

Social Impact Management as a process: gender impacts and sustainable development.

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PART ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines how social impact assessment can contribute to sustainable development in South Africa. Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been seen to fail as a practical application. It has value as an ideal, but the quality of SIA in practice is usually quite low (Vanclay, 2004: 280). The paper consists of two sections. The first section provides an overview of the literature informing sustainable development, environmental assessment, and social impact assessment, and the second section discusses Limpopo Province as a specific case. This entails a case of gender impact of a development and explores one study that might provide lessons for the effective mitigation of the social impact of such a project.

The literature review section of the paper follows two threads of argument. The first is a general discussion of SIA within Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies as a key factor in achieving sustainable development. The impacts of development, which are usually complex, require mitigation or response that could also be based in a complex approach, where small adjustments made by a large number of elements in a system can have a powerful effect on the relationships in the system, specifically the relationships between the proposed development and the communities that border on that development (Innes & Booher, 2000: 179). The second thread discusses the gender impact assessment of a development as a focus within the greater social impact assessment. This represents one such small adjustment.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Before the role EIA and SIA can play in sustainable development is discussed, some of the definitions and approaches to EIA will be examined.

DEFINITION OF EIA

The definition of impact assessment used in this paper has two aspects, both provided by Vanclay (2004: 268). Firstly, he quotes the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA:2003):

Impact assessment, simply defined, is the process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action.

Secondly, he continues that impact assessment can also be used generically to refer to a composition of, amongst others, environmental, social and health impact assessments (Vanclay, 2004:268). This paper discusses the consideration of gender impacts as important in the attainment of sustainable development; therefore this broader, generic definition is used.

APPROACHES TO EIA

As a process, however, there are many different approaches that examine/explore EIA. These approaches have been identified in various ways and according to various models. The *information provision model*, for example, sees EIA as a short-term decision tool to solve conflict and controversy. In this approach the aim is to make predictions of the impact of a development. It depicts EIA as a step in making 'real decisions' about limited resources. It is not an approach to EIA that includes extensive community participation and often depends on limited consultation (Cashmore, 2004: 411).

The approach within which this paper places EIA is the *environmental governance approach*. The environmental governance approach has a strong emphasis on sustainability and is an egalitarian approach, promoting equality and social justice. As this paper focuses on gender impact and equality, this EIA model matches an approach that would have a fundamentally central place for the SIA process. It is an approach that strengthens communities' self-governance and ability to control their own natural resources. Public participation is essential. Equality and equal distribution and access to natural resources would be the primary link to egalitarian sustainable development, but there are more aspects to consider in the field of social impact assessment as discussed below. The environmental governance approach to EIA matches the *participation EIA model* in that it is based on more substantive outcomes, where sound environmental management is the primary aim (Cashmore, 2004: 412).

The environmental governance model also has a more pragmatic and postmodern approach in that solutions and decisions are driven with a pluralist approach, where the transference of value and capital is challenged. Social capital, for example, is not seen in this approach as being interchangeable with financial or natural capital. Meaning and values are contextual and constructed socially (Mehta et al., 2001 in Cashmore, 2004: 413).

The impacts of a development can have a wide range, including gender impacts. As a macro-theme the effect of the industrialisation process in South Africa has been shown to have significant effects on family structures and experiences in households. The traditional role of men as breadwinners led to a significant number of men travelling away from their homes to work in the various new industries that built the economy of South Africa. Fatherhood lost its meaning and women increasingly began to bear the brunt of ill-health and poverty (Desmond & Desmond, 2006). This migrant labour system was particularly damaging to the social cohesion of families as it also was used as a tool in the hands of the apartheid government to disempower and control (Clegg, 2007).

This paper examines the role of SIA with a specific focus on gender impact assessment in the light of this legacy. There is a clear discrepancy that should be noted between the two 'projects'. The 'Apartheid project' was driven to purposefully disempower and control, for the benefit of a small minority (Ramphela & Richter, 2006). Projects conducting EIA

and SIA usually have less sinister goals in mind, and aim at their own return on investment.

The current framework of development under discussion in this paper contrasts politically- or profit-driven development with the purpose of achieving sustainable development, particularly egalitarian sustainable development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development is a term with a wide range of meanings and definitions (Hattingh, 2001). One of the most used definitions is the one by Brundtland (WCED, 1987:43):

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

An ecosystem that could be impacted by a development is inherently a complex system with a wide 'unknowable' range of lessons and tasks. It is impossible to predict exactly all the impacts that are going to occur due to a development being approved. However, where small adjustments are made they could have important impacts on the wider system (Vanclay, 2004; Innes, 1998). In this paper the focus is concentrated on a small part of the wider system, namely the gender aspect of SIA. SIA is a key part of EIA. Similarly there is an important reflection of social aspects as being important in sustainable development. Different definitions of sustainable development approach this in different ways. This discussion touches on three approaches that are relevant to EIA and SIA: the triple bottom line approach, the embedded model approach and the environmental space approach. These approaches are discussed below.

THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE APPROACH

The triple bottom line approach defines three areas where projects or organizations can add or destroy value. In addition to the conventional financial 'bottom line' that reflects a company's net profit, two fields are considered, namely the social aspect and the environmental aspect. It is often depicted diagrammatically as three intersecting circles. The approach sees the achievement of sustainable development as the area where the three fields overlap or interact. In other words, sustainable development is achieved when each of the three fields has been addressed in achieving sustainability. For the purpose of this paper, for example, the emphasis and focus should be placed on the ecological and social aspects of development (Vanclay, 2004: 34).

This approach is limited in that it might not be entirely accurate to say that there are aspects of economy that fall outside environmental concerns. It has been seen to be inadequate when considered as a serious contribution to EIA. However, it acts as a

starting point for defining more appropriate approaches (Vanclay, 2004: 43). This was also recognized in South Africa and a different model emerged out of this concern.

THE EMBEDDED MODEL APPROACH

The embedded model (see Figure 1) places the three fields named in the triple bottom line approach in an embedded perspective that represents the economic concerns as embedded within social concerns that are in turn embedded in environmental concerns. Seen from this perspective a social issue cannot be addressed without considering the environment, both built and natural, within which this social question is raised. Similarly, economic concerns are dependent on the social field within which they occur. Another field is added that reflects the policy approach that binds and supports all the other three in implementation. This is significant for this paper in that the social impact of a development is embedded within the environmental impact, and indeed the social sphere has an impact on the environmental, as the policy sphere does (RSA, 2006). If this can be kept in mind when environmental impact assessment is discussed, it will be clear how important the social impact of a developmental project is.

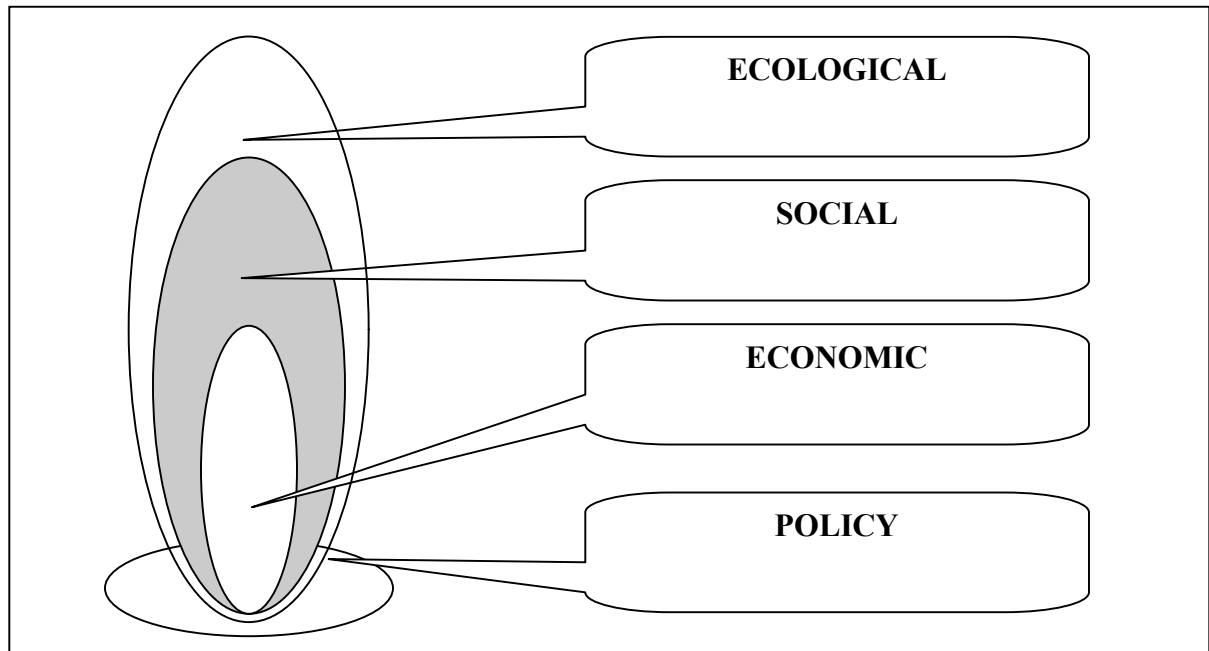


Figure 1: Embedded model

THE ENVIRONMENTAL SPACE APPROACH

A core value in the Brundtland definition is equality: equality between different generations but also equality between people living together in one generation. An approach that has extensively examined and developed the equality perspective on sustainable development is the *environmental space* approach. The core argument is that there is a finite amount of natural resources available to be consumed on the planet. This

consumption is then limited as a maximum level of consumption and a minimum level. The maximum represents the total natural resources available divided equally between the relevant population number to give an indication of each person's 'fair share'. This figure then represents the maximum amount of consumption per population that is practical and equitable. The approach also includes a minimum amount of consumption that is determined by basic human needs and dignity. The 'space' between these two lines then defines sustainable development (McLaren, 2003). This approach has important implications for EIA and SIA in that it represents a framework informing decisions about the usage of natural resources by developers or communities. It also highlights the importance of power in relation to accessing resources.

