

## Local smart specialisation: a step-by-step guide to social impact management in remote communities with resource-based economies

Leena Suopajärvi, University of Lapland  
Anna Kantola, Sodankylä municipality  
Ryan Weber, Nordregio





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a step-by-step guide to social impact management  
in remote communities with resource-based economies



# REGINA

Remote communities & resource-based industries

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Nordregio  
P.O. Box 1658  
SE-111 86 Stockholm, Sweden  
nordregio@nordregio.se  
www.nordregio.se  
www.norden.org

Analyses and text:  
Leena Suopajärvi, University of Lapland  
Anna Kantola, Sodankylä municipality  
Ryan Weber, Nordregio

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### **The REGINA project**

*Nordic co-operation* is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland.

*Nordic co-operation* has firm traditions in politics, the economy, and culture. It plays an important role in European and international collaboration, and aims at creating a strong Nordic community in a strong Europe.

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### **The Northern Periphery and Arctic 2014–2020**

forms a cooperation between 9 programme partner countries. The NPA 2014–2020 is part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and ERDF equivalent funding from non EU partner countries.

Despite geographical differences, the large programme area shares a number of joint challenges and opportunities that can best be overcome and realised by transnational cooperation. It is the programme's vision to help to generate vibrant, competitive and sustainable communities, by harnessing innovation, expanding the capacity for entrepreneurship and seizing the unique growth initiatives and opportunities of the Northern and Arctic regions in a resource efficient way.

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# 1

## Introduction

 **THE REGINA PROJECT** (Regional Innovation in the Nordic Arctic and Scotland with a special focus on regions with large-scale industries) is a 3-year project that focuses on developing a local smart specialisation strategy (LS3) model for implementation by remote and sparsely populated areas that depend heavily on resource based economies. Five municipalities from the Nordic-Arctic and North Atlantic region have participated in the project and each partner municipality has implemented the model. Broadly speaking, each LS3 aims to identify and develop the place-based strengths of each community, while mitigating potential risks and challenges. Three strategic planning tools developed by the REGINA project form the core components of the LS3 model:

**1. A demographic and labour market foresight Model (DFM):** that suggests ideas and initiatives for the recruitment of a new labour force and strategies for improving the competence and capacity of the local labour force.

**2. A Social Impact Management Planning Tool (SIMP):** that aims at identifying, monitoring and managing social impacts of large-scale industries.

**3. A Local Benefit Analysis Toolbox (LBAT):** that supports the retention of local economic benefits through development of the local supply chains and growth of complimentary or spillover opportunities presented by new industrial activities.

This report focuses on the SIMP tool and separate reports outline the results from our work with the demographic foresight model and the local benefits analysis toolbox.

SIMP tool is designed to provide strategic planning benefits for municipal planning, private sector industry and local residents alike. For municipalities, it is a tool for predicting and planning local developments in relation to large-scale industries, which helps to improve social sustainability and retain the local benefits of industrial growth. For industry, it offers a way to gain a

social license to operate (SLO) and obtain local acceptance for the project. It can also help the industry and local community in several of their mutual interests, such as improving the attractiveness of the place to live and work. For local residents, SIMP offers a channel for expressing concerns and participating in developing local strategies for the future. The SIMP tool is a formal document and associated management system that outlines the strategies to be undertaken during the various phases of large-scale industries (including closure) to monitor, report, evaluate, review and proactively respond to change.

SIMP is an adaptive management process that includes profiling the baseline situation, scoping and formulating development alternatives, and management strategies to avoid and mitigate negative **social impacts** (Box 1) and enhance positive impacts. Unlike social impact assessments made during the planning process of a project, SIMP also includes continued monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the ongoing social impacts of these large-scale activities.<sup>1)</sup>

### Box 1: What are social impacts?

Social impacts are intended or unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programmes, plans or projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Social impacts may be experienced at the level of an individual, social unit (family, household/collectivity or community/society) and in various spheres of life, including culture, community, political systems, environment, health, way of life, personal/property rights, and fears and aspirations.

