

Bridging the Gap Between Social Performance Assessments, Plans and Implementation



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Introduction

Social performance in:

- Lender requirements
- Legislative compliance
- Voluntary subscriptions
- Self-determined social performance targets

- Avoid harm
- Respect human rights & dignity
- Transparent, meaningful engagement

Not implemented as intended

- Causal factors
- Small changes in approach

Gaps between instruments and practice

Consultant scopes are limited



- **Assessment and planning:** baseline, consult, impacts, mitigations, feedback
- Limited scope, end-date
- *The deliverable* = SIA / HRDD / RAP / SEP
- **Implementation and monitoring** neglected
- Ill-conceived assessments to secure funding or permits
- Instruments do not inform performance
- Deliverable becomes means to an end

Constrained resources & numerous obligations

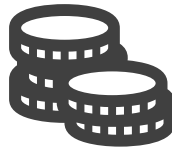
- Overwhelmed – reporting, reviews, audits
- Overworked
- Understaffed
- Not taken seriously
- Trauma
- No SP team



Gaps between instruments and practice

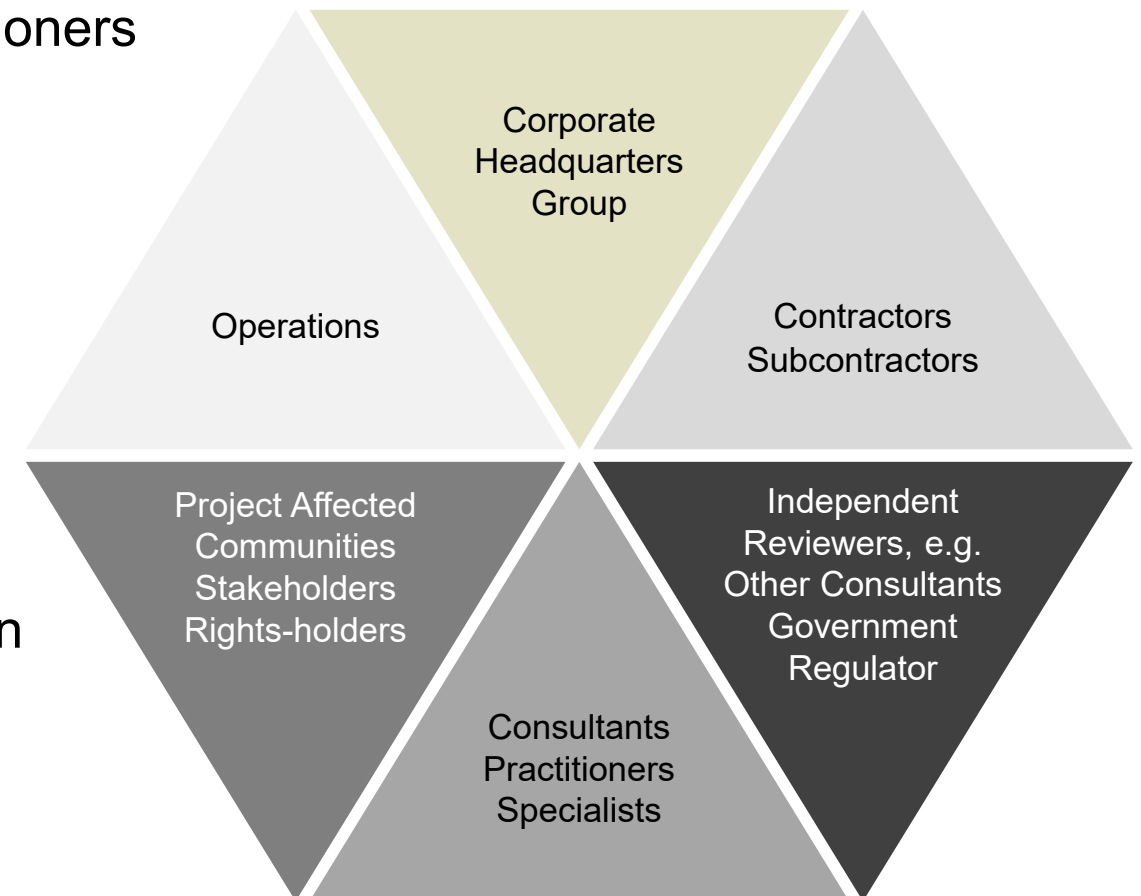
Cost-savings & ignorance

- Cost-conscious proponents, and environmental practitioners
- Lack of understanding of GIIP
- Cannot judge