Sustainable development is a complex concept dependent on many variables beyond any possibility of perception of the whole. EIA plays a wide range of roles in the achievement of sustainable development. This paper focuses specifically on the role EIA can play in strengthening social equity, as defined by environmental space and the embedded fields model, and placing it within the mitigation of social impact, specifically gender impacts.

POLICY CONTEXT FOR EIA, SIA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In South Africa, EIA falls within a particular policy environment. Between national, provincial and local government there are various tools and structures that contextualize and support the EIA process for developers, the communities impacted by proposed developments and the local municipalities that govern areas of implementation (see Figures 2 and 3).

Before the discussion proceeds to SIA it is useful to place EIA within the policy framework that surrounds it in South Africa, in order to create an understanding of how SIA, and for our discussion, gender impact assessment, can contribute to sustainable development.

The tools and policies are discussed at three levels: national level, strategy level (in other words, local and provincial), and on an individual project level. The policies and tools relevant to our discussion are briefly explained.

NATIONAL LEVEL TOOLS

- *IEM* – *Integrated Environmental Management Framework*
- *NFSD* – *National Framework for Sustainable Development*
- *NSDP* – *National Spatial Development Plan*

STRATEGIC LEVEL TOOLS (PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL)

- *EMF* – *Environmental Management Framework*
- *EMP* – *Environmental Management Plan*
- *SDF* – *Spatial Development Framework*

A legally required component of an IDP which seeks to set out a more detailed approach to spatial planning and land use management and which supports the development vision and objectives in the IDP. In a sense it is the picture of the IDP.

- *IDP – Integrated Development Plan*
Every municipality in South Africa is required to produce an IDP in which the city's future is mapped over the short, medium and long term. Issues that are considered include spatial planning, disaster management, finances, performance targets and economic development. The key to the process is *integration*, meaning that all processes are considered in relation to one another (DEAT, 2004). In the case study of the Limpopo Province which is presented below, this forms a key facility for collaboration between developers and local government.
- *SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment*
One of the trends in impact assessment is the development of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) as a way of mainstreaming policies to support impact assessments (Vanclay, 2004: 270). SEA forms the larger knowledge base into which individual EIAs fall (DEAT, 2004).

PROJECT LEVEL TOOLS

- *SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment*
It is important that SEA be recognized both on a strategic level and a project level, as EIA needs to be contextualized in the greater environment and history within which it is conducted (DEAT, 2004).
- *EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment*
- *SIA – Social Impact Assessment*
Social Impact Assessment will be discussed in more detail below. At this stage it is important to note that in South Africa it falls in the project level of development and is usually the responsibility of the developer to compile, as a section of the environmental impact assessment.
- *SA + SIs – Sustainability Assessment + Sustainability Indicators*

