

Team planning and project co-ordination

Lessons and recommendations

- Poor co-ordination of social impact, resettlement, environment and project planning teams can lead to an inadequate assessment of impacts and duplication of work.
- The first step in the assessment process should be the establishment of a team comprising social, environmental and project planning specialists to enable proper co-ordination of baseline data collection activities in line with the project design, schedule and budget.
- It is important to have a mix of local social experts who understand the project context and have experience with other resettlement activities.
- The involvement of the government and community in the assessment process is critical in reaching agreement on the nature and scale of project impacts.
- Engage with stakeholders to enable them to provide input into the project design while being careful not to disclose details too early, which can result in speculative activities.

Minimising resettlement impacts

Challenges

- Defining the project footprint and changes in planning or scope without input from social experts can miss opportunities to minimise resettlement and associated impacts.

Lessons and recommendations

There is a trade-off between minimising resettlement and acquiring sufficient land for the life of the project:

- Companies should ensure that social experts play a central role in defining the project footprint and examining project alternatives in order to minimise the impacts of land access and resettlement.
- Expert attention should be paid to defining the environmental buffers required under national and international legislation, as well as best practice principles so that the project planning team can incorporate these into the project design.
- Maintain confidentiality about the project footprint early in the project; not doing so can lead to speculative building in the project area by those hoping to qualify for compensation.
- Develop a land management plan to ensure that there is ongoing input into project development and impact management from environmental and social experts and project stakeholders.