Divergence in focus area

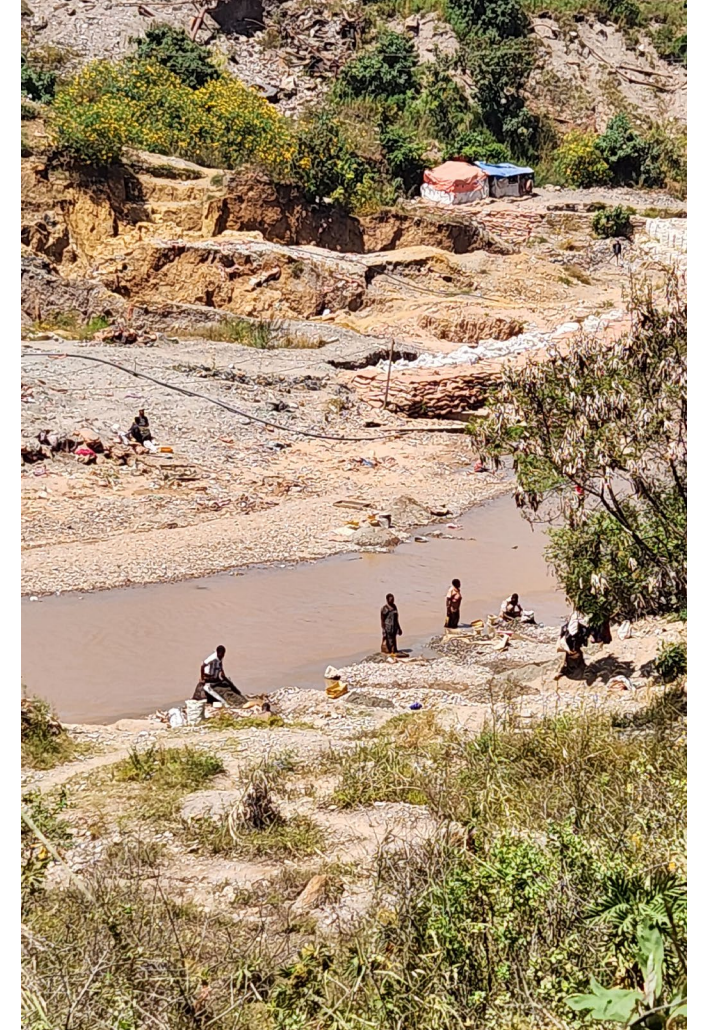
- Role-players' different focus & agenda
- Consultant's institutional memory lost
- Filtered information - data gathering & client interaction
- Internal departments



Gaps between instruments and practice contd.

Softening social impacts

- 'Net positive' projects (e.g. energy generation, transmission and distribution, renewables, water supply, transport)
- Adverse social impacts and wicked problems (e.g. ASM) downplayed or dismissed



A socially integrated approach

Base community programmes on evidence

- Iterative situational assessments
- Use SIA to inform CSR (not philanthropic)
- Consider needs stated vs observed



SIA as practice, not deliverable

- 'Assessment' lends itself to stasis under non-practitioners – allow for dynamism
- CLOs, staff engage regularly – information likely available once foundation is set

A socially integrated approach contd.

Stakeholders as individuals

- Individuals in relation to each other within SH group
- Rights-holders
- Agency and ability to claim rights



Draw on institutional knowledge

- Regard proponent and staff as stakeholders
- Gauge capacity constraints – successful, “lukewarm” or non-implementation?
- Spend time – SHs taking advantage?
- Objectivity not to be clouded