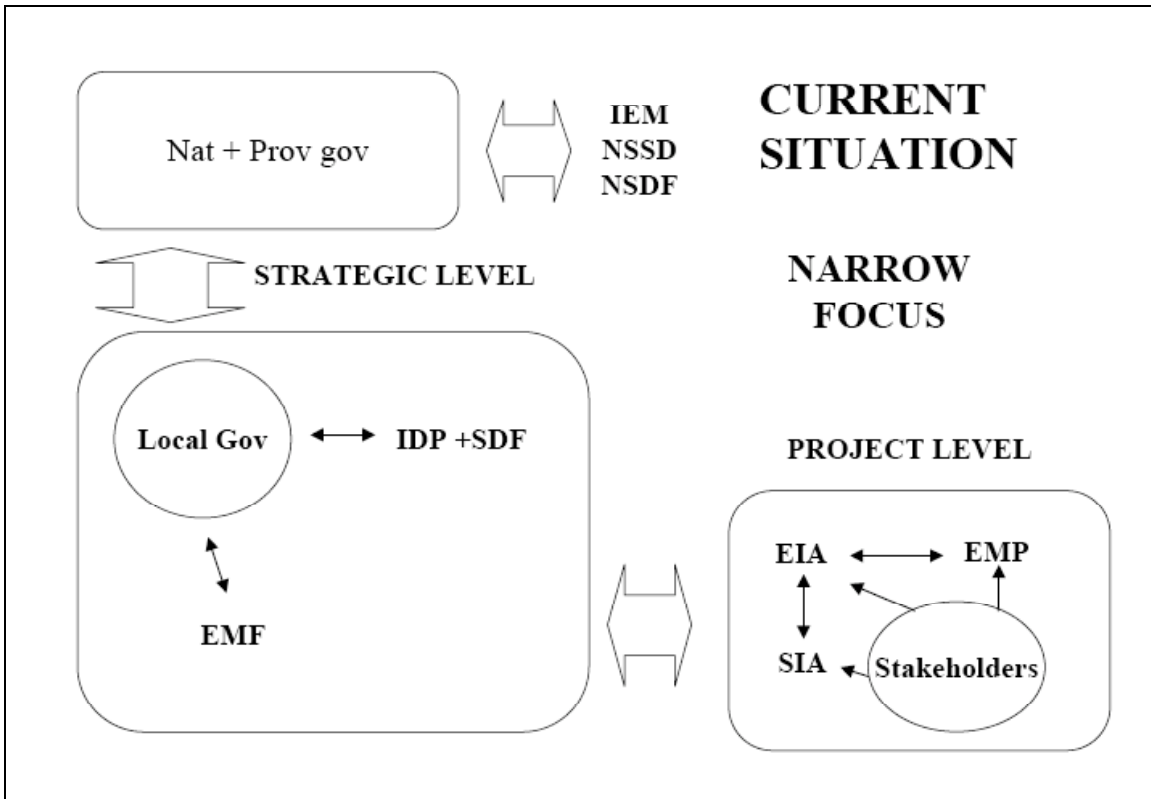


Figure 2: The policy environment in SA

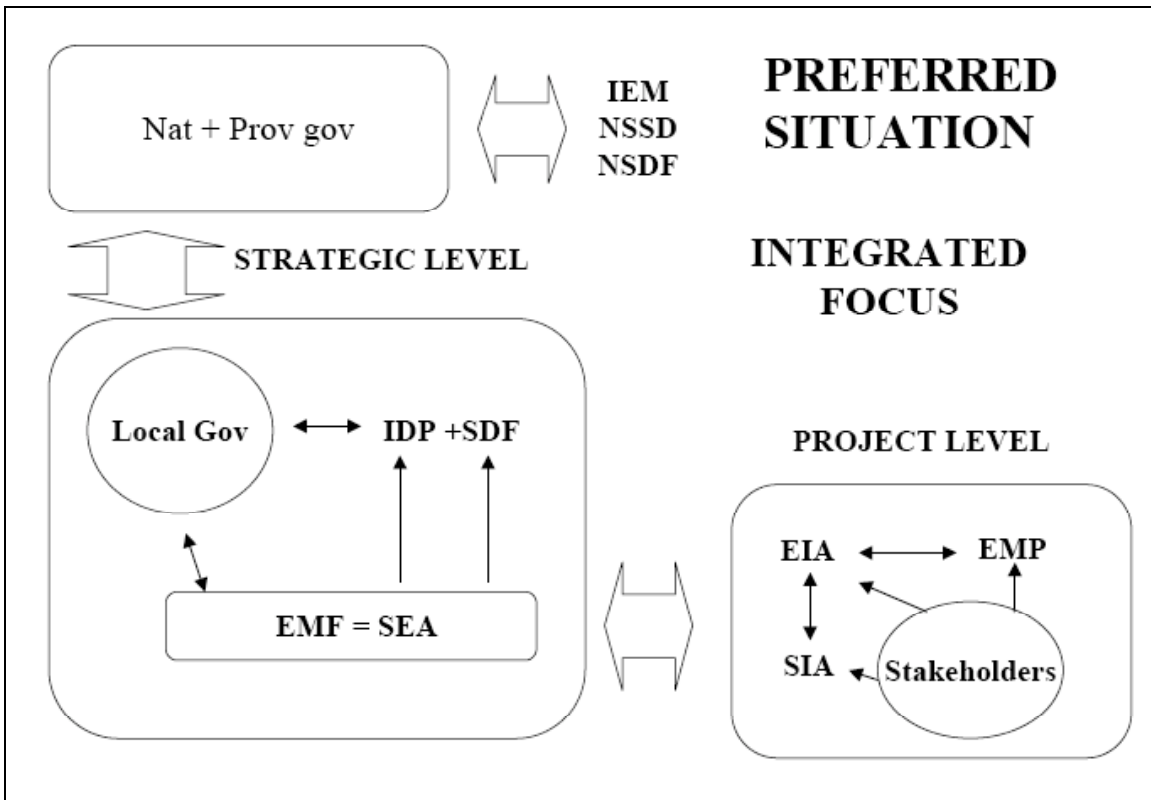


Figure 3: A potential improvement where an integrated focus is practised

Currently SEAs are not being utilized efficiently or seriously by project level stakeholders (Vanclay, 2004).

The second diagram (Figure 3) represents a situation where a stronger relationship exists between strategic decisions and the SEA of the specific area. Note that in Figure 3 the social impact has been determined by the stakeholders in the community along with the developers driving the project. Social impact assessment, like EIA, has a wide field of theory and practice that informs it.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SIA)

This paper argues that EIA can contribute to sustainable development in South Africa if SIA and specifically gender impact assessment is strengthened, by utilizing SIA as a participative process management tool, as opposed to a predictive quantitative tool (Lucas & Cornwall, 2003: 8). According to Vanclay (2004: 41), SIA has failed as a practical application. It is often seen 'as legitimating bad development rather than being a path to good development' (Vanclay, 2004: 280).

