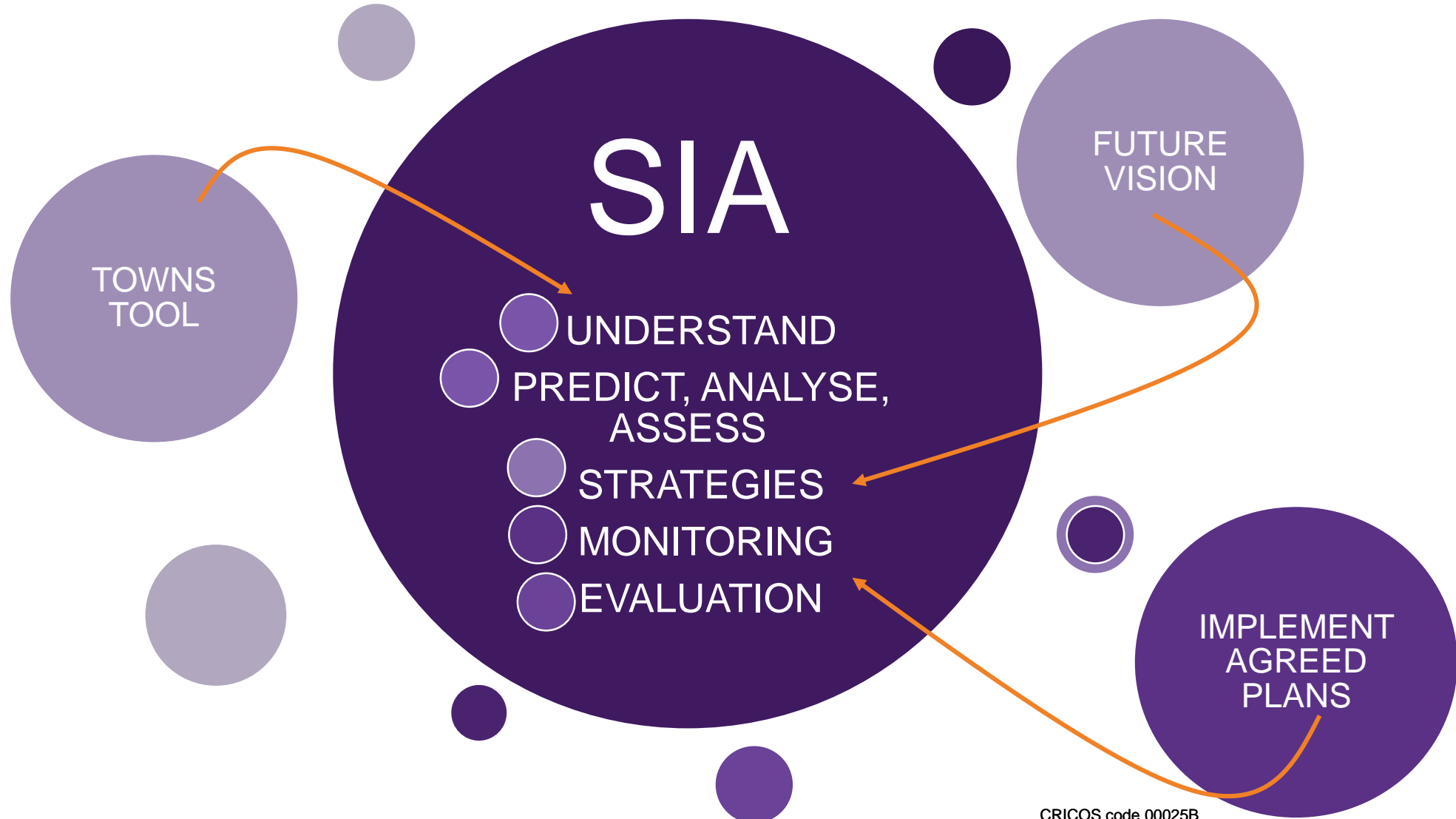
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Common closure challenges

- Mines eventually close
- The transition to renewable energy may hasten closure of uranium mines and thermal coal mines
- Communities near these mines face a momentous impact from the closure
- Can SIA and complementary tools ease the transition?