Vanclay 2003; Vanclay et al. 2015.

This paper describes how local communities facing the development of large-scale natural resource industries

1) Franks 2012; Franks et al. 2010; Franks & Vanclay 2013.

can implement SIMP. It focuses in particular on the experiences of Sodankylä municipality, where the process for developing a mining programme and agreement through the implementation of the SIMP tool is underway in summer 2017. Sodankylä is a rural community with 8653 inhabitants.<sup>2)</sup> The municipality is located in central Lapland where the possibilities of ore mining are good. As of 2017, there are three mining projects in different phases. First Quantum Minerals Ltd. started operation in Kevitsa in 2012, but Boliden Ltd. bought the mine in 2016. Anglo American Ltd. started an environmental impact assessment for the Sakatti project in spring 2017. In 1996, Terra Mining Ltd. started mining in Pahtavaara, but the Pahtavaara project has subsequently suffered several bankruptcies and ownership changes. The Pahtavaara mine is currently owned by Rupert Resources Ltd., which is also conducting further explorations in the area. Thus, a special quality of Sodankylä is that there are several mining projects at different stages of exploration, development or operation. This emphasises the need for a municipal-level social impact management planning, monitoring, evaluation and development work led by the local community. For example, in cases where there is only one mining project, it can be easier and more relevant to rely on the work that

the industry itself is doing, if it is working well.

In October 2016, Sodankylä's Municipal Board decided to start developing a mining programme and agreement using the REGINA project's resources. A mining programme is a policy programme that sets guidelines and goals for local development related to mining projects. A mining agreement is an agreement-based co-operative plan between the municipality, mining companies and other stakeholders to set common objectives. The mining programme and agreement aim to strengthen the local benefits of large scale mining project and to improve the socially sustainable development. The planned mining programme and agreement address issues such as how to attract mining employees to settle in the municipality, reconciliation of mining with other livelihoods, strengthening the positive socio-economic impacts of mining and mitigating potentially negative impacts. The mining programme is planned to be approved by the Municipal Council, while the development and negotiation of the mining agreement with local stakeholders is currently a work in progress. This report aims to show how Sodankylä is approaching the two main outcomes of implementing SIMP: the local mining programme and the so-called mining agreement.

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2) Regional Council of Lapland 2017.

## 2

# Diverse social impacts

ACCORDING TO THE International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), social impacts are “intended or unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programmes, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions” (Vanclay 2003, 5). In 2015, the IAIA provided a new guide-book for social impact assessment and defined social impacts as “understood as something that is experienced or felt, in perceptual or corporeal sense at the level of an individ-

ual, social unit (family, household/collectivity or community/society” (Vanclay et al. 2015, 95). The definition is extensive and suggests that social impacts create change in various spheres of life: culture, community, political systems, environment, health, way of life, personal/property rights, and fears and aspirations.<sup>3)</sup>

For the purposes of empirical studies, there are check-lists of different kinds of impacts. Table 1 offers guidelines for identifying social impacts<sup>4)</sup> and empirical case studies of social impacts.<sup>5)</sup>

**Table 1. Examples of social impact categories**

Themes Authors →	Burdge 1995	Vanclay 2002	Asselin & Parkins 2009	Lockie et al. 2009	Franks 2012	Petkova et al. 2014
Demographic change	Population impacts, e.g., population change, temporary workers, seasonal residents, relocation, dissimilarity in age, gender, racial or ethnic composition	Health and social well-being, e.g., health, subjective well-being, emotions	Population impacts	Demographic change	Social and cultural change, e.g., impacts on population and demographics, labour, gender and vulnerable groups	Demographic change
Institutional and infrastructural change, including human rights and possibilities for participation	Community/institutional arrangements, e.g., attitudes, interesting group activity  Community infrastructure needs, e.g., change in community infrastructure, land acquisition and disposal	Institutional, legal, political and equity impacts, e.g., participation, human rights, distribution of impacts	Community/institutional arrangements and infrastructure impacts	Demand for human services and access to housing and accommodation  Strengthening local and regional institutions for planning and governance Opportunities for ethnic groups (e.g., Aboriginal people)	The process of change, e.g., impacts on community engagement, consent, participation, remedy, agreements, community development  Human rights and security	

Table 1 continues →

3) Vanclay 2003; Vanclay et al. 2015.