According to Vanclay (2004: 270), SIA falls into the following three common categories:

- The use as a tool subordinate to EIA that makes predictions about impacts
- An approach and methodology in its own right that informs the management of social processes related to development
- An academic body of research and practice with its own field of reference and research.

Vanclay (2004) goes on to summarize the essence of the ineffectiveness or problems concerning SIA by stating that SIA cannot be considered as a formula for decision making. In other words, as it is a social approach, it cannot provide definitive quantitative answers. All that it can do is make certain predictions about which sections of the population will experience what kind of impacts. This is where the decision becomes a political decision, since the impacts upon certain groups have to be weighed against the impacts on other groups.

To reflect on the potential sustainability contribution of SIA, in the models discussed above, this echoes the inadequacy and inappropriate expectation of having a purely quantitative 'social bottom line'. It also demonstrates the usefulness of the embedded model that is grounded in policy. The political realm determines the decisions about environmental and social impacts. Consequently it is more practical to view SIA not as a decision-making tool, but as a process management approach (Vanclay, 2004: 281).

Therefore, in South Africa SIA would become the framework that links projects and EIA to the IDP of a town or area, as a continuous and developing framework. As mentioned above, the key potential of the IDP lies in its integrated nature, where economic, social

and environmental concerns are integrated in one plan for the town or area (DEAT, 2004).

SIA should ideally include harmful aspects of development, goals and objectives of development, including what constitutes appropriate development, and processes of development, such as participation and social capital building (Vanclay, 2004: 36).

If SIA is seen as a process of social impact management, a significant aspect is the participation of the people involved in the project area, and consequently participative approaches are required. Participatory studies are required by some funding agencies for projects, where the studies have to include the beneficiaries or impacted communities (Lucas & Cornwall, 2003: 299). This falls in the *participative* and *environmental governance approaches* to planning mentioned above where the paper defines EIA (Mehta et al., in Cashmore, 2004: 19).

The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) has drawn up a set of guidelines for SIA practice (2003). In this document it outlines some core values of SIA:

The core values of SIA

The SIA community of practice believes that:

1. There are fundamental human rights that are shared *equally* across cultures, and by *males and females* alike.
2. There is a right to have those fundamental human rights protected by the rule of law, with justice applied *equally* and fairly to all, and available to all.
3. People have a right to live and work in an environment which is conducive to good *health* and to a good quality of life and which enables the development of human and social potential.
4. Social dimensions of the environment – specifically but not exclusively peace, the *quality of social relationships*, freedom from fear, and belongingness – are important aspects of people's health and quality of life.
5. People have a right to be involved in the *decision making* about the planned interventions that will affect their lives.
6. Local knowledge and experience are valuable and can be used to enhance planned interventions.

(My italics; IAIA, 2003)

From the values stated here it is clear that development, and hopefully sustainable development, does not only impact on people's lives, but depends on their participation. Without their participation, seen from this perspective, large-scale developmental projects are bound to fail. SIA is a wide field of practice containing several specific focus areas like health and social wellbeing, quality of living environment, economic impacts and material wellbeing, cultural impacts and family and community impacts, amongst others (Van Schooten, Vanclay & Sloodweg, 2003). As a specific examination of the process nature of SIA, the discussion now moves to gender impact assessment.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

From a global perspective gender impact assessment has been seen as a key tool in implementing policies and programmes. In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the global platform for action requested that governments and other stakeholders ‘mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programs, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively’ (CSW, 1995). Gender impact assessment is seen as a tool to achieve this aim (European Commission, 2007).

According to the same European commission document quoted above gender impact assessment is defined as follows:

Gender impact assessment means to compare and assess, according to gender relevant criteria, the current situation and trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy.

The different impacts that are listed by Van Schooten et al. (2003) as social impacts often occur in several categories. For example, the set of impacts named as family and community impacts overlaps with gender impacts. I will also include some of the family impacts as discussion points in the application of the argument to the case study below. The following impacts have been selected for this discussion:

Family and community impacts

- Alterations in family structure
- Obligations to living family members and ancestors
- Family violence – physical or verbal abuse
- Social networks
- Community identification and connection
- Community cohesion
- Social differentiation and inequity – creation of differences between various groups in a community
- Social tension and violence

(Van Schooten et al., 2003: 87)

From the above list especially family violence and social inequity overlap with potential gender impacts.

The list of gender impacts provided by Van Schooten et al (2003: 88) identifies gender as a ‘core social impact issue’ in line with international acknowledgement that women bear the brunt of poverty globally (CSW, 1995). They name the following impacts:

Gender impacts

- Women's physical integrity
- Personal autonomy of women
- Gendered division of production-oriented labour
- Gendered division of household labour
- Gendered division of reproductive labour
- Gender-based control over, and access to, resources
- Political emancipation of women

One impact that has not been included by Van Schooten et al. concerns the specific reduction and breakdown of fatherhood. There is overwhelming evidence in South Africa that explores and discusses this as a direct impact of developmental and anti-developmental processes and projects like industrialisation and apartheid. A recent compilation of research by Richter and Morrell (2006) is a good starting point for review of this field. The addition of this impact to the list also echoes the global trend to include men and boys in discussions about gender, resulting in the term Women In Development (WID) changing to Gender and Development (GAD) in United Nations policies (Chant & Guttman, 2000: 6 in Flood, 2004).