Achieving a positive transition – SIA and complementary tools



Arlit, Niger – two mines and 4th largest uranium production

The challenges:

- 120,000 residents
- Mining since 1970s; Due to close; Little alternative major industry
- Basic service provision revolves around the mines (e.g. hospital, power, water)

Understanding the context and planning for the future:

- Complex geo-political context and remote, desert location
- No future planning and regulatory vacuum

Requisites:

Take stock of dependency

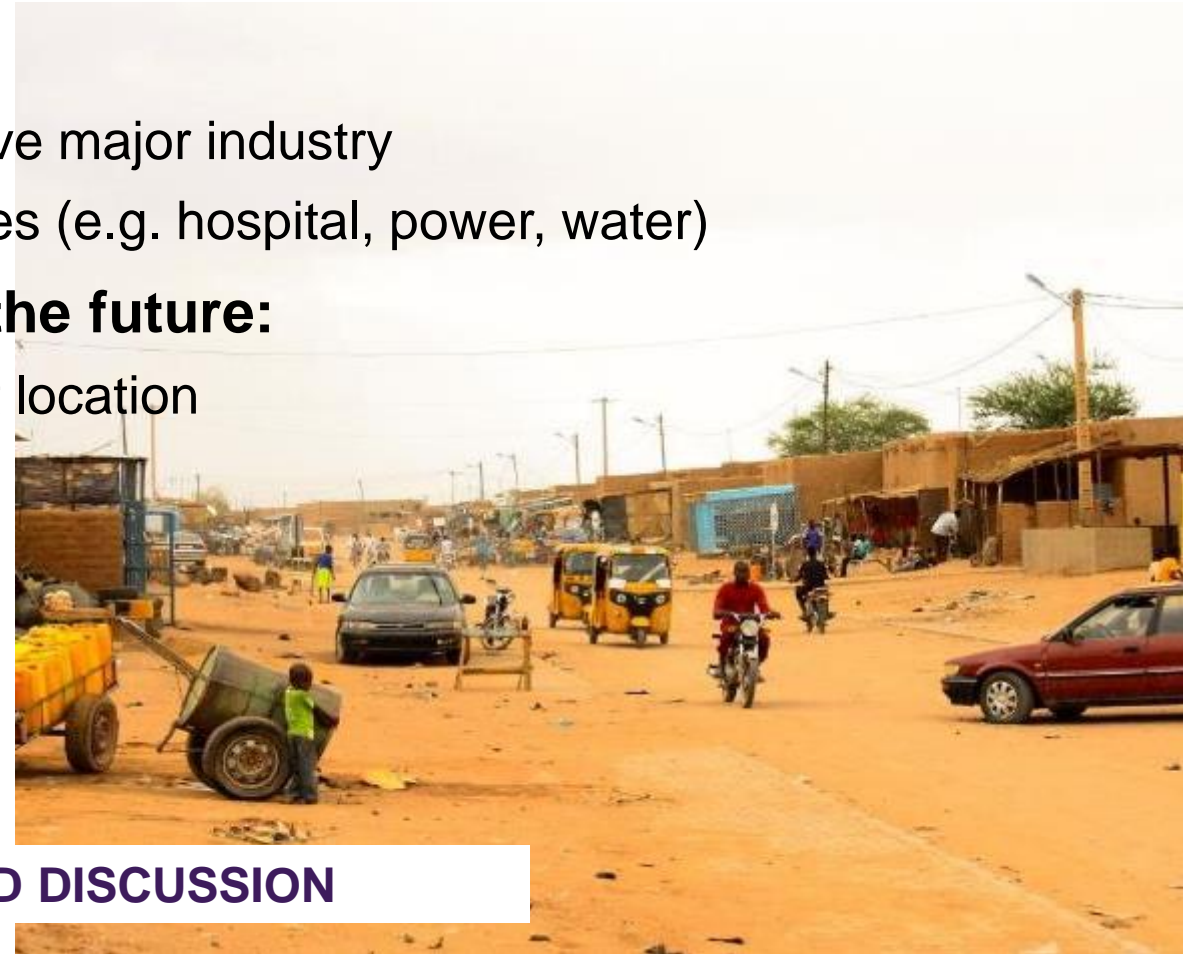
**TOWNS
TOOL**

MULTI STAKEHOLDER

STRUCTURED & FACILITATED DISCUSSION

SHARED UNDERSTANDING AS A STARTING POINT

code 00025B



Jabiru – Ranger uranium mine

The challenges:

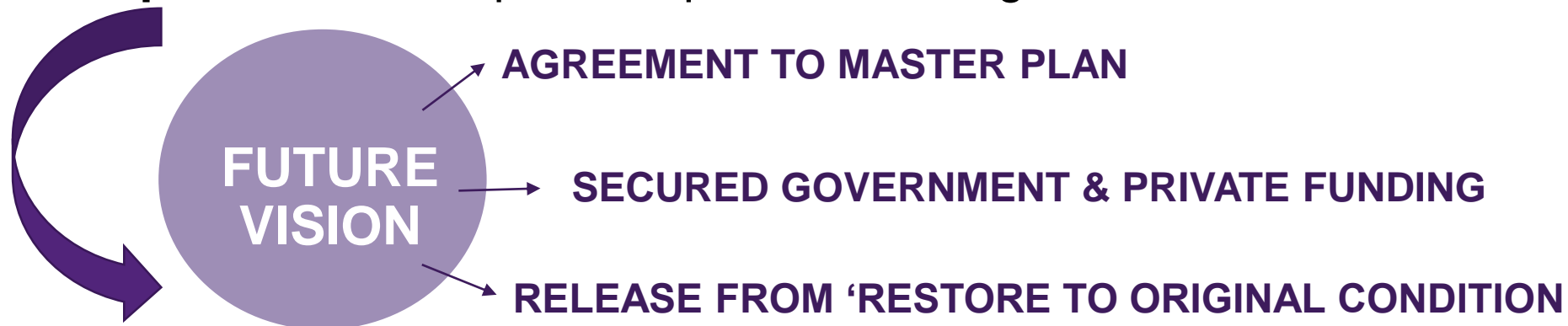
- 1,100 residents – largely a residential and mining services hub
- Mine due to close in 2021 and rehab to be complete by 2026
- Separate lease requires return of town to “pre-development state”

Understanding the context and planning for the future:

- Surrounded by world heritage listed Kakadu National Park
- Mirrarr Traditional Owners have a \$446 million master plan for a tourism and cultural hub



Requisites: Develop and implement strategies



Clermont – Blair Athol closing and Clermont mine opening

The challenges:

- Town of 3,300 residents, by 2006 mining was one-quarter of town's workforce
- Blair Athol mine closed in 2012 and Clermont project life 2010~2030
- Diminished importance of pastoral industry

Understanding the context and planning for the future:

- Local government and RTCA partnered on preferred future plan
- Uncertain situation requiring adaptive management

Requisites:

Progress to a diversified, viable local economy

FOCUS ON FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

**IMPLEMENT
AGREED
PLANS**

PHASED ACHIEVEMENT OF CONCRETE GOALS

IDENTIFYING RESOURCES, SKILLS & GOVERNANCE NEEDED



Lessons for managing the social impacts of mine closure

- A multifaceted and constant exercise from the outset
- Requires forward projections in uncertain conditions
- Based on understanding and responding to the changing community
- Best as a collaborative exercise with diverse stakeholders
- Currently constrained by regulatory systems

**Knowledge and understanding +
sound assessment and prediction = less risk**

<https://smi.uq.edu.au/post-mining-landuse>

<https://smi.uq.edu.au/new-consortium-social-aspects-mine-closure>

Thank you

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