4) Burdge 1995, Vanclay 2002; Franks 2012.

5) Asselin & Parkins 2009; Lockie et al. 2009; Petkova et al. 2009.

Social change, changes in community, family and individual levels	Conflicts between local residents and newcomers e.g., introduction of new social classes, change in the industrial focus of the community Individual and family level impacts e.g., social networks, perceptions of public health and safety, change in leisure opportunities	Family and community impacts e.g., family structure, social networks, cohesion  Indicative gender relations impacts e.g., different gender groups and their rights, division of work, emancipation	Individual and family level impacts	Community participation and integration  Crime  Risks in traffic, e.g., fatigue	Social and cultural change, e.g., social infrastructure and services, crime and social order, culture and customs, labour, gender and vulnerable groups	Atypical work schedules
Cultural and natural heritage change; including environmental impacts experienced by the people	Effects on known cultural, historical and archaeological resources	Cultural impacts, e.g., integrity of a culture, cultural and natural heritage  Quality of the living environment, e.g., liveability of the neighbourhood and workplace, biophysical impacts		Environmental impacts	Socio-environmental change, e.g., impacts on pollution and amenity, resources (access, competition), resettlement, disturbance	Environment and amenity  Ethnic groups; cultural heritage
Socio-economic change	Employment and occupational opportunities	Economic impacts and material well-being, e.g., wealth and prosperity of individuals and the community Housing		Employment opportunities and labour availability  Business opportunities and constraints	Economic change, e.g., impacts on distribution of benefits, inflation/ deflation, infrastructure	Business and employment opportunities and constraints  Demand for and cost of access to accommodation

# 3

## The step-by-step process towards a joint Social Impact Management Plan

SIMP IS A COLLABORATIVE process involving joint efforts and sharing of views by multiple parties to solve problems in a way that leads to mutually desirable outcomes.<sup>67)</sup> In REGINA, SIMP is supported by three complementary methods for identifying social impacts: questionnaires, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats model (SWOT), and participatory GIS.

To create a participatory process is time-consuming work and is a responsible task, where ethical considerations are also present, such as who should be included or excluded, and how the process will be perceived from different local perspectives. In this section, a participatory process is suggested based on academic literature (Franks 2012; Franks et al. 2010; Franks & Vanclay 2013) and on the Sodankylä municipality's experiences in applying SIMP as a mining programme with the aim to develop a mining agreement. This is a work-in-progress as of summer 2017, which is why the last steps are not fully described using examples from Sodankylä.

### 3.1 Step 1. Planning a meaningful and progressive process

The collaborative nature of SIMP means that there should be a series of workshops for identifying social impacts and deciding how to manage them. "Well planned, half done" is a common saying, but not applicable in this case. When there are many people involved and the planning is done collaboratively, there is a need for reflexive approach and ability to make changes to the process, if needed.

It is crucial that the municipal administration and political decision-makers are committed to the SIMP process. Responsible actors are to be named from the outset by identifying which departments and corre-

sponding individuals will be responsible for the process and ensuring that the necessary resources for implementing the SIMP are available.

In Sodankylä, a full mandate from political leaders allowed the responsible officials to implement the preparation of the mining programme and to formulate the mining agreement. The Municipal Board decided in October 2016 to prepare the mining programme and agreement using the REGINA project's resources. This work was placed under the direction of the development manager, the management team and political management of the municipality.