Gender impact assessment is placed in this paper as a core practice in SIA. As argued above, SIA can contribute more significantly to sustainable development in SA if used as a participatory process, and not only as a segment of a predictive, quantitative EIA. From the lists cited above I draw the following family and gender impacts to use as a framework within which to exemplify the process-oriented nature of social impact assessment.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IMPACTS

- *Family violence – physical or verbal abuse*

As the case study below shows, there is a distinct link between women's vulnerability to gender-based violence and their economic independence.

- *Social networks*

These are seen as the impacts on the social interaction between household members and people from the community that surround them.

- *Social differentiation and inequity – creation of differences between various groups in a community*

As a core value to sustainable development, seen in the environmental space approach cited above, equality is also important between genders. This link is obvious between the family impacts of inequality that often translate into gender inequality.

GENDER IMPACTS

- *Women's physical integrity*

This refers to a woman's right to be in control of and make decisions about her own body, health and sexual activity (Van Schooten et al., 2003). In South Africa women's health is particularly vulnerable to the HIV epidemic (Desmond & Desmond, 2006).

- *Personal autonomy of women*

This refers to the 'level of independence, self reliance and self-respect in physical, economic, political and socio cultural aspects' (Van Schooten et al., 2003).

- *Gender-based control over, and access to, resources*

This includes a range of resources ranging from natural to financial resources. Rigid gender roles often demand that men should be in control of household resources, even if they are not the main source of income (Ramphela & Richter, 2006; Flood, 2004).

These lists of gender impacts that fall under SIA can now provide us with a framework with which to examine the process-oriented nature of social impact mitigation.

CONCLUSION

In this first part of the paper, approaches to EIA and sustainable development were explored. The argument was made that SIA can be more useful for sustainable development as a process management tool than a predictive tool, and gender impacts as a specific set of social impacts were named to create a reference framework for further exploration.

In the case study below two examples are studied: the first is a summary of some of the above gender impacts that occurred due to development in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, while the second is a look at an intervention that could potentially fit into the framework of SIA as a *process to mitigate* the social impacts.

PART TWO: CASE STUDY

INTRODUCTION: CLOSING THE GAPS

One of the key challenges of the triple bottom line approach is that it often views economic, ecological and social values as being separate from each other (Vanclay, 2004). To make the leap from this silo approach towards a more integrated embedded approach requires that the relationships of social, economic and ecological values are reconsidered. In this paper we are specifically looking at the difference a shift in SIA approach would make to sustainable development in South Africa. When SIA is seen as a continuous process that still plays an essential part in EIA, but is not subordinate to the quantitative EIA decision-making frameworks, a gap will be closed. These gaps separate the circles in the traditional triple bottom line approach and move development towards the embedded approach.

EXAMINING THE CASE OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE

I chose the Limpopo Province of SA as a focus of the case study for two reasons. Firstly, it is one of the provinces in the country with mining activity that could be reflected on in terms of social impact, and secondly there are many community-based interventions occurring in the province that could match the criteria of social impact management. The discussion explores the social impact of the mining operation and an intervention that uses micro-finance to reduce HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence.

A question that often arises concerning social impact is: Who is responsible for the mitigation of social impact? It is often a serious issue of debate between the main categories of stakeholders in any project, namely the developer or proponent, related government departments and the community affected by the development (Vanclay, 2004: 270). As mentioned above, the process of social impact management is more often than not seen 'as legitimating bad development rather than being a path to good development' (Vanclay, 2004:280).

To take this line of argument a step further, it should be made clear that consensus is only one model of decision making. There are other ways of establishing all the criteria needed to make a decision and continue with the practical consequences of that decision. Drawing on the literature that examines the urban sustainability field, a model of *conflictual and transgressive* politics becomes apparent (Pieterse, 2004).

Communities and local government constituencies affected by potentially damaging 'economic' development therefore require a forum to interrogate and challenge each other. An example of a forum that could play this role is the 'community forums' required by the mining charter of South Africa for the establishment of a mining operation in an area (DTI, 2007).

The mining charter has had much criticism (Tupy, 2002). However, a critique of its effectiveness and appropriateness goes beyond the scope of this paper. In the description below, the social mitigation and impact reports of Anglo Platinum is explored in this regard¹.

For community residents to participate in such a forum effectively would however require that they are well-organized and informed. In the second part of this discussion we explore how the IMAGE² project played a role in strengthening the communities involved. This project is then also examined with the set of impacts selected above as criteria as a potential mitigation tool for social and gender impact.

