

## Impact assessments

### In this module

---

#### Introduction

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#### Addressing the gap between national and international legislation and standards

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#### Key steps

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#### Team planning and project co-ordination

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#### Minimising resettlement impacts

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#### Planning for life-of-mine land requirements

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#### Planning of baseline data collection

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#### Assessment of sociocultural context and impacts

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#### Impacts on communal resources

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### Introduction

The environmental and social impact assessment is the means by which companies assess their impacts on people and the environment early in the planning process. The process normally results in the development of an environmental and social management plan and systems to manage identified impacts, both positive and negative.

The resettlement action plan can be one of these management plans. However, often the linkages to other plans are not properly established and as a result relevant impacts are not properly assessed.

### Addressing the gap between national and international legislation and standards

#### Challenges

- Many countries have no or very limited regulations on social impact assessments and land access and resettlement planning, which means little clarity is provided by national legislation on what the expectation is for companies undertaking resettlement activities.
- There may be a conflict between national policy requirements and international guidelines.
- Corporate offices may be ambiguous in their commitment to alignment with international standards, leading to short cuts at site level.

#### Lessons and recommendations

- The company should conduct a gap analysis between local legislation and international standards and set out in the resettlement action plan how the higher standards will be reached to reduce project risk.
- Companies should work with governments to put a clear national legislative framework in place, which requires the identification and mitigation of social impacts, that is aligned with international standards.