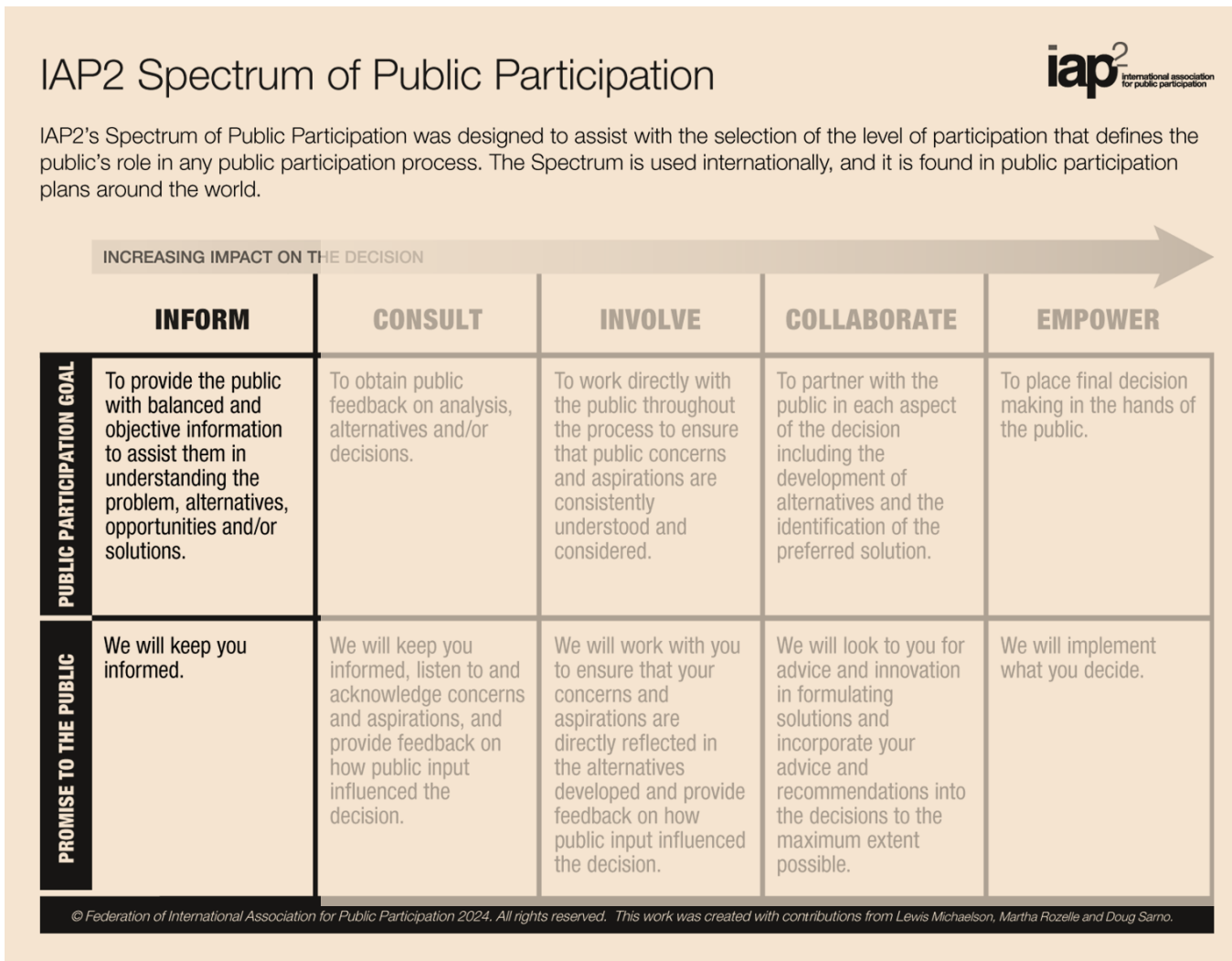
Promote participatory monitoring

- Countries (e.g. Canada, India) require not only IA, also establishment of committee at lower administrative levels
- Ongoing monitoring
- Avoids arbitrary fund and royalty allocation



A socially integrated approach contd.