¹ Anglo Platinum is the name of a mining conglomerate that has several operations in the Limpopo area. Their website provides copies of their annual reports and strategies involving social impact mitigation.

² IMAGE: Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equality

ANGLO PLATINUM MINES

The mining company Anglo Platinum is a significant developer, or corporate influence, in the Limpopo Province. Anglo Platinum signed towards the South African mining charter and thus expressed their commitment to mitigating and participating in the effects of the social impact their operations might have. Some significant steps in this regard include:

The socio-economic assessment toolkit

Anglo Platinum have developed a socio-economic assessment toolkit (SEAT) with which to identify and prioritise the social impacts of their operations. At the time of writing this paper all their operations had undergone an assessment.

Merging the strategic plans with IDPs and provincial growth strategies

Participation with local and provincial government is achieved through the integrated development plans and the provincial growth strategies of the area.

Ensuring CSI and strategy formulation influenced by all stakeholders

The Anglo Platinum company follows the mining charter in regard of maintaining community forums that interact with the IDPs in the area and keeping information channels open to stakeholders that might be affected by the operations. A social and labour plan is required that creates a framework for this mitigation of social impacts.

Recognising negative social impacts

The Anglo Platinum mine published a set of negative impacts of which they are aware, on their website. The paragraph reads as follows (Panel 1):

Socio-economic assessments, using the Anglo American socio-economic assessment toolkit, have been completed at all operations. These assessments have shown the significant positive impacts operations have on job creation, business development and infrastructure development. They have also highlighted a number of negative impacts which include:

Social impacts such as proliferation of informal settlements as job sectors move into areas adjacent to the mine
Complaints of increased prostitution and crime
Environmental impacts such as noise, dust and boreholes running dry
Cracked houses
Lack of employment of people from the community
Lack of business opportunities from the community
Loss of agricultural land

We address these issues through the social and labour plans for each operation.

(Anglo Platinum, 2007)

Panel 1: Negative social impacts accounted for by Anglo Platinum

The above panel touches on a few of the social impacts drawn from the list of Van Schooten et al. (2003). Table 1 below outlines some of the impacts that match the list above. It is not an exhaustive list or comparison. The purpose of the table is to illustrate that the mining operations of Anglo Platinum in Limpopo do have a family and gender impact.

Table 1: Negative social impacts of Anglo Platinum matched with gender, family and community impacts.

Negative social impacts	Related gender / family / community impacts
The proliferation of internal settlements	Social networks degrading
Complaints of increased prostitution and crime	Women's physical integrity Family violence – physical or verbal abuse
Lack of employment of people from the community	Personal autonomy of women
Lack of business opportunities from the community	Social networks degrading

The core argument stated in the first section of this paper demonstrated that social impact assessment should be seen as a process of social impact management, rather than as a predictive tool that functions as a segment of an EIA for any particular development. This would then allow the impact assessment process to contribute to sustainable development by contributing to the equality in the community affected.

Within the impact assessment structure of South Africa, and specifically in the mining industry, the mining charter has played the role of linking mining developments and developers to the communities impacted by the mines or proposed mines. The two main forums for this are the participation in the IDP and provincial growth strategy of the particular area and community-based forums to discuss the social impacts of the mining operation. Corporate social investment (CSI), as a key pillar of broad-based black economic empowerment has been recognized as a valuable field of social impact mitigation through resource support (DTI, 2007).

Taking the above exploration of negative social impacts into consideration this paper concludes with a look at an intervention that is not a part of a stakeholder forum or initiated by a proponent attempting to mitigate social impacts of investment. It is included because it responds effectively to some of the social factors that have been recognized above as impacts due to development. The study quoted does not aim to cover the source of the negative impacts, but discusses their remedy comprehensively. This study was included in this paper because the needs that required the study match some of the impacts above.

In short, the conclusion of this paper holds that some of the social and gender impacts resulting from a developer like Anglo Platinum in Limpopo can be managed as part of a SIA process by doing an intervention like the one below. The discussion starts with a comparison of the social impacts documented by Anglo Platinum and the needs that triggered the study.

INTERVENTION WITH MICROFINANCE FOR AIDS AND GENDER EQUITY

STATEMENT OF NEED

The two primary challenges to which the intervention responded are the high HIV infection risk and vulnerability to intimate partner violence. The study quotes several statistics to support this focus. For example: In 2004, 30% of all women visiting antenatal clinics were HIV positive and one in four South African women reported that they had been in an abusive relationship (Pronyk et al., 2006: 1973). The study also states underdevelopment, lack of economic opportunity, entrenched inequalities in the distribution of power, responsibilities and resources between men and women as elements conducive to a high risk environment for HIV infection and intimate-partner violence (see Table 2).