Figure 1 visualises the process put into practice in the Sodankylä municipality. In the first phase, a stakeholder workshop was organised to map the social impacts of mining, including the pros and cons of mining developments. In the second workshop, small groups discussed what should be done to strengthen the positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts. In the third workshop, the outline of the mining project was presented and the audience had the opportunity to comment on the outline. In addition to the stakeholder workshops, it is notable how Sodankylä's REGINA Local Steering Committee constantly guided the work, including providing immediate feedback about the workshops. Further, the guidance from the Steering Committee was deepened by ongoing exchanges with the municipal Management Team (department heads) and the Municipal Board, which engaged with the local political leaders.

After stakeholder involvement through the workshops, the mining programme will proceed to the second phase where it will be discussed as a political decision-making process in Sodankylä. First, the Municipal Board will decide on the mining programme, and then the final discussion and decisions are in the hands of the Municipal Council.

6) Franks 2012; Franks et al. 2010; Franks & Vanclay 2013.

7) Porter et al. 2013, p. 658.



**Figure 1:** Process to formulate the shared goals and plan the tools for the local SIMP in the Sodankylä municipality in Finland. The steps highlight the process of including stakeholders and local residents, and the follow-up

meetings and development with the REGINA Steering Group, Sodankylä's municipal management team, the Municipal Board, and ultimately the Municipal Council. By Anna Kantola, 2017.

Within the first step, existing knowledge gaps should be identified and research on relevant themes should be started. In Sodankylä, there was not enough information about the social impacts experienced by local people

or about local attitudes towards mining. Therefore, the municipal leaders decided to carry out a **postal survey** in Sodankylä municipality (see Box 2) as a basis for developing the SIMP tool.

### Box 2: Obtaining public input through questionnaires

Questionnaires are useful when it is necessary to reach a large audience, such as the residents of the municipality. They can be delivered by post or through Internet programmes such as Webropol or Survey Monkey. Keep in mind that postal surveys often receive only a 15–30% response rate, which can pose a challenge for getting representative coverage of your target group. At the same time, an Internet-based survey is prone to exclude certain groups, e.g., people not used to or not willing to use the Internet. There is also a possibility that someone may complete the questionnaire several times, but this is seldom the case. These issues must be considered when administering the survey and performing the analysis. For example, asking basic demographic questions at the beginning or at the end of the survey help to identify if

certain population groups are over- or under-represented in the results.

The survey developed for Sodankylä provided a general overview and a general picture of the present attitudes and experienced impacts of the mining developments. It was sent by post to 600 residents and was available on the municipality's website. The questionnaire included questions about general attitudes towards mining; impacts of mining on infrastructure, services and recreational amenities; evaluation of local acceptance of different mining projects (referring to SLO); opinions about legislation and regulation and finally, the experienced environmental impacts. The report, *Impacts of Mining in the Municipality of Sodankylä* (Kuisma & Suopajarvi 2017), is available from the Resource Centre on the REGINA website.<sup>8)</sup>

8) [www.reginaproject.eu](http://www.reginaproject.eu).



### **3.2 Step 2. Identifying the relevant stakeholders to be involved in the process**

Following the identification of internal stakeholders in the municipality, it is important to identify a variety of external stakeholders. Representatives from the industry are important for the success of SIMP, but it is also necessary to identify other stakeholder groups such as from other industries and livelihoods, different localities, representatives from the third sector, groups working in social services, recreational groups, and political groups. Even small, rural municipalities are heterogeneous communities. The involvement of a large number of stakeholders at the beginning of the process is important so that all voices from the community are heard.

In Sodankylä, it was first decided to have municipal representation from the development unit, from the social employment unit and from the local educational centre. Next, it was decided to involve at least all of the actors whom the operating mining projects are expected to impact. Therefore, the village councils nearby the mines or mining projects were contacted and their associations were asked to nominate a representative to the process.

The other task was to identify the representatives from traditional, nature-based livelihoods. First and foremost, representatives from all impacted reindeer herding areas were invited because reindeer herding is one of the most significant nature-based livelihoods in Sodankylä. Fishery representatives (as a livelihood and as a recreation) were invited to participate, in addition to representatives from a local hunting association. Representatives from nature conservation associations and their regional organisations were also invited. Part of northern Sodankylä belongs to the official Sámi area, so it was clear that the official representatives of Sámi people should be included on the list of invitations.