Inform stakeholders



- Important in/when:
 - Isolated/remote areas
 - Low literacy levels
 - Deeply traditional
 - Not aligned to technical manner of presentation
- Timelines, approvals, why consulted, funding mechanisms, what proponent subscribes to
- Agency for accountability of representatives and proponent

Behaviours for effective stakeholder engagement

Consider past experiences of stakeholders

- Take stock of what happened before project 'started'
- Rumours, other specialists/ consultants, similar projects, same proponent
- Engage ladder of inference
- Forgotten / unknown commitments
- Be better prepared to embed recommended mitigations in proponent culture

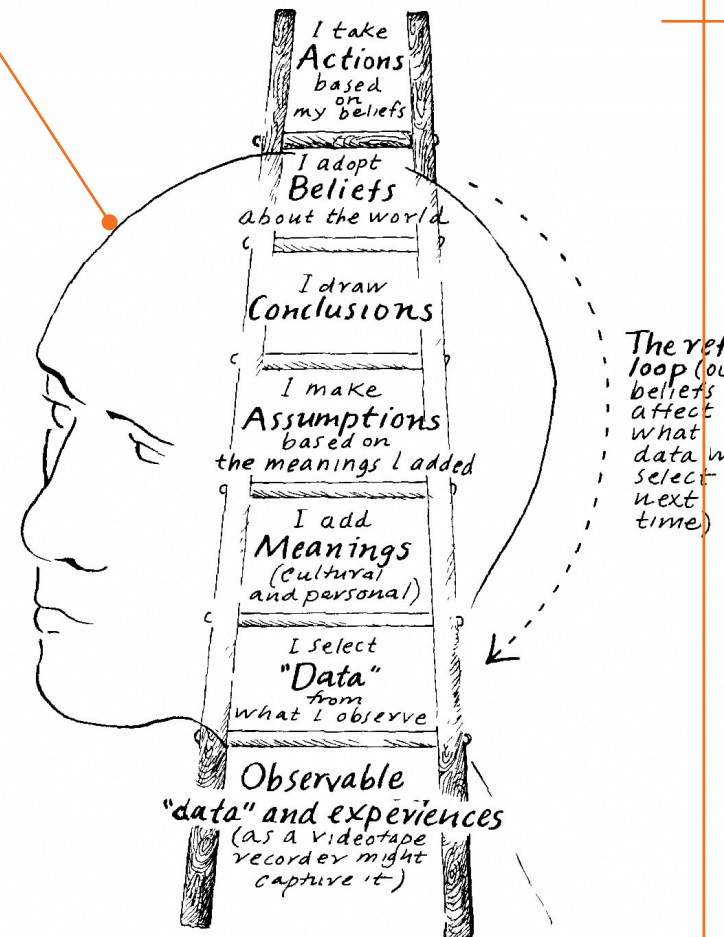


Image source: Great Place To Work® Institute

Improve communication

- Open communication across departments
- E.g. **security / protection services** + social performance departments = VPSHR adherence + **safety of SP teams**

Behaviours for effective stakeholder engagement

Understand individual values

- Intrinsic values, morals, principles
- Not only rights-holders / external stakeholders but also individual **employees** (in 'ecosystem')
- Craft the right team for engagements, assessments, presentations

Integrate within project

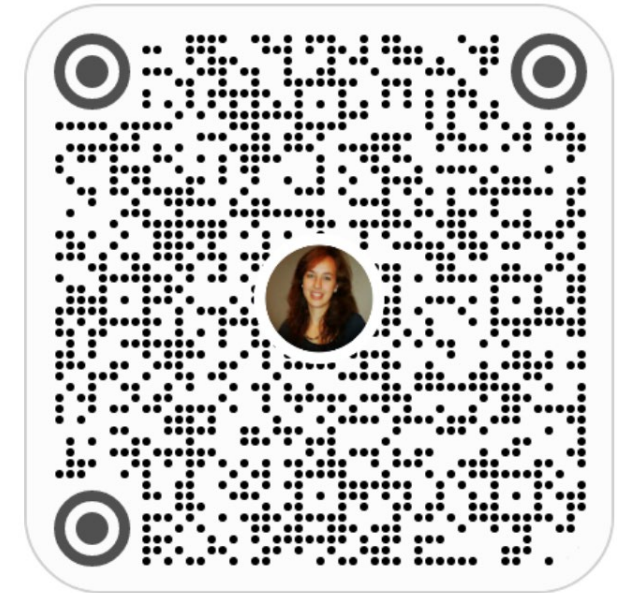
- Specialists, design engineers, consultants to move out of siloes
- More meaningful communication across project lifecycle
- Project manager informs all
- Experience-based inferences from technical, measurable impacts e.g. road diversions, water discharge





Let's continue the conversation!

Message me your questions or comments in the IAIA25 app.



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