Table 2: Matching negative social impacts with needs of community identified by IMAGE study

Negative social impacts (Anglo Platinum)	Related gender/family/community impacts (Van Schooten et al.)	Related needs identified by IMAGE study
The proliferation of informal settlements	Social networks degrading	Underdevelopment
Complaints of increased prostitution and crime	Women's physical integrity Family violence – physical or verbal abuse	High-risk environment for HIV infection and intimate-partner violence
Lack of employment of people from the community	Personal autonomy of women	Lack of economic opportunity
Lack of business opportunities from the community	Social networks degrading Personal autonomy of women	Lack of economic opportunity Entrenched inequalities in the distribution of power, responsibilities and resources

OVERVIEW OF INTERVENTION

The intervention combined a participatory curriculum of HIV and gender education with a targeted microfinance opportunity, focused on the poorest women in particular villages in rural Limpopo (see Panel 2). The area has unemployment rates as high as 40% and 60% of adult men and 25% of adult women living away from home for more than six months a year.

The aim was “to determine whether the involvement of women in the programme would improve household economic wellbeing, social capital, and empowerment and thus reduce vulnerability to intimate partner violence” (Pronyk et al., 2006: 1973).

The methodology was to select eight villages based on operational feasibility. Then four villages were randomly selected to participate. The study period was three years. (An extensive description of the study procedures lies beyond the scope of this paper, and only necessary information is quoted in summary.)

<p>Panel: Intervention components and key features</p> <p>Poverty-focused microfinance Microfinance processes facilitated by one field worker in every village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of the poorest households with participatory wealth ranking• Recruitment and group formation for credit guarantee and support (one group consists of five women)• Individual borrowing and repayment of loans over 10 or 20 week cycles• Centre meetings every 2 weeks (one centre consists of around 40 women in eight groups)• Continuing business assessment and monitoring of effect <p>Sisters for Life gender and HIV training programme²⁷ Sisters for Life facilitated by a team of trainers working in all villages.</p> <p>Phase 1: Structured training Ten sessions done within centre meetings every 2 weeks (for about 6 months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Reflecting on culture• Gender roles• Women's work• Our bodies, ourselves• Domestic violence• Gender and HIV• Knowledge is power• Empowering change• Way forward <p>Phase 2: Community mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Election of natural leaders from within centres (up to five per centre)• External training for natural leaders• Development of centre-based action plans responding to local priority issues• 6-9 months of continued facilitation by training team

Panel 2 Source: Pronyk et al. (2006)

RESULTS

The intervention achieved significant results in the priority areas. In one cohort of 843 women, experiences of intimate partner violence were reduced by 55% over the period of two years.

Increased economic wellbeing was suggested by some indicators, namely household assets, memberships of *stokvels* and expenditure on food and clothing. Women who participated in the intervention also were more likely to report higher levels of participation in social groups and collective action and felt a greater sense of solidarity from their community in a time of crisis than women in the control group.

Table 3 categorizes these outcomes with the social and gender impacts tabled above in Tables 1 and 2:

Table 3: Matching negative social and gender impacts with results of IMAGE

Negative social impacts (Anglo Platinum)	Related gender / family / community impacts (Van Schooten et al., 2003)	Related needs identified by IMAGE study	Results of IMAGE intervention
The proliferation of internal settlements	Social networks degrading	Underdevelopment	Higher levels of participation in social groups Greater sense of solidarity
Complaints of increased prostitution and crime	Women's physical integrity Family violence – physical or verbal abuse	High-risk environment for HIV infection and intimate-partner violence	Higher levels of participation in social groups Intimate partner violence reduced by 55%
Lack of employment of people from community	Personal autonomy of women	Lack of economic opportunity	Memberships of <i>stokvels</i> Increased economic wellbeing Greater sense of solidarity
Lack of business opportunities from the community	Social networks degrading Personal autonomy of women	Lack of economic opportunity Entrenched inequalities in the distribution of power, responsibilities and resources	Higher levels of participation in social groups Increased economic wellbeing Memberships of <i>stokvels</i> Intimate partner violence reduced by 55% Greater sense of solidarity

CONCLUSION

In this paper the discussion began with an examination of various approaches to EIA and sustainable development. The approach to SIA was subsequently explored and the argument was made that SIA can make more of a contribution to SD in South Africa if it is managed as a distinct process that continues beyond the EIA. Gender impacts were used as a specific example of social impacts to interrogate this argument. The second part of the paper uses two examples to examine the process nature of SIA: first a set of social and gender impacts was drawn from a major developer in the Limpopo Province, then an

intervention that mitigated some of these impacts was used as an example of how SIA can inform a social process.

This paper has demonstrated that social impact assessment can contribute to sustainable development in South Africa. The examples of gender impact in Limpopo Province demonstrated a linkage between negative social impacts resulting from development, and potential remedies for these impacts. It is suggested that an intervention like the IMAGE program can become a tool that forms part of a social impact management process. The question of the responsibility of the social mitigation remains an issue that is debated on a project-to-project basis by the three main role players, namely the government departments involved, the developer responsible for the development and the community affected by the development. The facilities of community forums and stakeholder participation create this opportunity to keep a process of conflictual political debate alive.

In the diverse and complex future of South Africa a small step can hereby be made towards sustainable, participatory development.

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