Representatives of mining and exploration companies were invited and the most significant companies currently operating in Sodankylä participated in the process. When considered from the perspective of reconciliation of different industries, the State Forest Enterprise was invited because it is the main landowner in the Sodankylä municipality and they have both an economic and a conservation perspective on the land and forest. The Sodankylä Tourism Association, representing entrepreneurs in the field, along with representatives from the Central Union of Agricultural Producers, local forest owners and the Local Entrepreneurs' Association were also invited.

### **3.3 Step 3. Involvement and efforts to ensure the commitment of the stakeholders**

Time is a valuable resource and first impressions matter. Therefore, it is important to think about how the purpose and process of the SIMP is described in the first letters or e-mails to the stakeholders. In Sodankylä, the invitation letter emphasised the municipality's commitment to the process. In addition, involvement often required personal contact by phone or in person because it showed stakeholders that their presence is particularly important. Furthermore, it is important that different organisations and associations can decide who will be their representative in the workshops. For example, the invitation letter to Village Councils in Sodankylä asked them to name their own delegates, who were usually the chairperson or secretary of the village association.

It can be difficult to encourage local entrepreneurs to join the process. This was the case in Sodankylä, where most of the companies are small, meaning that it is a major time investment to join discussion workshops without knowing the direct benefits for them. In addition, organisations with limited resources are often unable to participate. In Sodankylä, this was the case with some of the invited organisations.

There may also be groups that do not accept the operations of large-scale industries at all. This was the case in Sodankylä with the Sámi people. The municipality translated the invitation into the Sámi language and sent it to the Sámi Parliament, who answered by official letter that they were not willing to participate in this process and do not accept mining projects on their home area. In this case, the industrial mining projects are not currently located on their home area in the northern part of the Sodankylä municipality.

It is important that most of the representatives are the same people during the whole project. Simultaneously, if it becomes clear during the process that relevant stakeholders are missing, they should be included. For example, in Sodankylä, a representative from the Lutheran church's deacon work joined the process later on because they believed that potential social problems related to industrial projects could influence their work.

### **3.4 Step 4. Progressive collaborative planning**

As highlighted in Figure 1, this phase includes at least 2–3 workshops where the main themes of the SIMP are discussed, negative/positive social impacts are concretely identified, and measures and responsible actors



are decided. It is important that all participants feel that their ideas are heard, but it is unrealistic to assume that total agreement can be reached. Teamwork is a good way to organise workshops because then participants themselves also realise that there are different opinions and ideas and that not all of their individual ideas can be fulfilled.

In the first workshop, a SWOT model may be used for mapping out present experiences as well future threats and possibilities for development of the large-scale industries. The work should be documented so that the outputs can be used as a basis for the SIMP.

### 3.4.1 Collaborative workshops in Sodankylä

In the first workshop, the idea of a mining programme and agreement (SIMP) was introduced to the participants. The REGINA project and the local specialisation strategy concept were introduced and the current situation of the mining industry in Sodankylä from the mining company perspective was presented. The reindeer herders presented the basic facts of reindeer herding in the area and the economic value of reindeer herding. There was also a speech about nature values to open the discussion of different perspectives about the mining.

In the workshop, participants were divided into three groups based on their expertise in social, environmental and economic aspects of mining. Following the idea of **SWOT** (see Box 3), the participants were asked to name the main opportunities and challenges related to the mining industry at the local level, both at present and in the future. The discussions were fruitful and the participants responded in a follow-up e-mail survey that they were satisfied with the workshop method that provided a structure where every participant had the possibility to share their comments and ideas.

