

# **SOCIAL ISSUES IN IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS .**

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**BY**

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# **OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION**

- ***INTRODUCTION***
- ***SOCIAL IMPACTS***
- ***ESIA***
- ***BENEFITS OF ESIA***
- ***SOCIAL ISSUES IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS***
- ***CONCLUSION***

# INTRODUCTION

- ✓ Sustainable development is a fundamental objective for public policy and decision-making. It encompasses the economic, environmental and social dimensions of the development process.
- ✓ Economic development projects produce innumerable benefits but also portend unintended detrimental effects on people and natural resources, which can negate the positive effects of economic development.
- ✓ Human activities have resulted in the disruption of social and communal harmony, the loss of human livelihood and life, the introduction of new diseases, and the destruction of renewable resources
- ✓ Social problems arise largely due to conflicts between economic development and natural resources. Economic losses and social costs from environmental degradation often occur long after the economic benefits of development have been realized

# **SOCIAL IMPACTS**

## **Definitions**

Social impacts are the impacts of developmental interventions on human beings and their physical natural environment

The consequences to human populations of any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society. The term also includes cultural impacts involving changes to the norms, values, and beliefs that guide and rationalize their cognition of themselves and their society.

The impacts of development interventions take different forms. While significant benefits flow in from different development actions, there is also a need to identify, evaluate and manage the negative externalities associated with them, in such a way that the positive externalities are maximized and the negative externalities are minimized

# **SOCIAL IMPACT**

## **Definition *Cont'd...***

In essence, social impacts are the 'people impacts' of development actions. These include include changes in people's way of life, their culture, community, political systems, environment, health and wellbeing, their personal and property rights and their fears and aspirations

## Types of social impacts:

These can be grouped into five overlapping categories:

**Lifestyle impacts** – on the way people behave and relate to family, friends and cohorts on a day-to-day basis

**Cultural impacts** – on shared customs, obligations, values, language, religious belief and other elements which make a social or ethnic group distinct

**Community impacts** – on infrastructure, services, voluntary organisations, activity networks and cohesion

**Quality of life impacts** – on sense of place, aesthetics and heritage, perception of belonging, security and livability, and aspirations for the future

**Health impacts** – on mental, psychological, physical and social well being.

# SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Social impact assessments** focus on the human dimension of environments, and seek to identify the impacts on people who benefit and who lose. SIA can help to ensure that the needs and voices of diverse groups and people in a community are taken into account

SIA can be defined in terms of efforts to assess or estimate, in advance, the social consequences that are likely to follow specific policy actions (including programs/ projects and the adoption of new policies), and specific government actions. It is a process that provides a framework for prioritizing, gathering, analyzing, and incorporating social information and participation into the design and delivery of developmental interventions.

## **SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT *cont'd***

**The SIA ensures that the development interventions:**

- (i) are informed and take into account the key relevant social issues;**
- (ii) incorporate a participation strategy for involving a wide range of stakeholders.**

**SIA is a process of analyzing the impact of public/government intervention on the social aspects of the human environment. Essentially it involves characterizing the existing state of such aspects, forecasting how they may change if a given action or alternative is implemented and developing means of mitigating changes that are likely to be adverse from the point of view of an affected population.**

**ESIA is a research and analytical process with a focus on influencing decision making and the management of social issues. For effectiveness, it requires genuine stakeholder participation ( i.e. meaningful interaction and good faith dialogue). This will confer on interested parties a real ability to influence the management of social issues.**



# **BENEFITS OF ESIA**

## **Benefits for Business**

**An SIA identifies and assesses social issues that can represent a significant risk and/or opportunity to a project.**

**An SIA is an effective risk management tool informing and encouraging timely decisions on projects.**

**SIA can influence projects design and improve the quality of decision making. In particular an SIA can help with:**

- Managing the short and long term impacts**
- Better estimating and optimization of socio economics cost (like resettlement), resources required for mitigation measures, management plans etc**
- Defining socio economic considerations for inclusion into tender document**

# BENEFITS OF ESIA

## Benefits for Business *cont'd*

- **Providing important input into the design of effective stakeholder engagement, building consensus and collaboration between parties and managing expectations. This can assist securing trust with**
  - ✓ **The workforce, helping to prevent disputes**
  - ✓ **The local communities, to avoid protest, blockades and land access disputes**
  - ✓ **The regulatory authorities, reducing problems such as licensing delays**

**Meeting the requirements of financial and aid institutions which maybe important to the company or one of its partners.**