The REGINA Local Steering Committee decided it would be a good idea to organise the second workshop with a visit to the Kevitsa mine in Sodankylä. They believed it would be a good opportunity for those who had never visited the mine site to gain practical experience of the mining operations in physical and visual terms. The steering group also discussed that some stakeholders could interpret this as a process of “selling” the local acceptance for the mining. To avoid that feeling, the project manager asked the participants of the first workshop where they would like to have the following workshop organised. Most of the replies also voted for the mine site, so it was decided to hold the second workshop there. This small example describes how carefully the steps and details of the process have to be considered to maintain trust and acceptance among stakeholders.

### Box 3: Conducting a SWOT analysis during the stakeholder workshops

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) model includes the present day situation as well future aspects. SWOT is basically a sheet with four columns where people can write their views and visions under the SWOT categories, which can be done during local stakeholder workshops or within a questionnaire. The questionnaire for the Sodankylä municipality residents asked, following the SWOT model, what were the positive or negative impacts of mining to the informants' own life and what are the opportunities and threats that they see in mining developments. In a local workshop, SWOT can be used as a starting point for a collaborative planning process, where different views and visions can be grouped and then voted on so that the most important positive/negative impacts and opportunities/threats are identified. After voting, the next round can concentrate on how positive impacts can be supported, how negative impacts can be mitigated, how to make use of opportunities and how to avoid possible threats.

At the second workshop, the Boliden Kevitsa mining company presented their current situation and future development scenarios. There were good discussions during the company's presentations. From that perspective, it can be seen that this kind of participatory process facilitated by the municipality can help the industry and local community to take up the issues that concern the local public and to find ideas for solutions.

After the presentations, all participants were asked to write down their dreams for their future life in Sodankylä. All these visions were collected and some were shared in the workshop. Sodankylä's existing official vision was then presented. It seemed that the stakeholders' individual visions could be realised under the municipality's general vision.

Next, the results of the first workshop and the questionnaire were presented. Participants were then divided into groups and their task was to plan the actions to be taken to achieve the vision and tackle the opportunities and challenges identified in the previous workshop. There was not enough time for discussions, but some practical suggestions and solutions were agreed upon in the groups. Participants were observed as being able to discuss and agree on recommendations despite their different perspectives. The basic rule of thumb is that if more people participated in the workshop and are from more diverse backgrounds, more time should be reserved for the discussions.

The third workshop was organised in collaboration with a project called Governing adaptive change

towards sustainable economy in the Arctic, funded by the Finnish Academy (GovAda). This decision was made because GovAda was planning to organise workshops focused on the same stakeholders as REGINA. In general, if there are several research and development projects working in the area, then these types of opportunities for co-operation and information sharing should be used.

The REGINA project presented the current results from the previous workshops and the main themes of the mining programme were presented based on these results. This process received support from the audience during a question-and-answer session, since the main concern among the participants seemed to be how to get more local benefits from mining. During this session, however, it was important that mining industry representatives are ready to answer questions from the local participants on how they see the process and the possibilities to negotiate and develop community co-operation.

As mentioned earlier, the SIMP process cannot be fully planned beforehand; therefore, there should be the possibility to include themes that emerge during the process. In Sodankylä, one theme related to mining is how to get mining employees to move permanently to the municipality. The following steps to respond to this challenge were identified: (1) to perform a small inter-

view-based study among new employees and (2) to use **participatory GIS** (see Box 3) to develop the municipal centre and make it more attractive.

### 3.5 Step 5. Writing the SIMP as a continuing negotiation process

After listening to the relevant stakeholders, it is time to write the SIMP, whether it takes a form of an agreed policy programme or an agreement signed by responsible actors. The output of collaborative planning processes should be the primary basis for the documentation. However, as described in the fifth step of Figure 1, there should be also time for negotiations and developing the ideas further to make the objectives and measures even more concrete. There should also be a clear assessment routine to monitor how management of social impacts succeeds as the project proceeds.