# BENEFITS OF ESIA

## Benefits for Communities

- **Access to the company to express their views/concerns and suggestions and involvement in the decision making processes as a result of effective consultation.**
- **Identification of opportunities for economic development through the supply of goods and services by local stakeholders.**
- **Contributions to local capacity building in infrastructure, services and environmental protection.**
- **Increase in human capacity building through the transfer of best practices**
- **Social investment to meet both local and project needs.**
- **Support for traditional industries alongside the development of projects**

# BENEFITS OF ESIA

## Benefits for Communities **cont'd**

- Protection of cultural resources for the communities
- Inclusion for local communities through better understanding of both positive and negative effects of the project or operation

# SOCIAL ISSUES IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS

## **A. Reasons For Non-participation**

### **i. Legitimation and Community Entry Issues**

Inability to obtain approval for ESIA activities from community leadership or refusal of entry into community for social impact assessment activities by indigenous community stakeholders, especially recalcitrant youths.

### **ii. Lack of a culture of participation:**

It may not be part of the social or political system for people to participate in public meetings. This is more-so where repressive regime tiers exist, so there is the fear of molestation for airing their views, especially if it was thought that the project was endorsed by the government, and/or if they thought that the SIA practitioner was a representative of the government.

### **iii. Social Tensions in a community:**

Where serious divisions exist in a community, there is the possibility of misconstruing statements. Some people may therefore stay away for the fear of jeopardizing their interests.

### **iv. Possible lack of familiarity with proposed project:**

Affected people may have little or no knowledge about the proposed intervention, and hence may not participate for lack of knowledge to contribute positively to the consultation process

## **v. Attitude of Project Proponents:**

- ✓ **Mandated procedures, too often are disregarded by decision-makers,**
- ✓ **So-called participatory process rarely does more than attempt to legitimate pre-determined outcomes or conform with regulatory requirements in a perfunctory, box-ticking manner.**
- ✓ **People become disillusioned and cynical about the process and the project.**
- ✓ **Such misappropriation of 'participation' is not only deceitful, it could have repercussions for current and future interventions as local peoples are likely to become disillusioned and cynical about the process and the project.**
- ✓ **People may consider that their participation is pointless and their energy will be better invested in protest actions against the project rather than in participating in a seemingly flawed and/or unjust assessment process.**

### **vi. Issue of Payment/ Non-Payment to Participants:**

Payment of sitting fees to participants may demonstrate that their contributions are valued, and may ensure that a wider range of people can participate than would otherwise be the case. Caution should however be exercised in order not create perverse incentives..It may be more important to ensure that people 'can hear that they have been heard' by having good feedback mechanisms that fully report and respectfully respond to the comments collected.

**Vii. Bias of ESIA Practitioners:** ESIA practitioners need to guard against the following factors while performing social impact assessments:

**Spatial bias:** Information gathering focuses on accessible locations and overlooks remote or nomadic tribes

**Seasonal bias:** ESIA may be carried out at a time when it is difficult to gain representative information on an affected community, for example during harvest time or hunting season

## SOCIAL ISSUES IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS *cont'd*

### viii. Issue of Payment/ Non-Payment to Participants:

**Personal bias:** Consultation and interviews may be dictated by cultural traditions or power structures, for example limited to political leaders, elders or men

**Professional bias:** Lack of interaction between disciplinary specialists may result in important links between the environment and society being omitted.



## **SOCIAL ISSUES IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS *cont'd***

### **B. Other Issues Earlier Discussed (Constraints To Stakeholder Involvement In ESIA)**

- ✓ **Time and money**
- ✓ **Literacy, language and public presentation:**
- ✓ **Cultural differences:**
- ✓ **Insensitivity to female gender issues:**
- ✓ **Political and institutional culture of decision making:**
- ✓ **Pressures imposed by the project cycle:**
- ✓ **Mistrust and elitism**

## **SOCIAL ISSUES IN ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS *cont'd***

### **Other Issues Earlier Discussed (Constraints To Stakeholder Involvement In ESIA)**

- ✓ **Timing**
- ✓ **Poor presentation of EIA findings:**
- ✓ **Community burn-out:**
- ✓ **Project size:**
- ✓ **Lack of proactive support for stakeholder involvement in ESIA**
- ✓ **Engaging with Indigenous Groups**

# CONCLUSIONS

- **Negative impacts of human development activities are more pronounced on indigenous, less privileged stakeholders.**
- **Deliberative and empowering techniques like the ESIA can be used to determine how to ameliorate such anomalous situations.**
- **Social problems may however impede attempts to document the legitimate views of such disadvantaged set of people.**
- **Project proponents must however seek means and ways to ensure that positive externalities of human interventions are maximized, while the negative externalities are minimized.**
- **This will ensure that development activities are carried out in a sustainable manner.**



**THANK YOU**