In Sodankylä, the results of the collaborative planning process have been prepared as a written document by the REGINA project in co-operation with the local steering group. Because the mining programme and agreement processes are being led by the municipality, leading authorities and politicians have commented carefully on the draft of the document. The draft version of the mining programme (policy) was also introduced to the public in May 2017. It is important that all participants of the process can comment on the draft

#### Box 4: Participatory GIS

As a type of digital platform, Internet-based GIS platforms offer the ability to evaluate public opinion on both current land use situations and future development plans. They act as a form of foresight tool that engages with local stakeholders to provide foresight on the potential socio-economic impacts of development plans.

The capability of these platforms to analyse data (both visually and statistically) makes them particularly attractive for planners. They also offer the opportunity for planners to engage with local stakeholders earlier in the planning process and articulate more clearly how public input can contribute to the development of plans. This contrasts with the existing protocol of “public consultation periods” in which the public can comment on a pre-drafted plan, but after which there is no clear mechanism for applying or following up on public consultation within the planning process.

Certain challenges must be considered when applying a participatory GIS solution. First, parallel outreach activities are required to notify the target audience about the

existence of the platform. Second, a clear strategy for how the results will be applied within the planning process must be identified. And third, radical or dramatic responses may be over-represented compared with neutral and positive responses in the platform.

Multiple municipalities in the REGINA project have recently implemented GIS platforms. Our investigation has identified at least three platforms that offer efficient solutions for local planning departments. A key difference between the three platforms is the degree of consultancy support offered by the service provider when developing individual GIS surveys. This provides the opportunity for municipalities to use these innovative solutions regardless of their existing GIS knowledge capacity. The three platforms identified are Båsta Platsen (Spacescape), Harava (Dimenteq Oy) and CityPlanner (Agency9). More information can be found in the REGINA report, *Local Land Use Planning: Guidance on Spatial Data, Geographic Information Systems and Foresight in the Arctic*.<sup>9)</sup>

9) This report can be downloaded from the Resource Centre on the REGINA website (see [www.reginaproject.eu](http://www.reginaproject.eu)).

before it proceeds to official municipal decision making. The next phase will include final revisions before the programme is sent to the Municipal Board and then to the Municipal Council for approval.

### **3.6 Step 6. Deciding the organisational issues related to SIMP**

There must be agreement on who will take the responsibility for implementing the SIMP and on the roles of different actors, such as the municipality and companies. It should also be decided whether responsibility for the SIMP, its implementation and involvement of the community in the development work is taken by a steering group or any other kind of group where all key stakeholders are represented. After that, the steering group will decide themselves how they will work and how, when and to whom they will report about their work.

In Sodankylä, the idea has been to establish a “Local Mining Forum”, which would represent all stakeholders in the process. The Mining Forum will be open and transparent for all who are interested to follow and participate in mining-related issues. For example, the Mining Forum could have the task to follow-up on the impacts of mining at the municipal level and to take up issues for problem solving, actions to develop local businesses and other relevant issues. In addition, once the institutional format of the SIMP implementation body is established, it is crucial that all participants trust the person responsible for managing future activities.

### **3.7 Step 7. Assessment and revision of the SIMP**

The SIMP should be a reflexive plan for managing the social impacts of large-scale projects. Therefore, it should include a plan for assessment of the realisation of the objectives, results and identification of possible problems. There are two levels in the assessment: (1) the assessment of the process, which can be done as a self-assessment and (2) assessment of practical results of the SIMP. This should include a clear description of the parameters to be monitored and how this will take place. One example would be a follow-up survey process, either to the recipients of the introductory survey or stakeholder groups. Likewise, those responsible for the assessment should be identified and a timeline should be announced. The key point in assessments is that they are done systematically, transparently and follow basic research methods. The results should be introduced openly to the local community, e.g., to the Municipal Council and with a newsletter for the municipal residents.

In Sodankylä, the SIMP is planned to be monitored by repeating the residents’ survey every second or third year. Comparable monitoring data will inform the municipality and the companies as well as the local community members about the experienced impacts of mining as well as possible changes in the local mindset. The evaluation of the process and the impacts of the SIMP implementation itself could be part of the Local Mining Forum’s work, which could be financed with public and private funds.

# 4

## Communication of the SIMP process in Sodankylä

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THE REGINA PROJECT'S first official press release in June 2016 was about the survey performed by the University of Lapland. The regional newspaper and radio shared the press release about the survey. The local newspaper also wrote an article based on the press release. The second press release reported the results of the survey, which included comments from the municipality and information to identify the possibilities for an agreement-based co-operation. This press release was also discussed in depth on the regional and local news.

The Sodankylä municipality and the REGINA project team have also actively presented the idea of a mining programme and agreement, i.e., the outputs of SIMP, at the national level. Sodankylä's mayor is also a board member of the Finnish Sustainable Mining Network<sup>10)</sup> and the concept has been presented and discussed at their board meetings. Other municipalities in Lapland, where there are operating mines or plans for

opening a new mine, have also been interested in this "Sodankylä process".

At the local level, there should not be only one-way communication through newsletters or the media. Open seminars for the public and smaller meetings with the stakeholders are important because they open the forum for a dialogue.

In addition to the invitation-only stakeholder workshops in Sodankylä, two open meetings were held during the preparation of the mining programme. It was also decided that villages or associations could invite the REGINA project representative to visit and talk about the process, and offer the possibility to participate and to give comments and ideas. Generally speaking, when the idea of the SIMP is new for the planners and participants, there is a need to discuss the concept itself with industry representatives and the local stakeholders within the municipality.

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10) See [www.kaivosvastuu.fi/in-english](http://www.kaivosvastuu.fi/in-english).

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## Conclusions

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IN SODANKYLÄ, THE mining programme (policy) will be the basis for further and actual negotiation processes on the development of co-operation from the municipality's perspective. A variety of tools could be applied to implement the SIMP in collaboration with all stakeholders and mining companies operating in Sodankylä. What actually can be achieved and how to achieve it depends largely on the local competence, the will and resources of the mining and exploration companies and their management and owners, as well as the commitment of the municipal authorities and politicians and other stakeholders. This is because there is no existing legislation that would demand this kind of co-operation in Finland; thus, the work is performed on a voluntary basis as a co-operation that needs to identify mutual interests.

It is sometimes said of planning that the process is a part of the outcome: i.e., a well-planned process should offer steps to create the desired outcome, whether it will be a mutually agreed policy programme or a joint agreement among stakeholders. Collaborative planning demands different steps: mapping the present situation through reliable research and evidence; identifying relevant stakeholders; getting them involved and convincingly interested in joint efforts; guiding the stakeholders constructively through a meaningful collaborative work; and writing a SIMP transparently in the form of a policy programme or an agreement. The organisational responsibilities for putting decisions into action and monitoring the course of development needs to be implemented in a way that the actions can be responsive to ever-changing circumstances. SIMP is a collaborative planning process that offers a step-by-step example on how this can be achieved through local collaboration

by creating new knowledge for everyone involved.

Collaborative planning is a way of empowering local people. A successful SIMP process demands efforts to include different stakeholders in the joint planning process to ensure that the input of different stakeholders is considered in future decision-making processes. Planning should not have—or even should not look like—a project with a hidden agenda, but rather a real, open dialogue to improve the actions and decisions. Hence, when planning together, all questions and doubts should be answered equally and openly, and the whole process should be transparent. Based on the experiences from Sodankylä, it is important to accept that there are conflicts of interest. Despite this fact, the REGINA process in Sodankylä stresses the importance of a dialogue for reducing the possible negative impacts of mining and to retain benefits at the local level as much as possible.

Finally, SIMP is about learning from each other. When discussing large-scale industries at the local level, all participants will hopefully realise that there are different angles and opinions and they can also learn to be reflexive with their own ideas. Learning together means accepting the fact that each individual idea may not be fulfilled.

Although the collaborative planning process may show that stakeholders have differing future visions, the process provides an opportunity for influencing issues such as the development of large-scale industries at the local level. This kind of process ensures broader understanding of impacts of the decisions and highlights how issues related to local development are not only issues of facts, but also issues of feelings and values.

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